

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

TEA has become popular in Asia and is consumed as green tea in Myanmar, China, India, Japan, South Korea, some ASEAN countries, and European nations. Tea leaves are processed both dried and fermented to be used in boiling water for drinking.

Although herbal tea is consumed and used for medicinal purposes in Europe and Asia, Myanmar has been using it for drinking, eating, and medicinal purposes since the Konbaung of Myanmar's monarchical era. It is noteworthy that Myanmar is the only country where tea is consumed in the form of a salad.



A lush, thriving tea plantation. **PHOTO: ZWE MARN**

Myanmar's famous tea leaf culture aims for **UNESCO** recognition

The cultural heritage of a country is often of special interest to international travellers. In the Bagan region and the hilly areas, foreign tourists are accustomed to drinking green tea and tea salad.

A historical researcher said: "Stone inscription in the Konbaung era shows Myanmar has been using green tea used in boiling water for drinking. The traditional Myanmar Atar Thingyan festival, which is a heritage of Myanmar culture, has been recognized as the first intangible cultural heritage of humanity in Myanmar. If Myanmar's tea is recognized as a World Cultural Heritage, the value of tea will increase, which is a matter of pride and great joy."

Tea is primarily planted in hilly regions of Myanmar. The characteristics,

colour, texture, aroma, and taste of tea tend to vary depending on the climate and environment. Since the Konbaung era, tea has been a traditional Myanmar meal. Currently, a traditional culture of serving tea salad and green tea to guests is thriving both in urban and rural areas of Myanmar.

Generally, tea can help reduce blood cholesterol levels, lower hypertension, and improve heart health. Its antioxidants may also help prevent certain intestinal diseases to ease tiredness.

The tea leaf salad is consumed with

peanuts, sesame, fried shallots, dried shrimp, garlic, and chilli peppers. Moreover, it is also enjoyed with various combinations such as tomato, thinly sliced cabbage, tender papaya leaves and boiled maize.

The cultural heritage of a country is often of special interest to international travellers. In the Bagan region and the hilly areas, foreign tourists are accustomed to drinking green tea and tea salad. By promoting Myanmar's traditional tea as an integral part of the world's cultural heritage, there are opportunities to increase production and expand the market, with promising prospects ahead. — Thitsa (MNA)/TTA



NATIONAL PAGE 6

MPMEEA to sell hard-to-find medicines in Pyinmana for second time



BUSINESS PAGE 7

Realty market attracts more buyers than investors amid stable rentals

Customs Dept updates tariff exchange rate

THE Customs Department changed the weekly foreign exchange rate while imposing Customs tariff according to the reference exchange rate set by the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM), the Myanmar Automated Cargo Clearance System division notified on 25 January 2025.

The notification 90/2024 of the Ministry of Planning and Finance stated that the Customs Department collected Customs tariffs 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.

The previous notification 90/2024 dated by the Ministry of Planning and Finance was cancelled, according to Notification 8/2025. The Customs Department announced weekly foreign exchange rates will be exercised in levying Customs tariffs according to the CBM's reference rate starting from 25 January 2025.

The exchange rates for Customs duties from 26 January to 1 February are K2,100 against a US dollar, K60.544 against a Thai baht and K286.424 for a yuan, the Customs Department announced. — NN/KK

NATIONAL

Cooperative System: Key to Economic Development in Myanmar

- The cooperative system is the most suitable approach for Myanmar to develop its economic sector under current conditions.
- This system fosters collaboration among entrepreneurs and farmers who share common goals and ideas.

(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to the Union government meeting 6/2024 on 29 July 2024.)



Sitagu Sayadaw delivers special Dhamma Talk at ITBMU



The exclusive Dhamma Talk underway .

STATE Ovadacariya Shwegyin Sangharaja Abhidhaja Maharatthaguru and Abhidhaja Aggamaha Saddhammajotika Sitagu Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Nyanissara, who is also the Chancellor of the Sitagu International Buddhist Academies and the founder of the International Theravada Buddhist Mis-

sionary University (ITBMU), delivered a Special Dhamma Talk yesterday at the ITBMU Seminar Hall. The event was attended by local and international students who currently enrolled in diploma to post-graduate programmes for the 2024–2025 academic year.

The ceremony was graced

by the presence of ITBMU Rector Aggamaha Pandita Maha Dhammakathika Bahujana Hitadhara Dr Bhaddanta Chekinda and Pro-Rector (Academic) Dr Bhaddanta Nodhinana, along with lecturer monks and nuns. A total of 328 students from 21 countries participated in the event. — MNA/MKKS

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.

Media arrangements for 2024 Myanmar Film Academy Awards

THE 2024 Myanmar Motion Pictures Academy Awards ceremony is scheduled to take place on 9 February 2024 at the Myanmar International Convention Centre I (MICC I) in Nay Pyi Taw.

Due to the limited space at the venue, designated areas – Zone A and Zone B – will be allocated specifically for media personnel.

Media representatives wishing to attend the ceremony and access event information are required to complete an application form. The form must include the applicant's name, Citizenship Scrutiny Card number, position, and the name of their news agency. Each news organization is allowed to send up to two representatives.

Interested media personnel must submit their applications by 31 January 2025. For further information, they can contact the Copyright and Registration Division of the Information and Public Relations Department under the Ministry of Information at 067 3412143, iprd.crd.npt@gmail.com (Nay Pyi Taw) and 01 544582, 01 544583, iprd.crd.ygn@gmail.com (Yangon).

Ministry of Information

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)

76th Republic Day of India celebrated in Yangon

STATE Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister at the Prime Minister's Office Admiral Tin Aung San and his wife attended the reception ceremony commemorating the 76th Anniversary Republic Day of the Republic of India at Wyndham Grand Hotel in Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region, yesterday evening.

Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Abhay Thakur, his wife, and officials warmly welcomed Admiral Tin Aung San and his wife, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Dr Kan Zaw and his wife, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Chairman U Paw Lwin Sein and his wife, deputy ministers and their wives.



State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister Admiral Tin Aung San and his wife, and Indian Ambassador Mr Abhay Thakur and his wife cut the commemorative cake.

The ceremony commenced with the playing of the national anthems of the two countries, followed by a welcome speech from the Indian ambassador. Indian cultural troupes

also performed traditional dances at the event.

After the ceremonial procedures, the Admiral and his wife cut the commemorative cake together with the Indian ambassador and wife.

The ambassador and his wife hosted a dinner for those who attended the ceremony.

Also present at the event were Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein and his wife, Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Zaw Hein and his wife, regional ministers and their wives, senior Tatmadaw officers and their wives, ambassadors from embassies in Yangon, chargé d'affaires ad iterim, military attachés, representatives of UN, officials and invitees. — MNA/KTZH

Top websites and web portals to access Military Service Rules

1. Ministry of Defence <https://www.mod.gov.mm>
2. Ministry of Legal Affairs <https://www.mlis.gov.mm>
3. Ministry of Information <https://www.moi.gov.mm>
4. Myawady Webportal <https://myawady.net.mm>
5. Myanmar National Portal <https://myanmar.gov.mm>

India-Myanmar Food Festival set for Feb in Yangon

AS part of the "Mekong-Ganges Cooperation" initiative, an India-Myanmar Food Festival will be held at the Secretariat Yangon in February, according to the Embassy of India to Myanmar.

The festival is scheduled to be held from 3 pm to 9 pm on Sunday, 23 February at the Secretariat Yangon, located on Theinbyu Road, Yangon. It will be organized collaboratively by the Indian Women's Association in Yangon and the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Network, with support from the Embassy of India.

