

# The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

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By Rajiv Bhatia

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# Myanmar bags US\$447M from maize exports in FY 2024-2025

Thailand is the top importer of Myanmar's maize. It is currently sent to China, India, the Philippines and Bangladesh.

**M**YANMAR exported over 1.88 million tonnes of maize to foreign markets from April to November during the current financial year 2024-2025, bagging US\$447 million, according to Myanmar Corn Merchants Association.

Thailand is the top importer of Myanmar's maize. It is currently sent to China, India, the Philippines and Bangladesh.

"Myanmar's maize is in high demand among both foreign buyers and domestic feed processing factories. Starting from 1 February, maize will be sent to Thailand with the exemption of the Customs Tariff.

Thailand gives the green light for maize imports under zero tariff (with Form-D), between 1 February and 31 August. However, Thailand imposes a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on maize imports to protect the rights of their growers if the maize is imported during the maize season of Thailand. Therefore, traders are stocking them to export under duty exemption.

Additionally, China has been purchasing Myanmar's maize through cross-border trade under the alternative development programme.

SEE PAGE 7



This image shows a stockpile of maize in a warehouse, ready for export.

# VietStock Expo 2025 welcomes Myanmar business leaders

**V**IETSTOCK Expo Forum 2025 which is scheduled to be held on 8-10 October 2025 at Saigon Exhibition & Convention Centre welcomes the participation of Myanmar business people engaged in agriculture, livestock, aquaculture, feed and manufacturing industry, according to Myanmar Trade Promotion

Organization. VietStock Expo is organized by Informa markets, connecting buyers and sellers through exhibitions and presenting a platform to link with international brands directly or B to B virtual matching. Informa Markets has an extensive network across 13 markets of Bangkok, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, Jakarta, Kuala Lum-

pur, Manila, Singapore, Phnom Penh and other big cities with branches and joint ventures. This expo will feature a wide variety of information, technologies, manufacturing solutions and business enhancement ideas related to the feed and livestock industry, with participants from over 40 countries with over 300 booths.

The exhibition booth costs US\$400-US\$465 per square metre for different packages (Space Only, Walk on package and lead grab). The Myanmar Embassy to Vietnam will help Myanmar business leaders showcase livestock and fish farming products and services at the VietStock Expo. Myanmar businesspeople

will have a great opportunity to join hands with Vietnam partners, expand businesses and explore business opportunities through trade companies and consultants. Those interested can register through the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization at 067 408622 and email event.td.myantrade@gmail.com. — NN/KK



# NATIONAL

## Literature: A Source of Knowledge to Enrich Lives and Guide Society

THE knowledge gained from individuals' reading of literature will be able to provide significant support to improve their lives. They can provide guidance and clear direction to their families and society in their workplaces.

*(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with tutors, teachers and trainees at Mandalay Education Degree College on 26 August 2024.)*



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

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

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

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



# Myanmar tourism to Thailand expected to surge during Thingyan

FOREIGN tour packages are being sold in advance for the upcoming Thingyan, and there are likely to be many outbound trips to Thailand, an official from the Myanmar Tourism Federation said.

Thailand, which is easy for Myanmar citizens to travel to, is expected to see many family vacationers with children and friends during Thingyan, due to the long summer school holidays, he said.

“Some travel companies have already bought seats for overseas tours during Thingyan. That’s why we see they start selling packages. Many mid-

dle-aged people and families are going on vacation. Their destinations include Thailand and other countries. I think there will be a lot of visits to Thailand this Thingyan. It’s also a time when schools are closed, so many families are going abroad for leisure. Thailand is an easy and top travel destination for many Myanmar people,” he said.

Some travel companies are also planning outbound trips including a tour to Bodh Gaya-Bhutan-Mount Everest-Kashmir as well as domestic trips such as visits around Yangon, pilgrimages and beach trips. — MT/ZN





# 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)*

## Union Information Minister visits Pindaya TV production sites

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, accompanied by Shan State Chief Minister U Aung Aung, inspected the construction sites of infrastructure and studios for the production of television programme broadcasting conducted by Forever Yay Wati Company Limited in Pindaya Township of Danu Self-Administered Zone yesterday morning.

Project Director U Thein Tun Aung of the company first briefed the construction processes.

The Union minister said the ministry provides the required assistance to develop the film industry, and the project is established to promote the film standards and regional economy through the films. The government allocated the land plots for the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization for the emergence of film city. It is difficult to promote the film industry.

Therefore, it needs to follow the rules and regulations as the investment amount is very large.

He then mentioned the benefits after completion of the project like creating job opportunities in Pindaya called for collaborative actions, and stressed the need to operate proper agricultural farming in possible project land areas for environmental conservation and greening.

The Union minister and chief minister observed the project procedures, soil conservation, greening processes, studios, recreational centres and filming complex by car. Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn donated 20 MRTV DTH dishes and 50 DVB T2 set-top boxes for the Danu Self-Administered Zone.

Similarly, the Union minister and the Shan State chief minister visited Shwephonep-wint Pagoda in Taunggyi and



Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn, Shan State Chief Minister U Aung Aung and officials view the construction sites of infrastructure and studios in Pindaya.

inspected the processes of full-body gold foil and new gold umbrella donation. They also donated cash.

They then proceeded to Culamuni Loka Chantha Pagoda

and made cash donations.

According to the guidance State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing made on his visit to Culamuni

Pagoda on 28 May 2023, the renovation, gold foil donation, inner and outer painting processes, all-round renovation and cleaning activities were conducted in 2024. — MNA/KTZH

## Tatmadaw performs second-day liver transplant operation

TATMADAW performed the second day of its eighth liver transplant operation at the Special Treatment Centre of No 1 Tatmadaw 1,000-bed Hospital in Mingaladon Township yesterday.