In addition to this upcoming



This photo depicts the Indian Food Festival held in Hanoi on 11 November 2024.

event, the Indian Embassy held the 2025 World Hindi Day celebrations on 10 January to pro-

note Hindi language learning and appreciation in Myanmar. — ASH/MKKS

NATIONAL

Meeting held to address online scams, gambling in border areas

A meeting on combatting online scams and online gambling in border areas was organized in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

State Administration Council Member Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, who is also Chairman of the Supervisory Committee on Prompt Legal Action and Deportation of Foreigners Who Enter Myanmar Illegally, attended the meeting, together with relevant officials.

Speaking at the meeting, the Union minister said the online scams are connected with financial fraud, human trafficking, drugs, forced labour and money laundering. The foreigners who face difficulties are recused and transferred to their respective countries. Although some entered the country illegally through some neighbouring countries, the government did not take action on humanitarian grounds and bilateral relations



A meeting on combatting online scams and online gambling in border areas in progress in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, attended by SAC Member Union Home Affairs Minister Lt-Gen Yar Pyae.

between the countries.

He then mentioned the online scams and online gambling combating operations between

Myanmar and China, the need to carry out measures with shared responsibility among the country of origin, transit and arriving

country, and the access to basic infrastructure, electric power, basic foodstuffs and internet connection from neighbouring

country by the scammers, the foreigners who establish infrastructure and make investment, establishment of Police Cooperation Centre and Trilateral Cooperation of Myanmar-China-Thailand, and arrangements to draft action plan by organizing a Task Force of these countries.

Then, Chief of Police Lt-Gen Win Zaw Moe of the Myanmar Police Force, who is the committee secretary, explained legal actions taken against online scams and online gambling, exchange of information via the police channels, cooperation with international law enforcement organizations in combatting online scams and recuse work for foreigners who face difficulties in the country.

After hearing the reports of attendees, the Union minister concluded the meeting. — MNA/KTZH

Myanma Post unveils new stamp featuring 'Green Spotted Triangle' butterfly

THE Myanma Post under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, in collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environ-

mental Conservation, has announced the release of a new postage stamp featuring the "Green Spotted Triangle" butterfly. This butterfly species is recorded as native to Myanmar. The new stamp, valued at K200, will be officially launched on 1 February 2025 (4th waxing of Tabodwe 1386 ME), starting at 9:30 am.

The stamp will be available for purchase simultaneously at the Central Post Office in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon General Post Office, Mandalay General Post Office, and other regional and state post offices across the country.

As part of a special initiative, stamps purchased on 1 February 2025 at the Central Post Office in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon General Post Office, and Mandalay General Post Office will be affixed with a commemorative date mark. — MNA/MKKS



New postage stamp featuring the "Green Spotted Triangle" butterfly.

COVID-19 report, 27 January 2025

NEW TESTS	NEW CASE	CASUALTIES
2,942	NIL	NIL

Myanmar National Centre for Diseases Control
Department of Public Health

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanma Alinn, the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit www.moi.gov.mm/mal, www.moi.gov.mm/km, www.moi.gov.mm/nlm and www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper.

News and Periodicals Enterprise



NATIONAL

Union Information Minister meets staff of affiliated departments in Taunggyi

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, accompanied by Shan State Chief Minister U Aung Aung, met the affiliated departments' staff at the multimedia hall of the Community Centre in Taunggyi Township yesterday.

First, the Union Minister said different ethnic nationals are residing in Shan State and the Shan State government is also carrying out the development programmes. Meanwhile, the departmental staff should adopt proper media ways aiming to succeed in these operations and share knowledge with the public regarding these works.

The government employees should be loyal to the nation and people, and participate in development programmes with their skills. Today, the media industry plays a key role, and it should be applied effectively. Unscrupulous persons spread misinformation and disinformation to mislead the people and so the department staff

should fight against such fake information. The ministry also circulates the true information via various online platforms like television, newspaper and radio, and all should make efforts for

the public.

The state chief minister explained the regional development programmes, training courses for the public at the Community Centre (Taunggyi)

and media development training for IPRD staff.

The Union Minister made proper instructions and presented cash prizes.

At noon, Union Minister U

Maung Maung Ohn visited the Shan State Buddhist University in Phayaphyu Ward of Taunggyi and paid homage to Rector Sayadaw Professor Dr Dhammasami (Oxford Sayadaw).

During the visit, he observed the library of Shan State Buddhist University, and the preservation of books, publications and ancient treatises.

The Shan State Buddhist University is the very first Buddhist University in Shan State established following the teachings of the world's earliest university Nalanda University (5th-12th centuries) and Dhamma Cariya and Samanekyaw, the Pariyatti heritage of Myanmar.

Founder Oxford Sayadaw Dr Dhammasami makes efforts to establish an international Buddhist University in Myanmar as a secretary of the International Association of Buddhist Universities and the International Association of Theravada Buddhist Universities. — MNA/KTZH



Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn meets the affiliated departments' staff at the Community Centre in Taunggyi Township yesterday.

Realty sales surge in Hlinethaya amid rising real estate agents

WITH a growth in the number of real estate agents, the number of buyers has also elevated in Hlinethaya Township.

The township's property market is seen healthy again, however, most transactions are happening based on negotiable prices, according to local estate agents.

"There are buyers too, the market isn't fine like before, though. Estates which are located conveniently, are attractive now. Most of the transactions are done in negotiations. Let's say it is the time of buyers because the number of sellers is greater than the number of buyers," said a local estate agent. An increase in the number of estate agents gave buyers more options, and properties, which can prove complete documents and have good

locations and negotiable prices, are now marketable.

"Now, buyers go to observe with the help of agents so they have more options. Some buyers choose a property based on wards and some do based on their likes such as price, building condition and location. So, we can't say which wards are the most attractive for buyers," he added. — Thit Taw/ZS



Hlinethaya Township entrance.

Bagan Archaeological Museum receives K48M+ over 9 months

BAGAN Archaeological Museum located in NyaungU Township in Mandalay Region has received more than K48 million from the admission of local and foreign tourists over nine months of the current financial year, according to the Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Bagan branch) under the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture.

From April to December, 45,072 domestic travellers and 300 international travellers, totalling 45,372 visited there, said an official.

"Admission fee is K1,000 per local while K10,000 per foreigner, so total income is more than K48 million. Tourist arrival is larger on weekends and usually peaks in December," he said.

At present, there is the arrival of 100-200 local visitors



This image showcases the Bagan Archaeological Museum.

per day regularly and more on weekends. Except Monday and public holidays, it is open from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm daily and free admission is provided for children under 12 years old,

monks and nuns.

Bagan Archaeological Museum received over K71.9 million from 94,951 local and foreign tourist arrivals last year. — MT/ZS

NATIONAL

Construction of Bala Min Htin Bridge II expected to be completed in 2026

THE Ministry of Construction's Department of Bridges has announced that Bala Min Htin Bridge II, a critical infrastructure project for Myanmar-China trade routes, is expected to be completed in 2026.

This bridge is part of the Namti-Tanai-Pansawng route, which links the Myanmar-China border trade zone at Kampaiti with India, thereby contributing significantly to national economic development. Bridge Construction Task Force 1 and Special Bridge Task Force 1 of the Department of Bridges are responsible for the project. Construction commenced on 16 October 2021.

Bala Min Htin Bridge II is being built in Sitapu Ward of Myitkyina, Kachin State, along the

Mandalay-Lashio-Bhamo-Myitkyina Road, adjacent to the old Bala Min Htin Bridge, which has been in use for around 25 years.

Currently, work is underway on constructing the bridge's main piers and approach roads on both sides, while maintenance and repairs are being carried out on the old bridge's piers.