The operation was carried out on U Nyi Nyi, patient, and U Tun Tun Lin, donor.

The liver extraction from the donor started at 9:30 am and the extracted liver was transplanted at 5 pm. The operation took about 11 hours. Both the patient and the donor are reportedly in good health after the operation. They are now in the



The second-day operation is underway.

ICU under the care of specialists, medical officials and nurses. The senior Tatmadaw of-

officials observed the operation and encouraged the patients. — MAN/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>



# NATIONAL

## UEC Members return from Belarus election observation

UNION Election Commission Members U Aung Saw Win and U Myint Thein visited the presidential election in the Republic of Belarus on 26 January as international observers. They observed the advance voting process from 21 to 25 January and met with Mr Igor Karpenko, Chairman of the Central Election Commission of Belarus, on 24 January.

Additionally, the delegation attended the opening ceremony of the Central Information and Observation Centre of Bela-

rus and participated in press conferences held by the Central Election Commission. On election day, they visited polling stations to observe the voting process.

A total of 486 international election observers from 52 countries monitored the election. Reports indicate that the current president, Aleksandr Lukashenko, won with 86.82 per cent of the votes. The Myanmar delegation returned to Yangon via Bangkok, Thailand, yesterday evening. — MNA/MKKS



UEC Members observe progress of Belarusian election in this photo.

## Surus cranes flock to Wakema after summer paddy harvest



This image displays a fleet of Surus cranes found in Wakema.



SURUS cranes gather in groups in the fields after summer paddy harvest, and according to records, Wakema Township has the highest number of them, said the Kyonekapyin-Tatseik Wildlife Conservation Group.

Surus cranes can be found in groups in some townships in the Ayeyawady delta, mostly in the fields after the summer paddy harvest.

During the rainy season,

they separate from the group and live in pairs and a harmonious coexistence between farmers and birds can be observed in the fields. They usually build their nests in paddy dykes, silted lands and grasslands to lay eggs in the mid-rainy season.

After the paddy harvest, the chicks began to grow with many challenges and the KTCG recorded 72 bird species in the second census on 16 January,

including waterfowls and land birds.

Since 2016, locals have been working together to conserve birds and in 2018, the KTCG was formed to continuously work on bird conservation, said the chairman of the group.

Foreign tourists as well as locals have been visiting the area to study bird species since 2018. — MT/ZN

## 'Confluence' art exhibition by 7 artists ongoing in Yangon

A group art exhibition under the theme Confluence has been ongoing at Artistic Space Art Gallery located at Botahtaung Township in Yangon Region, from 25 January until 29 January.

Artworks in different styles created by 7 well-known artists have been displayed at the exhibition.

"The exhibition called Con-

fluence by 7 well-known artists and veterans in the art industry is still in progress at Artistic Space Art Gallery, from 10 am to 5 pm. We warmly invite the public to join us," said the gallery's in-charge.

The seven artists are- Aung Thwin Oo, Aung Thura, Chit Hnin Eain, Sai Pyae Sone Aye, Sitt Moe Aung and Dake. — ASH/ZS



Visitors are seen at the group art exhibition 'Confluence'.

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



# NATIONAL

## Tatmadaw vessels deliver healthcare to Kyone Mange villagers



Images showcase Tatmadaw hospital vessels delivering healthcare services in Kyone Mange.

TATMADAW'S mobile medical team, comprising specialists, doctors and nurses provided healthcare services to residents along the Ayeyawady River. The team operating aboard Tatmadaw hospital vessel Shwepuzun and river vessel Saku conducted medical services yesterday at the Basic Education Middle School in Kyone Mange Village, Kyaiklat

Township. A total of 516 locals from Kyone Mange and nearby villages received medical care.

The team provided treatment for 174 general patients, 19 surgical cases, 15 obstetric and gynaecological cases, 53 paediatric cases, 64 orthopaedic cases, 34 (ear, nose and throat) ENT cases, 79 eye-related cases and 78 dental cases. Six general surgical patients and six eye patients underwent operations, while 17 individuals received X-ray examinations, 32 underwent ultrasound tests, 45 had ECG screenings and 47 received laboratory tests. Three patients requiring further treatment were referred to nearby Tatmadaw and regional hospitals.

— MNA/KZL

## Sales for dried 'Nganitu' surge

AMONG fishery products, dried 'Nganitu' (Red-bellied Pacu) has been selling well, according to fishery traders in Dawei Township.

It is time that the dried 'Nganitu' supply has been large, and it is transported to Yangon, Kawthoung, Pyay and Meiktila as well as Thailand.

"Dried 'Nganitu' sale is the best and it is among fishery items that have a large number of supplies now. The 'Nganitu' stock was short in previous

years. It has nationwide orders, especially from Yangon, Kawthoung, Pyay and Meiktila, as well as from Thailand. Price is higher than before," said Ma Phyo Phyo from the Shwe Phyo Dawei-produced fishery products trading in Dawei Township.

Local fishery products were exported to overseas markets through the Kawthoung-Ranong border in June 2024, according to local traders from Myeik Township. In addition to fishery products,



Dried 'Nganitu' (Red-bellied Pacu) are organized for sale in the market.

areca nut was also exported to Thailand and consumer products and foods were also imported. — Thit Taw/ZS

## Counter-argument to false information

### False reports spread on security operations in Yebyu Township



This screenshot validates misinformation.

MALICIOUS news media spread false reports claiming that security forces have raided villages at the edge of Launglon and Yebyu townships, Taninthayi Region, since January, causing residents to flee.

According to a local security official, security forces have been continuously conducting necessary security measures in the area to prevent insurgents from infiltrating and carrying out terrorist activities.