Once completed, the new bridge will span a length of 979 metres (about 3,212 feet) and feature bored pile concrete piers and reinforced concrete platforms. It will incorporate a Steel Box Girder and RCC Slab structure. The bridge will have a carriageway width of over 27 feet and a load capacity of up to 75 tonnes.



This photo shows officials inspecting the construction site of the Bala Min Htin Bridge II.

Upon completion, both the old and new bridges will remain operational, improving accessibility and providing a more efficient crossing for vehicles. — ASH/MKKS

TOP-J applications open as of 27 Jan



TOP-J exam logo and a student.

APPLICATIONS, for TOP-J which is scheduled on 9 March 2025 in Yangon and Mandalay, will be accepted starting on 27 January, announced by Myanmar Association of Japan Alumni (MAJA).

The exam fee for all levels is K72,000 and submission of application will be opened on 27 January at 1 pm and closed on 10 February at noon (close on weekends and public holidays). A copy of CSC card and two 3-4 cm photos are required and applications can be sent to MAJA Education Centre in Yangon: 440-B, 14th Zeya Street, Ward 10 in South Okkalapa Township and phone number is 09 428 613 848 and MAJA Mandalay branch- first floor, Building 1, Room 6, 67th street, Mingalar Mandalay in Chanmyathazi Township and phone number is 09 255 162 533.

Recognized by Study in Japan and organized by the Asian Foundation for International Scholarship Interchange, TOP-J is a Japanese language test and very helpful for testing Japanese language skills, university entrance, and major requirements for scholarship and employment. — MT/ZS

MPMEEA to sell hard-to-find medicines in Pyinmana for second time

MYANMAR Pharmaceutical and Medical Equipment Entrepreneurs' Association (MPMEEA) will sell hard-to-find pharmaceuticals for the second time in Pyinmana, Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory, from 27 to 31 January, according to distribution prices of the companies.

"The companies started to sell hard-to-find medicines at Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization's office in Yangon on Merchant Road in Pabedan Township, Yangon, on 17 July. The sales will expand to a place located in the compound of Nawade Cinema in Mayangon Township, Yangon, and the sales centre on the first floor of the Thiri Oattha Market in Bago Region on 29 July. The pharma sales in Pyinmana happened on 12-17 August 2024. It is the second time for the pharma fair in Pyinmana, at the distribution price of the companies on 27-31 January. Individuals can



Pharmaceuticals are being sold at distribution prices of the pharma companies.

buy hard-to-find medicines according to patient records and old blister packs, bottles, sachets, etc," said Dr Win Maw Phy.

About 70 pharma-importing companies will participate in this fair. The association stated that they are planning to expand the sales in more

regions and states.

Drugs for chronic diseases, common diseases and conditions including medicines for patients with hypertension, heart failure, kidney failure, diabetes, cancer, antibiotics, probiotics and other bone growth stimulators are available at a pharma fair. — ASH/KK

YGN palm oil wholesale reference rate dips

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil for the Yangon market slightly decreased to K7,245 per viss for the week ending 2 February 2025, from K7,255 recorded last week ending 26 January, according to the Supervisory Committee on Edible Oil Import and Distribution.

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

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

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

face legal action under the Essential Goods and Services Law.

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

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

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



Cooking oil bottles are arranged for sale at the supermarket.



Some residential buildings in Yangon metro.

Realty market attracts more buyers than investors amid stable rentals

REAL estate agents say that there are buyers to live in the property market and the rental market is stable.

There are fewer investors than real buyers in the current real estate market. The rental market is stable with regular tenants due to people coming from other cities to Yangon for training and people moving in, while it has increased because of more relocations during the dry season, said an agent in Kyimyindine Township.

“The real estate market is more active in real buyers than investors. Apartment rentals are regular. Many people are attending training courses and families are moving in among the

tenants. Some people migrated from other cities and some relocated within Yangon. The rental market is stable with more activities in the dry season,” he said.

A slight increase in rental prices was seen this year. As a result of residential demand, hundreds or even thousands of units have been sold in some townships, and many individuals have purchased land plots for house construction.

“People from Yangon came down to Thanlyin and bought plots to build houses. With the new bridge completed, it is easier to travel, so we see more purchases,” said a Thanlyin resident. — MT/ZN

Nipa palms thriving in bamboo market

CURRENTLY, nipa palms are selling well in the bamboo market according to the sources in Htantabin Township.

Since the price of nipa palms will increase in March, people have started buying to prepare in advance to make roofs and attached extensions using nipa palms.

“Nipa palm is selling well at the moment. Its price will increase when Thingyan is nearby. People have started making roofing and constructing annexes the next months. Sales will be better in March”, said a bamboo and nipa palm trader in Htantabin.

Nipa palms called ‘Dhani’ in Myanmar grow abundantly in the mangrove forest areas of Bogale, Pyapon District, and Ayeyawady Region. They are in high demand in the market during the pre-monsoon season. Dhani plants are grown evenly, about nine feet apart, on the shores where the tides fluctuate.



This image depicts cultivated nipa palms (Dhani).

After three years of planting, each tree produces about 10 to 25 branches, according to a farmer.

Dhani business is a seasonal business that makes money only once a year, and unlike farming, it does not need a yearly investment. After waiting for the whole rainy season, farmers can harvest their leaves in the summer to earn a profit. — Thit Taw/ZN

Trainees invited for rubber tapping training

NATIONAL-LEVEL Rubber Tapping Grade-1 Training 1/2025, jointly organized by the Agriculture Department and National Skills Standards Authority (NSSA), will open from 14 to 28 February 2025, awarding national certificates to the workers.

The NSSA will assess the qualification of the workers according to its National Occupational Competency Standards, following technical and

practical approaches to rubber tapping systems. Qualified trainees will receive certificates from the NSSA, under the Ministry of Labour.

The maximum number of trainees is limited to 30 only. Those interested can contact the Perennial Trees Research and Technical Development Farm (Mudon) in Mon State via 09 402022002 and 09 778711545 starting from 25 January. — NN/KK

OPINION

Welcome to migratory birds at Myanmar's wetlands

EVERY cold season, more than 100 migratory birds, along with domestic waterfowl and other species, seek refuge at Moeyungyi Wildlife Sanctuary in Myanmar's Bago Region. The sanctuary is home to Moeyungyi Lake, which is one of the Ramsar sites in Myanmar, renowned for its importance as a wildlife habitat.

This season, Moeyungyi Lake is holding water at full capacity, with depths ranging from five feet at the shallowest to more than 10 feet in the deepest areas. Although this year's water level is lower than last year, the sanctuary still provides a haven for both migratory and resident bird species.

Each year, hibernating birds begin arriving in late October and stay until the end of April. These birds migrate from temperate regions of the world, where colder climates drive them to seek milder conditions in southern areas. Birds from Siberia typically migrate to Inlay Lake in Shan State, while those from China and Russia favour Indawgyi Lake in Kachin State. Sadly, about 35 per cent of the world's wetland areas have vanished over the past 50 years. It poses a significant threat to the migratory birds' habitats.

Both migratory and resident birds play crucial roles in environmental conservation, and their well-being is directly influenced by human actions. As their behaviour is shaped by the state of the environment, it is important to foster empathy and protect these species. Public awareness about the need to conserve biodiversity species should be raised, especially in both urban and rural communities, to ensure these birds are welcomed and safeguarded from hunger and other dangers. Active participation of the people in the conservation of these species is essential to prevent their extinction and protect the health of the ecosystems they inhabit.

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Myanmar's abundant natural water bodies — such as Indawgyi Lake, Inlay Lake, Moeyungyi Lake, Taungthaman Lake, Pyu Lake, Panaw Lake, Paleik Lake, and other wetlands across the nation — offer vital shelter to migratory birds from as far as 26,000 kilometres away, in addition to domestic species. These wetlands play an essential role in sustaining bird populations, both during the monsoon and cold seasons. Migratory birds that arrive at the start of the monsoon typically breed here and return to their home countries when the season ends. Meanwhile, those arriving in the colder months stay until summer. The nature of both migratory and domestic bird species is a great opportunity for bird-watchers at home and abroad in addition to improving the tourism industry.

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India's Growth Story: Democracy, Development, Demand & Decisiveness

By former Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar

INDIA'S multi-faceted progress and growth, particularly over the last decade, has been truly remarkable setting it in a highly promising position to achieve its aspirational goal of "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India) by 2047 when it celebrates the centenary of its independence.

In 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spearheaded the victory of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to win an absolute majority in the Parliamentary elections, the first time that a single party had won an outright majority on its own in the last 30 years. He repeated the feat with an even larger majority in the elections in 2019. In 2024, when the whole world witnessed a wave of anti-incumbency, PM Modi again rode back to victory convincingly for the third consecutive term with

the support of BJP's alliance partners. Following the Parliamentary elections, BJP and its partners decisively won elections to state legislatures in major states like Maharashtra and Haryana thereby emphatically demonstrating its irrefutable support amongst the common people. Democracy has been India's undeniable strength and leitmotif since independence which has stood it in great stead to achieve a peaceful, stable, secure and better life for its people.

The last decade has also witnessed impressive growth in India's economic expansion and rise. In 2014, India was the tenth-largest economy in the world. Today it has climbed five places to become the fifth largest economy in the world. In another two years, it is expected to move up to third place by displacing

Germany and Japan from their positions. India is today the fastest-growing major economy in the world its GDP having risen by 8.2 per cent and 6.4 per cent in Financial Years 2022 and 2023 respectively. The projected figure for FY 2024 is 6.6 per cent. It is expected to grow at impressive rates in the coming years and become a US\$5 trillion economy by 2030. The Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund has stated that India is the ray of hope in an otherwise gloomy global economic environment.

Nearly 70 per cent of India's GDP is driven by domestic demand and private consumption. Its GDP is additionally fuelled by government spending, investments and exports. This has been achieved through various structural reforms like the imple-

mentation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime. The GST streamlined the indirect tax system, fostering business ease and tax compliance. Additionally, emphasis on digitalization (including the Digital Public Infrastructure) and innovation led to the rise of startups and expanded the digital economy, with initiatives like Digital India enhancing technology access. Initiatives such as Make in India and Product Linked Incentive Scheme have been pivotal in driving growth. Furthermore, the focus on renewable energy underscores India's commitment to sustainable development.

India enjoys a huge demographic dividend supporting its economic rise. About 65 per cent of its population is below the age of 35 years with just about five per cent being above 65 years. The

median age is around 28 years which is much lower than the median age of other major economies like the United States and China. While the whole world is ageing and greying, India looks forward to its young population adding to its consumption and production and spurring its economic growth to new heights. India is home to more than 600 million people aged between 18 and 35 years. India's demographic dividend is expected to persist at least until 2055-56 and will peak around 2041 when the share of the working-age population – 20-59 years – is expected to hit 59 per cent. It is an opportunity which India is fully determined to harness.

India's ambitions to become a global manufacturing hub and a technology leader are closely linked to the upskilling of its

workers. Progress is already underway, as nearly 10 million youth are benefitting from the Skill India programme annually. Getting more women to enter the workforce is pivotal for India's future growth. India is working assiduously to achieve this objective.

In the arena of foreign relations, India has pursued a bold, proactive and confident policy.

In its ties with the United States, it has "overcome the hesitations of history" and is fostering a "Partnership of Trust". The US is India's largest trading partner in goods and services, and the second-largest supplier of sophisticated defence equipment. India and the US engage in around 60 substantive Dialogue Mechanisms spanning all conceivable areas of human endeavour including technology, cyberse-

curity, energy, health, education, security etc.

India has maintained its time-tested and substantial ties with Russia by importing significant quantities of Russian oil and not directly criticizing or condemning it for its attack against Ukraine.

India has stood steadfast against the aggressive and expansionist policies of China. It has followed a policy of "Neighbourhood First" and strategic patience and extended non-reciprocal, generous support to its neighbouring countries in times of need and for their economic development. Its Outreach to the Global South, particularly by supplying more than 300 million COVID-19 vaccines, most of them gratis, to above 100 countries, has exemplified its role as a "Vishwa Bandhu" (Friend to

the World).

India's robust economic growth and assertive pursuit of its interests and foreign policy over the last decade have enhanced its global prestige and imbued its people with hope and confidence in attaining its goal of becoming a peaceful, prosperous and developed country by the time it marks hundred years of its independence in 1947.

Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar has worked for the Indian Foreign Service for over three decades. He was the Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, Sweden and Latvia, and has worked in diplomatic positions in Washington DC, Brussels, Dhaka and Bangkok, among other nations.

New drug may help restoring vision for people with nerve damage: Study



The treatment significantly accelerates myelin repair, improving vision-related brain functions. Researchers highlight its potential in treating severe damage, with the drug's ability to enhance brain repair mechanisms being a game-changer for visual function. PHOTO: ANI

Researchers at the University of Colorado developed LL-341070, a therapeutic candidate that accelerates myelin repair in the brain, improving vision and cognitive function. The drug could benefit those with multiple sclerosis and neurodegenerative diseases by enhancing the brain's natural repair mechanisms and potentially reversing damage, offering hope for recovery.

RESEARCHERS at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus found a promising therapeutic candidate that could aid in the restoration of vision in those suffering from multiple sclerosis (MS) and other neurodegenerative diseases.

The medicine, LL-341070, improves the brain's ability to repair damaged myelin—the protective sheath that surrounds nerve fibers. Myelin damage is a hallmark of disorders such as MS, as well as a normal consequence of ageing, and it fre-

quently causes visual loss, loss of motor abilities, and cognitive decline.

The research, focused on vision, demonstrated that while the brain has some ability to repair itself when myelin is damaged, the process can be slow and inefficient. Researchers observed that LL-341070 significantly accelerated the repair process and improved brain function related to vision in mice, even after severe damage.

"This research brings us closer to a world where the brain has the capacity to heal

itself" said Ethan Hughes, PhD, co-lead author and associate professor in the Department of Cell and Developmental Biology at the CU School of Medicine. "By harnessing this potential, we hope to help people with diseases like MS by potentially reversing some of the damage, offering people the opportunity to regain their vision and cognitive function."

Researchers discovered that the treatment makes the repair process much more effective following serious damage, highlighting the importance of

intervention with severe injury. Even partial repair of myelin was found to significantly improve vision-related brain functions.

"We've known for years that myelin plays a crucial role in brain function," said Daniel Denman, PhD, co-lead author of the study and assistant professor in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics at the CU School of Medicine. "This study highlights the role of cortical myelin in visual function. The drug could be a game-changer because it accelerates the brain's

natural repair mechanisms." The researchers plan to test the drug in other areas of the brain and refine the treatment, hoping to make it even more effective and eventually accessible to patients.

"This discovery is just the beginning," Hughes said. "We are optimistic that LL-341070 and similar therapies could one day provide real, tangible benefits to patients by improving overall brain function and quality of life."

SOURCE: ANI

NATIONAL

Tatmadaw naval vessel delivers healthcare to Zadetgyi Island locals

THE Tatmadaw Thanlwin naval hospital vessel, with a team of doctors, specialists, and nurses provided healthcare services to locals from the Taninthayi coastal region, Yangon Region's Cocokyun Township and Ayeyawady Region's Hainggyikyun.

The vessel arrived at Zadetgyi Island, Kawthoung of Taninthayi Region, and offered healthcare services to 98 locals at Salone Home for the Aged at Dhammikarama TatU monastery, yesterday.