Subversive news media circulate such baseless reports, intending to mislead public perception of security forces, incite fear among the people and disrupt regional stability. — MNA/KZL

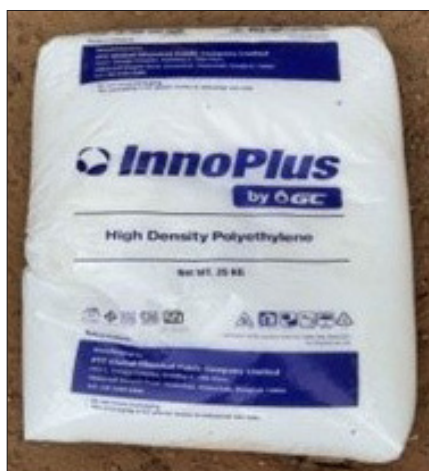
## Two-day Illegal trade crackdown seizes goods worth K411M

UNDER the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, efforts are being made to combat the illicit trade effectively under the law.

On 27 January, the combined teams impounded three unregistered vehicles (worth K72 million) in Magway, Seikphyu and Pakokku Townships and a Dongfeng truck (worth approximately K15 million) carrying illegal teak weighing 3.589 tonnes (valued at K3.32 million) in Minbu Township. The action was taken under the Export-Import Law and the Forest Law.

Similarly, on 28 January, the combined on-duty teams seized industrial materials worth K24.93 million) without official documents from a container at the Myanmar Industrial Port and a Yutong bus (estimated value of K60 million) carrying foodstuffs (valued at K6.352 million) without official documents at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint. The action was conducted following Customs procedures.

Additionally, the joined teams su-



Seized illegal items.

persived by Kayin State and Sagaing Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Forces captured a Pyay truck (estimated value of K25 million) carrying industrial materials and consumer goods (valued at K20 million) without official documents at the Yethaya temporary vehicle checkpoint compound and an unregistered Daihatsu Hijet (worth approximately K6 million) at the Kan-

taluu combined checkpoint in Sagaing Township. The action was taken under the Export-Import Law and Customs procedures.

The combined inspection teams seized a Mitsubishi Fuso truck (estimated value of K30 million) carrying industrial materials (valued at K75 million) without official documents near the detour around Kyaukse and 154.155 tonnes of illegal timbers (valued at about K43 million) in Yamethin and Kyaukse Townships. The action was conducted under the Forest Law and Customs procedures.

About 0.567 tonne of illegal teak (worth K498,900) was seized from a Hino Dutro truck (estimated value of K30 million) on Yangon-Pyay Road in Taikkyi Township and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported 16 arrests on 27 and 28 January, confiscating illegal goods worth approximately K411.14 million. — MNA/MKKS



# NATIONAL



This photo showcases the Htamane-making competition being held at the Shwedagon Pagoda in the previous year.

## Shwedagon to host 17<sup>th</sup> annual Htamane Festival & Contest

ACCORDING to U Bo Thinn, a member of the Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustees, the 17<sup>th</sup> traditional Myanmar Htamane festival and Htamane-making competition will be held on a grand scale on 11 February at the Shwedagon Pagoda.

The ceremony of offering Htamane to Buddha images and monks and providing Htamane to pilgrims will be included in the Htamane festival. Teams representing townships

in Yangon Region and religious associations of the Shwedagon Pagoda will also join the 2025 Shwedagon Pagoda Htamane Festival.

“We are planning to hold the Htamane festival and the Htamane-making contest – a traditional cultural festival – at the Shwedagon Pagoda. For the Htamane Festival, individuals can donate K100,000 for a pan of Htamane. Htamane will be donated to monasteries in the

Shwedagon Pagoda precinct and devotees,” said U Bo Thinn.

The Htamane-making competition will take place at 3 pm on 11 February at the Htanpingon compound of the Shwedagon Pagoda. Htamane will be offered to the Shwedagon Pagoda at 5:30 am and rice to 64 monks at 6:30 am on 12 February (the full moon day of Tabodwe) at the Shwedagon Pagoda platform. — ASH/MKKS

## MRCS-Denmark Red Cross hosts second child-friendly spaces facilitator training

MYANMAR Red Cross Society (MRCS) and Denmark Red Cross jointly organized Child-Friendly Spaces for Facilitators and Psychological First Aid for Children Training for the second time in Yangon on 27-31 January.

The five-day training helped 21 volunteers and staff of MRCS from Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and Bago regions understand the establishment of Child-friendly spaces in emergencies and presented knowledge and skills required to identify, prevent and respond to the psychological needs

of people during emergencies and how to provide psychological support and care to children.

MRCS President Professor Dr Myo Nyunt, Country Manager Mr Fabio Beltramini and MHPSS Adviser Ms Patricia of Denmark Red Cross gave the remarks respectively during the opening ceremony of the training.

The first training took place on 20-24 January in Yangon, with the participation of 24 staff and volunteers from Sagaing and Magway regions and southern Shan State. — ASH/KK



This image captures the opening ceremony of the Child-Friendly Spaces for Facilitators and Psychological First Aid for Children Training.

## ‘Kathee Katphelt Ywa’ drama series introductory ceremony held

THE launch and filming initiation ceremony for the drama series ‘Kathee Katphelt Ywa’ took place on the morning of 28 January at the sacred grounds of Botahtaung Pagoda in Botahtaung Township, Yangon Region.

The script for the series was co-written by Aung Chit and Yeyint Thitsa, while the screenplay was developed by Phyo Kyaw (Thanlyin) and Aung Chit. Director Yeyint Thitsa will oversee the production under MTN Entertainment Video Production.

“This drama is a rural comedy, just as its title suggests. Ko Naing Gyi (Kyaw Ye Aung) has

always been my mentor, and I feel fortunate to reunite with him on this artistic journey. I am also grateful to all the artistes who have collaborated with us. Since this series reflects rural traditions with humour, I believe the audience will enjoy it,” said lead actor Min Thu Naing.