They treated 33 people for general health issues, 11 for sur-

gery-related ailments, five for Obstetrical and gynaecological issues, five for pediatric illnesses, eight for orthopaedic diseases, five for ear, nose and throat disorders, 13 for eye diseases and 18 for dental issues.

Among them, eight X-ray patients, nine patients examined using ECG machines and four patients undergoing laboratory tests were provided with necessary medical treatment.

Two patients in need of hospital care were sent to the nearest Tatmadaw hospitals for further treatment. — MNA/KTZH



Tatmadaw medical officer examines an eye patient at Zadetgyi Island, Kawthoung of Taninthayi Region.

Tatmadaw vessels offer healthcare services in Pyapon



Tatmadaw medical team provides treatments to monks and local people in Pyapon.

TWO Tatmadaw vessels — the Shwepuzun and the Saku — arrived in Dhaminseik village, Pyapon Township, Pyapon District, with Tatmadaw doctors, specialists and medical officers to provide healthcare services to the locals.

The team based itself at the Sutaungpyae AnnawaU Pagoda and conducted health services for 552 locals from the town and surrounding villages.

The services included treatments for 91 individuals with general illnesses, 18 with

surgical conditions, 21 with obstetric or gynaecological issues, 50 with paediatric diseases, 143 with orthopaedic issues, 42 with ENT conditions, 146 with eye diseases and 41 with dental problems.

In turn, nine general surgery patients underwent procedures while one received eye surgery, 17 patients received X-ray tests, 12 were tested in ultrasound and 23 had ECGs performed to assess heart conditions. Furthermore, 40 patients underwent laboratory testing. — MNA/KTZH

Counter-argument to false information

Khit Thit Media defames Obo prison officials

MALICIOUS media, Khit Thit Media, intentionally circulated false information, claiming that the Obo prison warden and staff neglected the health-related reports without providing proper healthcare services to prisoners as diarrhoea broke out in prison, and prisoners with gastrointestinal illness also suffered from abdominal pain for inconvenient bean curry and rice starting from the second week of January.

According to the record of Mandalay Central prison, three male inmates and one female inmate were treated at the out-

patient ward of the prison hospital in January. Last month, there were only seven patients with abdominal disease. The prison officer explained that no patient was seen until 23 January.

Moreover, prison officials inspected prisoners' food before serving it and distributed it systematically following the health rules.

Prison officials also resolved the complaints regarding the food. Therefore, the Khit Thit Media deliberately spread such fake news to mislead the public. — Thitsa/KTZH

Fake news alleges security forces fired at Sagyin Village, injured 3

MALICIOUS media spread fake news that security forces opened fire with heavy weapons, injuring three civilians and damaging several houses in Sagyin Village of Madaya Township in Mandalay Region on 26 January.

In response to the incident, a relevant official explained that security forces are maintaining control of the area and performing security duties under the law to prevent terrorists from hiding and to ensure the safety of the people. Security forces did not fire at villages without any reason. Terrorists are attacking with heavy weapons inside villages to disrupt the stability and peace of the region and to instil fear in villages that have no support for them. These attacks have destroyed homes and the deaths, injuries, and harm to innocent civilians. As such, malicious media spread misinformation on social media to mislead people about security forces. — MNA/TTA



Screenshot of Khit Thit Media validate their fake news.

World marks 80th anniversary of Auschwitz liberation

THE world marks the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz on Monday, with some of the few remaining survivors attending ceremonies at the site of the notorious Nazi death camp.

Auschwitz was the largest of the extermination camps and has become a symbol of Nazi Germany's genocide of six million European Jews, one million of whom died at the site between 1940 and 1945, along with more than 100,000 non-Jews.

On Monday morning, Polish President Andrzej Duda laid flowers at the site alongside survivors, some wearing scarves in the blue-and-white stripes of their death camp uniforms.

Around 50 survivors are then expected at the main commemoration from 1500 GMT outside the gates of Auschwitz II-Birkenau alongside dozens of leaders, including Britain's King Charles III and French President Emmanuel Macron.

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Chancellor Olaf Scholz are both expected, as well as Israeli Education Minister Yoav Kisch.

"This year we will focus on the survivors and their message," Auschwitz Museum spokesman Pawel Sawicki told AFP. "There will not be any speeches by politicians."

Speaking to AFP ahead of the anniversary, survivors around the world



Survivors, relatives and representatives of the Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau lay wreaths and light candles at the so-called Death Wall next to the former Block 11 of the former Auschwitz I main camp in Oswiecim, Poland on 27 January 2025, during commemorations on the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the German Nazi concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau by the Red Army. PHOTO: AFP

spoke about the need to preserve the memory of what happened when there will no longer be living witnesses.

They also warned about rising hatred and anti-Semitism around the world and spoke of their fears about history repeating itself.

Organisers said it could be the last major anniversary with such a large group of survivors.

"We all know that in 10 years it will

not be possible to have a large group for the 90th anniversary," Sawicki said.

'Overcome hatred'

Auschwitz was created in 1940 using barracks in Oswiecim, southern Poland. Its name was Germanized into Auschwitz by the Nazis.

The first 728 Polish political prisoners arrived on 14 June of that year.

On 17 January 1945, as Soviet troops advanced, the SS forced 60,000 emaciated

prisoners to walk west in what became known as the "Death March".

From 21-26 January, the Germans blew up the Birkenau gas chambers and crematoria and withdrew as Soviet troops approached.

On 27 January, Soviet troops arrived, finding 7,000 survivors.

The day of its liberation has been designated by the United Nations as Holocaust Remembrance Day. — AFP

Auckland digital art exhibition launches 2025 Happy Chinese New Year celebrations

THE digital art exhibition "A Dream Journey of A Panorama of Rivers and Mountains" has kicked off the 2025 Happy Chinese New Year celebrations in Auckland.

The Happy Chinese New Year in Auckland is a series of cultural events and celebrations organized by the China Cultural Centre in Auckland to bring festive experiences to local communities and residents.

The digital art exhibition, which opened here on Saturday, is the highlight of all events, using holographic projection technology to revitalize the masterpiece A Panorama of Rivers and Mountains, the only surviving

painting by Song Dynasty (960-1279) artist Wang Ximeng.

Chinese Consul General in Auckland Chen Shijie is delighted to see that the Chinese New Year has become an important part of New Zealand's multicultural mosaic.

"Telling by its name, it portrays the beautiful landscape of China and the harmonious coexistence of humans and nature. Lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets," said Chen, adding that China is building a green ecological civilization to ensure the sustainable development of China and the world at large. — Xinhua

Jennifer Lopez brings 1950s Hollywood 'diva' to Sundance indie fest

JENNIFER Lopez brought a heady blend of 1950s Hollywood musical and gritty prison drama to Sundance with her new film "Kiss of the Spider Woman", which earned a standing ovation from the indie movie festival on Sunday.

The musical film, about two mismatched cellmates who form an unlikely intimate bond during Argentina's 1970s military dictatorship, was the hottest ticket at this year's Sundance gathering, which typically focuses on smaller arthouse and documentary fare.

"It's about how love can cure any divide. These two people who couldn't be more different in this cell together — doesn't matter their sexuality, their political beliefs. None of



Jennifer Lopez attends the "Kiss Of The Spider Woman" Premiere during the 2025 Sundance Film Festival at Eccles Centre Theatre on 26 January 2025 in Park City, Utah. PHOTO: NEILSON BARNARD/GETTY IMAGES/AFP

it," Lopez told AFP, on the red carpet.

"It's exactly the kind of story that we need to see right now," she said.