The series will feature a cast including Kyaw Ye Aung, Min Thu Naing, Myat Kaythi Aung, Shwe Poe Eain, Nay Sun, Moe Dee, Ngapyaw Kyaw, Min Thu, Min Nyi, Khin Moet Moet Aye, Aung Phyo Lin, Zaw Wine, singer Min Htet, and guest actors Hmon Nant Tha Kyaw Ye Aung, Nann and Nanda Win. — ASH/KZL

## Goethe-Institut to present Rimini Protokoll in Myanmar event



This photo showcases a poster of Rimini Protokoll in Myanmar public presentation.

THE Goethe-Institut Myanmar and the renowned German-based theatre company Rimini Protokoll will jointly present a contempo-

rary theatre workshop titled ‘Rimini Protokoll in Myanmar’ at the Goethe-Institut Myanmar (Exhibition Hall) in Bahan Township, Yangon Region, at 5 pm on 5 February.

The workshop will be led by Helgard Haug, co-founder of Rimini Protokoll, writer, and director. It will feature contemporary theatre professionals and arts organizations from Myanmar, including Thukhuma Khayeethe, FXB Myanmar, Thyitar, Maung Day and Associate Theatrical Artistes, and other emerging theatrical artistes.

Rimini Protokoll is a German theatre company and art organization that creates plays, artistic collaborations, performance art, and audio stories.

The group is known for transforming social issues into compelling storytelling, often using technology to enhance the performance. The upcoming Rimini Protokoll in Myanmar event is free to attend and open to all, with a networking session following the performance. — ASH/TH



# Indonesia buys over 590,000 tonnes of Myanmar rice, tops buyers list

INDONESIA became the top importer of Myanmar's rice with over 593,000 tonnes in the past nine months of the current financial year 2024-2025 beginning 1 April, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

China is the second largest importer of Myanmar rice with over 410,000 tonnes, followed by 274,400 tonnes to Belgium, over 131,000 tonnes to the Philippines, over 96,600 to Senegal, 46,900 to Cote D'Ivoire, over 44,200 to Mozambique, over 30,000 to Spain, over 27,100 to Cameroon, 17,500 to the Netherlands, over 17,400 to Poland, over 13,900 to Ivory Coast and over 13,300 to Italy.

Myanmar's rice and broken rice exports hit over two million tonnes in the past nine months (from April to December) of the current financial year 2024-2025, with an estimated value of \$948 million, statistics of the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) showed.

The federation aims to achieve 2.5 million tonnes of rice

exports in the 2024-2025 financial year (April-March).

The Ministry of Commerce has been cooperating with departments and institutions concerned to achieve monthly export targets and beyond depending on the supply volume of rice, broken rice, pulses, corn, rubber and fisheries from the respective companies.

Ministry of Commerce is working together with the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Myanmar Rice Federation, Myanmar Rice Federation, Myanmar Pulses, Beans, Maize and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association, Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association, Myanmar Industries Association, Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association, Myanmar Fisheries Products Processors and Exporters Association to meet monthly export targets and facilitate exports.

The federation is project-



Workers diligently stack rice bags in the warehouse.

ed to achieve 2.5 million tonnes of rice export in the FY 2023-2024, generating earnings of one billion dollars. However, rice exports fell short of the target with 1.6 million tonnes worth \$845 million.

The Central Bank of Myanmar's monetary policy to control export earnings impeded rice exports, hurting exporters financially. The El Nino weather condition also hampered rice export, the president of the Myanmar

Rice Federation affirmed.

Myanmar exported 2,261,203 tonnes of rice and broken rice to foreign trade partners in the past 2022-2023 FY (April-March), with an estimated value of \$853.472 million. — NN/KK

## Taninthayi exports 143.499 tonnes of kelp

TANINTHAYI Region produced seaweed ash (kelp ash), and exported 143.499 tonnes until the December 2024-2025 financial year, according to the region's Fishery Association.

In 2007, the seaweed species *Cottonic*, *Spinosum*, and *Gracilaria* were imported from Indonesia and were cultivated in 16 acres of farming fields in Kywegu, Pasoot, Mawdoon, Donplaeaw and Saraw in Kyun-su Township, whereas 240 acres in Bokpyin Township in 2022-2023.

The cultivation of kelp is a manageable scale operation, and the process has become successful in some ASEAN countries. Myanmar possesses good opportunities to produce marine products along the long coastal region at low expenses. Currently, the Korean industry is established in Myeik.

There are many species of seaweeds and they grow in saltwater and changing tem-



A fishery worker harvesting seaweed. PHOTO: KANU

peratures, and are useful for the rich in nutrients. Moreover, some countries use them as valuable compounds in sushi, salad, soup, cosmetics and other industries. The seaweed can be grown with a floating line in the sea, and it can be harvested after 45 days. The seaweed farmers do not need to feed them, so it is a cost-

effective business.

"The kelp is described as sea bird's nests in Malaysia. There is a specific market and the framing expense is cheap, so, it is a manageable scale. It is just an effective way of using the sea. The kelp is purchased mostly for food and cosmetics, and there should be a proper market. Korea and Thailand

purchase the kelp from Myeik. Korean industry is in Myeik. The fish eat kelp and the people farm the kelp using the nets. The production cost is low and they can grow naturally. I think the kelp farming will be successful one day," said U Thet Soe, secretary of the association.

The kelp supports the ecosystem of the coastal region, and also the food, medicine and commodity production. Moreover, officials organize a workshop on protecting kelp.

The expansion of kelp farming is a preventive measure for global food security, biodiversity losses and climate changes, and a supportive compound for food and cosmetic production. Such expansion can create job opportunities for locals, and create a manageable scale operation. Taninthayi Region exported 143.499 tonnes of kelp worth US\$0.071 million in the 2024-2025 financial year. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/KTZH

## Myanmar bags US\$447M from maize exports in FY 2024-2025

### FROM PAGE 1

Legitimate maize trade between Myanmar and China commenced at the end of 2023. A total of 112 Myanmar companies have been permitted for maize exports.

Myanmar exports around two million tonnes of maize. The corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. Myanmar has three corn seasons – winter, summer and monsoon. Myanmar's annual corn output is estimated at 2.5-3 million tonnes. — NN/KK



# OPINION

## Carefully handle avian influenza for the life of human

**T**HE World Health Organization announced on 17 December 2024, that avian influenza has spread across 108 countries on five continents, infecting over 500 bird species and about 70 mammal species, with a death toll exceeding 300 million birds globally.

Avian influenza is caused by the H5N1 virus, which can lead to infections in all seasons. The virus infects humans and then

spreads to other parts of Asia, Europe, Africa, and America. It is a communicable disease that can be transmitted from animal to animal, as well as from animals to humans, through direct contact with the virus. In some cases, the infection can be fatal. However, human-to-human transmission is less common.

Over the past two decades, infectious diseases responsible for 75 per cent of global outbreaks have primarily been animal-to-human communicable diseases. As a result, these diseases have had a devastating impact on human society. Vulnerable groups, such as those who work with animals, infants, the elderly, individuals with pre-existing health conditions, workers in agriculture and food processing industries, as well as pregnant women, are particularly at risk of infection with the H5N1 virus. For this reason, special precautions are needed to protect against these infectious diseases.

Since 2003, a total of 463 people worldwide have died from H5N1 virus infections, according to the WHO. In total, 889 individuals from 23 countries have contracted the virus.

In early October, the H5N1 virus was responsible for killing animals at a zoo in Vietnam, as reported by the state media. Given its potential to pose a constant threat to society, everyone must take measures to control the spread of the H5N1 virus. Additionally, it is essential to prioritize the cleaning of poultry farms, not only for the health of the animals but also to mitigate the threat to human life. Breeders, in particular, must ensure that chickens and ducks that die from bird flu are properly buried.

Currently, avian influenza poses a threat to human food sources. The H5N1 virus affects the livelihoods of millions of people worldwide. As a result, relevant authorities have issued warnings to the public, especially business owners, about the importance of biosecurity in poultry farms. Poultry farmers and the general public are advised to wash their hands with soap after handling chickens, birds, ducks, and quails. Additionally, authorities emphasize the importance of personal hygiene and recommend consuming meat and eggs that are thoroughly cooked to reduce the risk of avian influenza.

**I**NDIA'S Act East Policy (AEP) enjoys high priority in the nation's foreign policy architecture. This is evident from the efforts and resources devoted to building relations with the region and addressing diverse issues of humanitarian assistance, maritime security, economic cooperation, and power balancing faced by the region's states. India's leaders and diplomats participate – actively and constructively – in all deliberations at bilateral, sub-regional, and regional levels. India has emerged as a key political player in the East.

### Backdrop, trends

But AEP is dynamic, not static. Its evolution needs to be appreciated in the historical context. Prior to the colonial period, priests, monks, traders, and ordinary people travelled eastwards from India's shores for centuries. This phenomenon is remembered even today through the annual celebrations of 'Bali Jatra' in Odisha. The deep imprint of Indian arts and culture is visible in Hindu and Buddhist temples in Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Indonesia. Post-Independence, interactions

continued and expanded, but they were more political in nature, resulting, for example, in a collaboration that created the Non-Aligned Movement. The end of the Cold War caused a new impetus for India to seek trade and investment opportunities as it embarked on major economic liberalization. That is how the Look East Policy was launched in the early 1990s.

Against this background, Prime Minister Narendra Modi took the podium at the 9th East Asia Summit in Myanmar on 13 November 2014 to announce, "Since entering office six months ago, my government has moved with a great sense of priority and agreed to turn our Look East Policy into Act East policy."

The shift from the old to the new policy was not just re-labeling. It was a substantive re-orientation representing the nation's enhanced determination to pursue its wide-ranging interests in a fast-changing environment. The policy's focus now was not only on Southeast Asia but the whole of East Asia, though without compromising ASEAN 'centrality'.

Moreover, defence cooperation, maritime security, and strategic

## India's Act East Policy: Trends, Impact and Prospects

calculations were added to the previous package of essentially political, economic, and cultural cooperation. A new policy goal was to ensure optimal attention to developing India's Northeast and expanding its linkages with ASEAN countries. Finally, greater emphasis on the implementation of India's commitments, at a time when China's assertiveness was on the rise, formed an essential feature of the new policy.

Later in the decade, India's Indo-Pacific vision built on the AEP, with the former's stress on the deep interlinkage between the Indian and Pacific oceans. This stood reinforced by the doctrine of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region). Consistently, India promotes a free, open, inclusive, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region built on a

rules-based international order; as External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar stressed while speaking at a university in Thailand in August 2022.

### Impact

The impact of AEP in the past decade (2014–2024) may be assessed from several angles.

First, India's relations with ASEAN have grown from strength to strength. The annual summit provides a valuable opportunity to review progress and push for more in diverse domains of political and security cooperation, trade and investment, and cultural, educational, and people-to-people ties. Bilateral trade has increased from \$74 billion in 2014–15 to \$121 billion in 2023–24. India's annual FDI flows to ASEAN rose from \$1.5 billion in 2019 to \$5.6 billion in 2023,

whereas ASEAN's cumulative investments in India were valued at \$117 billion during 2000–24.

Second, adopting an inclusive approach, India launched its Indo-Pacific Oceans initiative (IPOI) at the 14th East Asian Summit in November 2019. Focused on its seven pillars, such as maritime security, maritime ecology, and maritime resources, it is a natural fit for the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP). Collaborative projects involving the two initiatives have been under discussion and gradual implementation.