Based on the Broadway adaptation of Argentine author Manuel Puig's novel, "Kiss of the Spider Woman" is directed by Bill Condon. — AFP

ECON: WORLD

Visa-free policies ignite surge in foreign tourist arrivals

AS China continues to relax its visa-free policies, the country has seen a notable increase in foreign visitors joining the Spring Festival travel rush, eager to experience its rich cultural traditions.

The Spring Festival travel rush, or *chunyun*, began on 14 January and will continue through 22 February. Preliminary statistics show that ticket bookings for inbound flights during this period surged 47 per cent year on year.

As Japanese traveller Kyoko Shimada touched down at Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport, she was greeted by a vibrant display of red lanterns and paper cuttings featuring the Chinese character “fu”, a symbol of good fortune.

Having long dreamed of visiting China, Shimada and her husband seized the chance to travel just ahead of the Spring Festival, taking advantage of China’s visa-free policy for Japanese citizens.



Foreign tourists wait for entry inspection at the Shanghai Pudong International Airport in Shanghai, east China, 15 January 2025. PHOTO: XINHUA

“Although the airport was busy before the holiday, the immigration process was smooth and faster than I expected. The signs were clear, and some were even in Japanese,” Shimada said. During their three-day stay in Shanghai, the couple plans to enjoy the traditional lantern shows in

the ancient Yuyuan Garden and savour the city’s local cuisine.

In 2024, China further relaxed its visa policies to enhance openness and promote people-to-people exchanges, allowing more foreign travellers and business people to visit the country visa-free.

A key development was

the introduction of expanded unilateral visa-free entry policies in November 2024, allowing ordinary passport holders from 38 countries to stay in China for up to 30 days without needing a visa.

The following month, China announced a relaxation in its visa-free transit policy, increasing the permitted stay for eligible foreign travellers to 240 hours, up from the previous limits of 72 or 144 hours.

According to Trip.com Group, China’s online travel service giant, inbound travel orders from foreign tourists surged by 203 per cent year on year during the Spring Festival, with the majority of visitors coming from the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Singapore and Japan.

Recently, Thai tourist Ruchanewan Binsaree travelled to the ancient city of Xi’an, the capital of northwest China’s Shaanxi Province, with a friend. “I’ve visited cities like Shanghai

and Hangzhou before, but we came here specifically to see the famous Terracotta Warriors,” Binsaree said.

During their trip, they explored the city’s historic architecture, strolled along a pedestrian street adorned with festive lanterns, and enjoyed watching locals dressed in red Hanfu, a traditional style of Chinese clothing.

Since the first day of the Spring Festival travel rush, Xi’an’s port has welcomed more than 3,100 inbound foreign visitors, marking a 187 per cent increase compared to the same period last year. Among them, over 1,800 availed of the visa-free policies, while more than 360 took advantage of the 240-hour visa-free transit option.

Beyond air travel, the high-speed railway has become a popular option for foreign tourists during the Spring Festival rush, thanks to its convenience and efficiency. — Xinhua

US regulator OKs Eisai-Biogen Alzheimer’s drug’s continuous dosing

JAPANESE pharmaceutical company Eisai Co and US firm Biogen Inc said Monday that a jointly developed Alzheimer’s drug has been approved for continuous use for people with early stages of the disease by US regulators.

With the green light from the US Food and Drug Administration, the intravenous dosing of the drug, known chemically as lecanemab and branded Leqembi, could be reduced to every four weeks after 18 months of dosing every two weeks, potentially decreasing the patients’ burden of needing to go to hospital for treatment.

The companies aim to introduce injectable drugs in the United States that can be administered at home in the future. They did not comment on possible future developments in Japan.

The drug utilizes an antibody that targets a protein

called amyloid beta. The plaque-like protein, which accumulates inside the brain and destroys nerve cells, is considered the cause of the disease.

Last year, a team of Eisai and others presented an estimate at a conference in the United States that amyloid beta increases by 30 per cent over the following two and a half years if treatment is stopped after 18 months, but that this increase can be prevented if the treatment is continued with the pace of dosage halved.

Meanwhile, it is speculated that treatment from a similar drug called donanemab, developed by US firm Eli Lilly and Co and approved for use in the United States and Japan, can be ended once the amyloid beta has been sufficiently eliminated from the brain, with the long-term cost-effectiveness of both drugs coming under scrutiny. — Kyodo

Singapore’s labour market grows in Q4 amid slower pace

SINGAPORE’S labour market continued to expand in the fourth quarter of 2024, with total employment rising by 8,700, according to the latest Labour Market Report by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) published Monday.

While this marked a slowdown compared to the 22,300 jobs added in the third quarter, it was a significant increase from the 3,900 recorded in the same period in 2023.

Resident employment growth was driven by higher-skilled sectors such as professional services, financial services, and health and social services.

Year-end seasonal hiring also provided a

boost to retail trade. Non-resident employment saw gains primarily in the construction sector, while outward-oriented industries like information and communications experienced declines.

For the full year, total employment increased by 45,500, a slower pace compared to the 78,800 recorded in 2023.

A December 2024 survey by the MOM showed growing optimism among employers, with 46 per cent planning to expand their workforce and 32 per cent intending to raise wages. However, the MOM emphasized the importance of transformation and upskilling in navigating global economic uncertainties. — Xinhua



Excavators are seen at a construction site with the city’s skyline in the background in Singapore on 23 October 2024. PHOTO: AFP

New direct shipping route booster of China-Europe trade

IT was a crisp Friday morning when the Container Terminal Wilhelmshaven (CTW) buzzed with activity as the first container ship of the “China-Europe Express” arrived at the port.

Containers emblazoned with the logo of the fastest direct route connecting Europe and China’s Yangtze River Delta region were lifted by cranes as vehicles zipped across the terminal moving the containers to their designated spots.

The bustling scene after the arrival of KAWA NINGBO, the inaugural vessel of this groundbreaking shipping route, marked not only a milestone of the maritime logistics but also a com-

mitment to strengthening China-Europe ties.

What makes the route stand out is the remarkably reduced travel time between Ningbo, a bustling port city in China’s Zhejiang Province, and Wilhelmshaven, Germany’s only deep-water port.

Unlike traditional shipping routes, the “China-Europe Express” is a direct maritime route providing “point-to-point” service without intermediate stops, reducing the shipment time of 45 days in the past to just 26 days.

For industries like automotive, lithium batteries, and solar energy, where time-sensitive, high-value goods are the norm, this efficiency can



Photo taken on 24 January 2025 shows the “KAWA Ningbo” cargo ship of the “China-Europe Express” in Wilhelmshaven, Germany. The first container ship of the “China-Europe Express”, the fastest direct route connecting Europe and China’s Yangtze River Delta region, arrived at its destination at the Jade Weser Port in Wilhelmshaven on Friday. PHOTO: XINHUA

be a game-changer.

“The world is becoming increasingly interconnected, and supply chain reliability is more critical than ever,” said Frank Doods, state secretary in the Lower Saxony

Ministry of Economics, Transport, Construction, and Digitization, during a ceremony celebrating the route’s operation. — Xinhua

German business morale edges up in new year

GERMAN business confidence improved slightly in January but remained low as Europe’s largest economy remained stuck in a rut, a closely watched survey showed Monday.

The Ifo institute’s confidence barometer, based on a survey of around 9,000 companies, rose to 85.1 points from 84.7 points in December.

The final reading of 2024 was the lowest the indicator had been since May 2020, when Europe was reeling from the impact of Covid pandemic

shutdowns.

The gentle improvement was “due to a more positive assessment of the current situation”, Ifo president Clemens Fuest said in a statement.