Third, transcending ASEAN and adopting a broader strategic approach, India has become a leader in forming and developing a four-power grouping named Quad. Its other members are the US, Japan, and Australia. Recently, this grouping celebrated its 20th

anniversary. In the joint statement of 30 December 2024, the four foreign ministers observed, "What began as an emergency response to a catastrophe has grown into a full-fledged partnership, delivering positive outcomes for the people of our region."

Fourth, the AEP impelled India to strengthen other regional institutions such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral, Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). The continued strengthening of these bodies and the growing role of India in their multifarious activities is a testimony to the policy's success. But more needs to be done in this direction.

### Prospects

The AEP's success is widely appreciated. PM Modi noted that the policy has revitalized ties with ASEAN, "infusing them with energy, direction, and momentum." However, the coming years will sharpen the challenges facing the region. The US-China rivalry could intensify with a new US president in the White House. China's aggressive and coercive measures in the South and East China Sea continue unabated. Despite years of negotiations, uncertainty prevails about when an enforceable Code of Conduct (COC) on the South China Sea may emerge.

While India could not join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), causing disappointment to its ASEAN friends, the current review of the India-ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA)

should be completed on time, thereby creating better conditions for a substantive enhancement of bilateral trade.

The deepening crisis in Myanmar has hampered progress in India's mega connectivity projects, such as the Trilateral Highway and the Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport. ASEAN and Myanmar's neighbours need to accelerate their endeavours to persuade various stakeholders in Myanmar to revert from violent conflict to peaceful negotiations.

While focused on the wider region's challenges, India's diplomacy must continue to concentrate on deepening bilateral relations with the key players. In this context, the visit to India by Indonesia's President Prabowo Subianto, as the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations, bodes well for the future. ■

*Rajiv Bhatia is a Distinguished Fellow at Gateway House. A former Indian ambassador with extensive diplomatic experience in Southeast Asia, he is the author of India-Myanmar Relations: Changing Contours.*

## Dead Sea an 'ecological disaster', but no one can agree how to fix it

*Industrial water use and climate change are causing the Dead Sea to shrink rapidly, leaving the beach inaccessible and dangerous due to sinkholes.*

**A**N ABANDONED life-guard cabin, a rusty pier and mangled umbrellas are all that is left of Ein Gedi, once Israel's flagship beach drawing international tourists to float in the world-famous waters of the Dead Sea.

Now, this lush desert oasis at the lowest point on Earth sits in ruins beside the shrinking sea, whose highly salty waters are rapidly retreating due to industrial use and climate change, which is accelerating their natural evaporation.

The beach has been closed to the public for five years, mainly due to the appearance of dangerous sinkholes, but also because

the dramatic recession of the sea's level has made it tricky to reach its therapeutic waters, known for extraordinary buoyancy that lets bathers float effortlessly.

The increasingly exposed shoreline and the sinkholes, caused by a flow of freshwater dissolving layers of salt beneath the Earth's surface, are not new.

In fact, the Dead Sea, nestled where Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian territory meet, has famously been drying for years.

Now, with war raging in the Middle East, efforts to tackle this ever-worsening ecological disaster appear to have dissolved too.

"Regional cooperation is the

key... to saving the Dead Sea," said Nadav Tal, a hydrologist and water officer for the Israel office of EcoPeace, a regional environmental nonprofit that has long advocated for finding a solution.

"Because we are living in a conflict area, there is an obstacle," he said, describing how the sea has been declining more than one metre (three feet) per year since the 1960s.

### 'Ecological disaster'

The evaporation of the salty waters in a time of rapid climate change and in a place where summer temperatures can reach upward of 50 degrees Celsius (122

degrees Fahrenheit) has been exacerbated by decades of water diversions from the sea's main source – the Jordan River – as well as various tributaries that begin in Lebanon and Syria.

The water is also being pumped out by local factories extracting natural minerals – potash, bromine, sodium chloride, magnesia, magnesium chloride and metal magnesium – to sell to markets across the world.

"The consequences of this water diversion is what we see around us," Tal told AFP, pointing to a nearby pier that was once submerged in water but now stands firmly on dry land.

"It is an ecological disaster," he emphasised, adding that "the declining of the Dead Sea is a disaster for Israeli tourism".

The only remaining Israeli resorts are on the man-made



Hikers stand on salt formations during an excursion along the northern Dead Sea shore near the Israeli settlement of Ovnat in the east of occupied West Bank on 29 December 2024. PHOTO: MENAHEM KAHANA / AFP

evaporation ponds south of the surviving Dead Sea itself.

Recently, 22-year-old Yael and her friend Noa were looking for a place to dip their toes into the soothing waters.

Relaxing beside one of the wa-

ter-filled sinkholes, Yael recalled how her parents once enjoyed going to a public beach near here.

"It was like their beach on the Dead Sea, and nowadays you pass by there and it looks like, I don't know... a shipwreck," she told AFP.

"It's hallucinatory, the destruction caused by this thing (the drying up of the sea), and it's just such a special landscape."

### Call for joint effort

Although some efforts have

been made to address the Dead Sea disaster, including past agreements signed by Israel and Jordan, the wars raging in Gaza and beyond have brought regional tensions to an all-time high, meaning tackling cross-border environmental issues is no longer a priority for governments in the region.

At Israel's environment ministry, Ohad Carny has been working on the issue for years.

He said the government was looking into several solutions, including building a desalination facility and forging a canal from either the north or the south to address the general water shortages in the region, including the Dead Sea.

"It doesn't make economic or environmental sense to desalinate water and bring it directly to the Dead Sea, because then it's a waste of drinking water and the region needs desperately more drinking water and more water for agriculture," he said.

Carny said that while his focus was on the Israeli side, "we are hoping for collaborations".

SOURCE: AFP



# SCI/TECH WORLD

## Former Google CEO calls DeepSeek “turning point” for AI race

*Schmidt stressed China's efficient AI competition, urging the US to boost open-source AI, invest in infrastructure, and share methodologies.*



DeepSeek is a Chinese AI company founded in 2023. Liang Wenfeng, DeepSeek AI CEO. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

FORMER Google CEO Eric Schmidt described DeepSeek's rise as “a turning point” in the global artificial intelligence (AI) race, according to an op-ed published Tuesday in The Washington Post.

Schmidt emphasized that China's ability to compete with Big Tech using fewer resources demonstrates the need for the United States to intensify its open-source AI efforts. He called for increased investment in AI infrastructure and initiatives like Stargate while urging leading research labs to share their training methodologies. DeepSeek is a Chinese AI company founded in 2023. In January 2025,

the company released its latest model, DeepSeek-R1, which has attracted significant attention for its advanced reasoning capabilities. The model is said to have achieved performance comparable to leading AI systems, such as OpenAI's ChatGPT, but at a fraction of the development cost.

The launch of DeepSeek-R1 has sent shockwaves through the technology industry, causing a notable decline in the stock prices of major tech companies, including Microsoft, Meta, and Nvidia, on Monday. Schmidt stressed the importance of open-source development as a countermeasure to DeepSeek's advancements. — Xinhua

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### OpenAI tailors version of ChatGPT for US government

OpenAI on Tuesday launched a bespoke version of its ChatGPT artificial intelligence tool for use by the United States government.

Big money government contracts are often tech firm targets, and OpenAI already boasts some 90,000 users of ChatGPT across federal, state and local governments in the United States.

The new ChatGPT Gov version of OpenAI's popular chatbot provides a tailored AI tool to assist the work of US government agencies and their employees. — AFP

## New Australian map to enhance conservation of species in ice-free Antarctica

AUSTRALIAN researchers have created a new detailed map of Antarctica's ice-free land that they say will help protect the continent's biodiversity.

The team, led by researchers from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) Sydney, unveiled the new high-resolution map on Wednesday as well as a hierarchical classification system of the ecosystems in ice-free Antarctica.

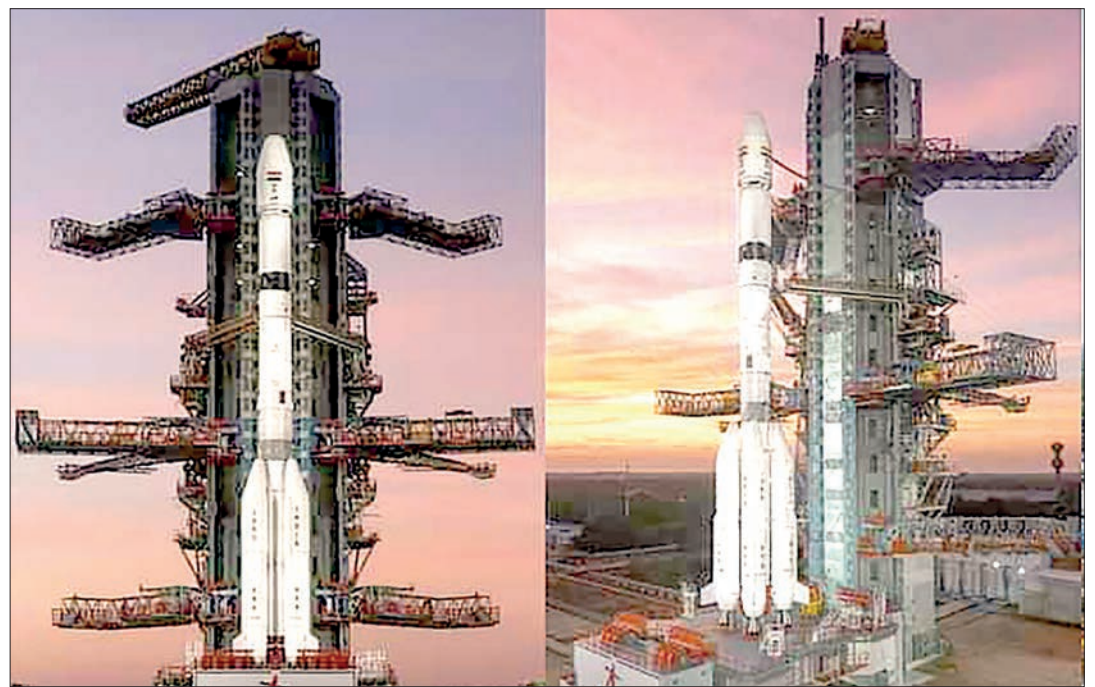
According to the study, permanently ice-free land covers

less than 0.5 per cent of Antarctica, but its ecosystems contain the vast majority of the continent's biodiversity and are facing a growing threat from human activity and climate change.

Anikó Tóth, lead author of the new research from UNSW, said that Antarctic ice-free lands are home to uniquely adapted flora, several species of arthropods, microbes and to breeding colonies of penguins, gulls, albatrosses and other seabirds. — Xinhua



The climate changes and ice melts, the patches of land will become milder and less isolated -- enabling colonization by species from lower latitudes. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**



ISRO Wednesday morning successfully launched its Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV)-F15 rocket carrying navigation satellite NVS-02. **PHOTO: ISRO**

## India's ISRO marks 100<sup>th</sup> launch sending navigation satellite NVS-02 into orbit

INDIAN Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Wednesday morning successfully launched its Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV)-F15 rocket carrying navigation satellite NVS-02, officials said. The GSLV-F15 carrying the NVS-02 lifted off from the launch pad of Sriharikota, off the Bay of Ben-

gal coast located in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh at 6:23 am (local time).