Meanwhile companies’ expectations for the months ahead “deteriorated again” and the overall picture remained “pessimistic”, Fuest said. The depressed mood comes as the European powerhouse recorded its second-straight annual recession in 2024, shrinking by 0.2 per cent. — AFP



A broker is seen working while the digital display in the background shows the graph of the German stock market index DAX above 21,000 points at the Frankfurt Stock Exchange, operated by Deutsche Boerse AG, in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany, on 20 January 2025. PHOTO: AFP

Malaysia to enhance trade with BRICS, FTA partners in 2025

MALAYSIA has set trade targets for 2025 with a focus on the BRICS group, Free Trade Agreement (FTA) partners and emerging markets.

The Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) said in a statement on Monday that Malaysia’s inclusion as a partner country in the BRICS group marks a significant milestone in its trade diplomacy.

According to MATRADE, BRICS, which includes major economies such as Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, along with some recent members, presents vast opportunities for Malaysia to collaborate on green technologies, digital transformation and infrastructure development. — Xinhua

Member’s Voluntary Winding-up & Appointment of a Liquidator for YUYU Beauty Co., Ltd. (Registration No. 125573983) pursuant Articles 147(a)(ii) and 152(a) of Insolvency Law 2020

Notice to Creditors

With respect to YUYU Beauty Co., Ltd. (Registration No. 125573983) (the “Company”) which is located at No.700 (A), City Shine Condo, Penthouse, Corner of Merchant Road & 27 Street, Pabedan Township, Yangon, Myanmar, it is hereby noticed that:

- According to Article 147(a)(ii) of Insolvency Law, the Company unanimously passed the following resolutions:
 - to wind up the Company voluntarily effective on 27 January 2025; and
 - to appoint the following liquidator (the “Liquidator”) pursuant to Article 152(a) of Insolvency Law, effective on 27 January 2025:

Name: Daw Nilar Thwin
 Name of the Company/Title: Global United Myanmar Ltd./Managing Director
 MAIP member serial: 00120
 Phone number: 095049113
 Address: #14-11, Level 14, Sule Square, 221 Sule Pagoda Road, Kyauktada Township, Yangon, Myanmar 11182

- Any creditors who have any debts or claims against the Company are required to submit their names, addresses, and details of their claims, together with any documentary evidence in their possession, to the Liquidator on or before 27 February 2025.

Daw Nilar Thwin
 Liquidator
 Global United Myanmar Ltd./Managing Director
 #14-11, Level 14, Sule Square, 221 Sule Pagoda Road
 Kyauktada Township, Yangon, Myanmar 11182
 Phone number: 095049113

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

AS the wharves, warehouses and chellan offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 12th FEBRUARY 2025 (Union Day), Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V BANGKOK VOY.NO. (199N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BANGKOK VOY.NO. (199N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **28-1-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIP where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

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ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Lukashenko wins Belarus presidential election

INCUMBENT President Alexander Lukashenko has won the presidential election of Belarus, according to the preliminary results released early Monday by the country's Central Election Commission.

The preliminary data from the Central Election Commission showed that Lukashenko received 86.82 per cent of the vote. Sergei Syrankov, Oleg Gaidukevich, Anna Kanopatskaya and Alexander Khizhnyak secured 3.21 per cent, 2.02 per cent, 1.86 per cent and 1.74 per cent of the vote, respectively.

Under Belarusian law, a presidential candidate who secures more than 50 per cent of the vote is declared the winner. Belarussian president is



Belarusian President and presidential candidate Alexander Lukashenko casts his ballot during Belarus' presidential election at a polling station in the capital Minsk on 26 January 2025. **PHOTO: AFP**

electorally elected by direct ballot and the term of office is five years. The Belarus election commission will announce the final results of the voting no later than 5 February. — Xinhua

Iranian drones equipped with homegrown AI-powered missiles: commander

A top Iranian military commander said Sunday the country's drones have been equipped with homegrown missiles that employ artificial intelligence (AI) technology, the official news agency IRNA reported.

Commander of the Navy of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Alireza Tangsiri made the remarks in an address to reporters in

the southern Iranian province of Bushehr while he was elaborating on a two-day large-scale naval drill held by his forces in Iran's southern waters.

He said the IRGC Navy equipped two homegrown combat drones Mohajer-6 and Ababil-5 with the domestically developed "Qaem and Almas" missiles incorporating AI technology. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Landslide in Indonesia's West Sulawesi claims 4 lives, injuring 4 others

AT least four people died, and four others were severely injured in a landslide in Mamuju regency, Indonesia's West Sulawesi province, according to the country's disaster authority on Monday.

Head of the Mamuju regional disaster mitigation agency, Taslim Sukirno, said the landslide occurred in Mamunyu village at around 11:15 pm local time on Sunday after heavy rain hit the region for over eight hours.

According to the authority's preliminary report, one of the killed was a one-month-old infant.

The landslide also buried two houses.

"All the victims have been evacuated using stretchers and ambulances, and the injured are receiving intensive care at the Mamuju district hospital," he was quoted by local media as saying.

The official said the government had employed personnel for evacuation, but the process was difficult because the landslide debris and fallen trees blocked the access. — Xinhua

1 dead in scaffolding collapse in Japan's Hiroshima

A scaffolding collapse during bridge construction on the Chugoku Expressway in Japan's Hiroshima Prefecture caused five workers to fall, leaving one man dead and another in critical condition, local media reported Monday.

The incident occurred at around 3:30 pm local time at a bridge construction site on the expressway's outbound lane, where scaffolding was being erected for foundation work, national broadcaster NHK reported.

Three others sustained injuries and were hospitalized.

Police and fire authorities are investigating the cause of the accident and the detailed circumstances surrounding the collapse. — Xinhua

Bird feathers and bloodstains found in Jeju jet engines: report



Firefighters and recovery teams work at the scene where a Jeju Air Boeing 737-800 series aircraft crashed and burst into flames at Muan International Airport in Muan, some 288 kilometres southwest of Seoul on 30 December 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

BIRD feathers and bloodstains were found in both engines of the Jeju Air plane that crashed in December, according to a preliminary investigation released Monday.

The Boeing 737-800 was flying from Thailand to Muan in South Korea on 29 December when it crash landed and exploded into a fireball after slamming into a concrete barrier. It was the worst aviation disaster on South Korean soil, killing 179 of the 181 passengers and crew.

South Korean and American investigators are still probing the cause of the disaster, with a bird strike, faulty landing gear and the runway barrier among the possible issues. Both engines recovered from the crash site were inspected, and bird bloodstains and feathers were "found on each", the report said.

"The pilots identified a group of birds while approaching runway 01, and a security camera filmed HL8088 coming close to a group of birds during a go-around," the report added, referring to the Jeju jet's registration number.

It did not specify whether the engines had stopped working in the moments leading up to the crash.

DNA analysis identified the feathers and blood as coming from Baikal teals, migratory ducks which fly to Korea in winter from their breeding grounds in Siberia.

After the air traffic control tower cleared the jet to land, it advised the pilots to exercise caution against potential bird strikes at 8:58 am, the report said. Just a minute later, both the voice and data recording systems stopped functioning. — AFP

SPORTS

THE ONE Friday Fights 95 event will take place in Bangkok, Thailand, on 31 January, featuring the participation of three Myanmar fighters.

The fighters from Myanmar are Moe Htet Aung, Aimi, and Super Ye Chan who will compete in the event. Moe Htet Aung will face Thai fighter Samingdam, Super Ye Chan will face Thai fighter Danch, and Aimi will compete against Japanese fighter Mugasito.



Myanmar fighter Moe Htet Aung. PHOTO: ONE CHAMPIONSHIP

Three Myanmar fighters set for ONE Friday Fights 95

Moe Htet Aung started collaborating with ONE in 2024 and has already earned victories over Japanese fighters Tomoya at the ONE Friday Fights 57 event on 29 March 2024 and Kazuki at the

ONE Friday Fights 67 event on 14 June. Super Ye Chan has fought only once in ONE, defeating Thai fighter Sutin by decision.

Aimi also began working with ONE in 2024 and won against

Japanese fighter Takazono by a second-round knockout at the ONE Friday Fights 76 event on 23 August. However, on 25 October, at the ONE Friday Fights 84 event, Aimi lost to Gambian fighter Omar by decision. A total of 12 bouts will be featured in the ONE Friday Fights 95 event. — Ko Nyi Lay/TTA

Barca in seventh heaven in La Liga as Real Madrid go four clear

REAL Madrid extended their lead at the top of La Liga to four points over Atletico Madrid with a comfortable 3-0 win away to Valladolid while Atletico were held to a 1-1 draw at home to Villarreal.

Kylian Mbappe scored his first hat-trick for Madrid on Saturday as they cruised past their bottom of the table rivals.

Jude Bellingham exchanged passes with Mbappe ahead of the opening goal after half an hour and in the 55th minute, it was 2-0 as Mbappe added his second after good word from Rodrygo.

The Frenchman's third of the game came in the closing minutes after Madrid were awarded

their 10th penalty of the season.

Atletico coach Diego Simeone made several changes to his side to face Villarreal, with the visitors taking the lead after Reinildo was penalized from bringing down Villarreal striker, Gerard Moreno, who scored from the penalty spot.

Samuel Lino saved a point for Atletico from close-range, but Atletico were unable to break down a packed Villarreal defense in the last half-hour.

FC Barcelona moved to three points of Atletico after they returned to winning ways at home with a 7-1 thrashing of struggling Valencia Sunday. — Xinhua

Boonlert Charoenwong departs as head coach of Myanmar Futsal Team

THE Thai national, Boonlert Charoenwong, who served as the head coach of the Myanmar national futsal team of the Myanmar Football Federation, has parted ways with the Myanmar Football Federation.

Boonlert Charoenwong officially announced his departure from the Myanmar Football Federation in recent days. During his nearly four-year tenure, he held the position of head coach for the Myanmar National Men's Futsal Team, Myanmar National Women's Futsal Team, and the U-19 Futsal Team. Although the

Myanmar futsal teams did not achieve major successes under his leadership, the Myanmar Men's Futsal Team secured victory in the 2024 AFC Futsal Championship qualifiers.

He served as the head coach for the Myanmar Women's Futsal Team in the 2025 AFC Women's Futsal Championship qualifiers held in Yangon from 15 to 19 January 2025 but was unable to achieve victory.

The Myanmar Football Federation will now need to appoint a new head coach for the futsal team. — Shine Htet Zaw/TTA



This photo shows former head coach of the Myanmar futsal team, Thai national Boonlert Charoenwong. PHOTO: MFF



Kenshiro Teraji (L) and Seigo Yuri Akui attend a press conference at a hotel in Tokyo on 27 January 2025. PHOTO: KYODO

Japan's Teraji, Akui to fight flyweight world title unifier

JAPANESE boxers Kenshiro Teraji and Seigo Yuri Akui will face off in a flyweight world title unification bout at Tokyo's Ryogoku Kokugikan arena on 13 March, organizers announced Monday.

The 33-year-old Teraji is the current WBC flyweight champion, while the 29-year-old Akui holds the WBA belt in the same class.

Teraji has a record of 24 wins, 15 by knockout, and one

loss. He became a two-weight world champion after stepping up from light flyweight and defeating Nicaragua's Cristofer Rosales in October. Akui (21-2-1, 11 KOs) made his second successful title defense against Thailand's Thananchai Charunphak while fighting on the same card at Tokyo's Ariake Arena.

Ryogoku Kokugikan will also host two other world title matches on 13 March. — Kyodo



Palestinians return to north Gaza after breakthrough on hostages



Displaced Gazans ride in the back of a horse-drawn cart as they cross the Netzarim corridor from the southern Gaza Strip into the northern part on 27 January 2025. **PHOTO: AFP**

MASSES of displaced Palestinians began streaming towards the north of the war-battered Gaza Strip on Monday after Israel and Hamas said they had reached a deal for the release of another six hostages. The breakthrough preserves

a fragile ceasefire and paves the way for more hostage-prisoner swaps under an agreement aimed at ending the more than 15-month conflict, which has devastated the Gaza Strip and displaced nearly all its residents.

Israel had been preventing Palestinians from returning to their homes in northern Gaza, accusing Hamas of violating the terms of the truce, but Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said late Sunday they would be allowed to pass after the new deal was reached.

Crowds began making their way north along a coastal road on foot Monday morning, carrying what belongings they could, AFPTV images showed.

"It's a great feeling when you go back home, back to your family, relatives and loved ones, and inspect your house — if it is still a house," displaced Gazan Ibrahim Abu Hassera told AFP.

Hamas called the return "a victory" for Palestinians that

"signals the failure and defeat of the plans for occupation and displacement".

Its ally Islamic Jihad, meanwhile, called it a "response to all those who dream of displacing our people".

The comments came after US President Donald Trump floated an idea to "clean out" Gaza and resettle Palestinians in Jordan and Egypt, drawing condemnation from regional leaders.

President Mahmud Abbas, whose Palestinian Authority is based in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, issued a "strong rejection and condemnation of any projects" aimed at displacing Palestinians from Gaza, his office said.

Bassem Naim, a member of Hamas's political bureau, told AFP that Palestinians would "foil such projects", as they have done to similar plans "for displacement and alternative homelands over the decades". — AFP

EU agrees 'roadmap' for easing Syria sanctions

EU foreign ministers on Monday agreed to begin easing sanctions on Syria after the ouster of Bashar al-Assad, as the West looks to build bridges with the war-ravaged country's new leadership.

"This could give a boost to the Syrian economy and help the country get back on its feet," foreign affairs chief Kaja Kallas said after a meeting in Brussels.

"While we aim to move fast, we also are ready to reverse the course if the situation worsens, and in parallel, we will scale up humanitarian aid and recovery efforts."

The 27-nation EU imposed wide-ranging sanctions on the Assad government and Syria's economy during its civil war.

Kallas said ministers had signed up to a "roadmap" for lifting the sanctions starting with key sectors such as energy where relief is needed most urgently.

France's Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said the EU could begin by suspending sanctions on the energy, transport and banking sectors.

Europe is keen to help the recon-



Commissioner for Foreign Affairs and Security policy Kaja Kallas attends a Foreign Affairs Council at the European Council headquarters in Brussels on 27 January 2025. **PHOTO: AFP**

struction of the Syria and build better ties with its new rulers after the end of the Assad family's five-decade rule.

But some EU countries worry about moving too fast to embrace the new Islamist-led rulers in Damascus.

The EU will only suspend the sanc-

tions and not lift them definitively to maintain leverage over the Syrian leadership.

Syria's new de facto leader Ahmed al-Sharaa, and the Islamist group he led, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, remain under EU sanctions. — AFP

Govt, Keidanren aim to double investment to 200 tln yen by FY 2040

THE government and Japan's biggest business lobby Keidanren said Monday they plan to double the country's capital expenditures to 200 trillion yen (\$1.3 trillion) in fiscal 2040 from its level in fiscal 2023, as they seek to expand investment in growth areas such as decarbonization and digitalization.

"The government and the private sector need to work hand in hand" to make the newly set goal a reality, Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said in a meeting held at the prime minister's office.

Ishiba emphasized that the government is making efforts to attract investments worth over 50 trillion yen in areas such as semiconductors and to increase productivity. Capital spending in the country stood at about 102 trillion yen in fiscal 2023. — Kyodo