Wednesday's launch marks a remarkable milestone for ISRO commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> launch from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. NVS-02 will help improve Navigation with Indian Con-

stellation (NavIC) services, which are used for navigation, precision agriculture, emergency services, fleet management, and even mobile device location services. According to ISRO, the first big rocket to lift off from Sriharikota was the Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV) on 10 August 1979. — Xinhua



# Waymo begins testing robotaxis on Los Angeles freeways



Waymo starts testing its driverless robotaxis on Los Angeles freeways, with plans to expand the service to the public after initial employee-only access. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Waymo plans to expand its driverless robotaxi service to the public after an initial phase of employee-only access, following prior approval for operation.

THE Alphabet-owned autonomous vehicle company Waymo announced on Tuesday that it will begin testing its fleet of driverless robotaxis on the Los Angeles freeway system, including Interstates 10, 110, 405, and 90.

These robotaxis will operate without a human safety operator behind the wheel. According to a

report by TechCrunch, Waymo plans to follow the same phased approach it has used in other regions, starting with employee-only access to driverless vehicles on Los Angeles freeways before eventually opening the service to the public.

Waymo has maintained a presence in Los Angeles since

2019. In 2022, the company announced that Los Angeles would be one of its next commercial markets, following its operations in Phoenix and San Francisco.

In March 2024, Waymo received approval from the California Public Utilities Commission to operate a commercial robotaxi service in Los Angeles. — Xinhua

## First deportees land in Colombia from US

TWO Colombian Aerospace Force planes with migrants deported from the United States landed Tuesday in the country's capital Bogota, Colombian President Gustavo Petro confirmed.

The Colombian nationals were picked up in Houston, Texas, and San Diego, California, on the instructions of Petro. "They are Colombians, they are free and dignified and they are in their homeland where they are loved. The migrant is not a criminal, he is a human being who wants to work and progress,"

Petro posted on the social platform X, along with photos of the Colombian nationals walking out of planes.

Petro on Sunday denied entry of US military aircraft carrying the deportees, saying they were being treated like criminals. The move sparked a harsh response from his US counterpart Donald Trump, who threatened to cancel the visas of all Colombian government officials and slap 50 per cent tariffs on imports from Colombia. — Xinhua

## Primark launches new line for people with disabilities

GIANT budget fashion chain Primark launched on Tuesday a line of clothing created specifically for people with disabilities.

Designer Victoria Jenkins adapted the Ireland-based chain's most sold items, including jeans, T-shirts and trench coats, to suit the needs of shoppers with disabilities who want clothes that are "not only functional, but fashionable and affordable".

"Everyone deserves to feel confident and stylish in what they wear," added Jenkins, who herself has a disability.

"We don't want to live in a uniform of jogging bottoms and T-shirts, but often don't have a choice." The adaptive collection, which went on sale on Tuesday in 31 stores, includes a trench coat with pockets that close with magnetic strips, and zipped sleeves. A shorter version has been created for people in wheelchairs.

Jeans have been designed to close with magnetic buttons or snap fastenings, and trousers are fitted with hidden openings to allow easy access for stoma bags or catheter tubes. — AFP

## Child suicides in Japan hit record high of 527 in 2024

A record 527 children attending elementary, junior high and senior high schools in Japan died by suicide last year, up 14 from 2023 and topping the previous high of 514 in 2022, preliminary government data showed Wednesday.

Senior high school students accounted for 349 of the total, up 2 from the previous year, followed by junior high school students at 163, up 10, and elementary school students at 15, up 2, according to the health ministry data,

which is based on National Police Agency statistics.

By gender, 239 were male, down 20, while 288 were female, up 34. A Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare official called the situation "serious" and said further analysis is needed to understand the contributing factors better.

The overall number of people taking their own lives in Japan fell to 20,268, down 1,569 from 2023, the second-lowest figure since

records began in 1978.

Male suicides dropped to 13,763, down 1,099, marking the first decline in three years, while female suicides also decreased, down 470 to 6,505 for the second straight year of decline.

Health issues were the most common reasons behind suicides, accounting for 11,986 cases, followed by problems related to economic and life issues at 5,075 and family problems at 4,334. — Kyodo



Japan reports a record 527 child suicides in 2024, highlighting a 14 per cent increase. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ KYODO**



# ECONOMY WORLD

## Indian banks facing margin pressure amid high interest rate and declining loan growth

Indian banks are under margin pressure due to slower loan growth amid high interest rates. The fiscal year 2025 sees a slowdown to 12.3 per cent growth, down from 22.5 per cent previously.

INDIAN banks are facing margin pressure as loan growth slows amid high interest rates, according to a report by S&P Global Market Intelligence.

The report highlighted that the aggregate loan growth of six of India's largest banks—both private and state-owned—is expected to decline to 12.3 per cent in the fiscal year ending 31 March 2025. This is a sharp slowdown from the 22.5 per cent growth recorded in

the previous fiscal year.

It said, "Indian banks face margin pressures as loan growth slows amid high interest rates... Net interest margins at most lenders are expected to edge lower, the estimates show. Weaker NIMs are expected as deposit rates catch up and monetary easing looms".

However, despite the slowdown in loan growth, the report stated that the Indian banks con-

tinue to report higher net profits, although at a slower pace.

The report suggested that net interest margins (NIMs) of most banks are likely to decline in the coming months as deposit rates catch up and monetary easing comes into play. Many banks have adjusted their lending strategies, reducing consumer loans while focusing more on mobilizing retail deposits to strengthen their balance sheets. — ANI



State Bank of India (SBI) building, Kolkata. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ANI/FILE

## Japan, US finance chiefs agree to closely consult on forex



Japanese Finance Minister Kato and US Treasury Secretary Bessent agree to consult closely on foreign exchange moves. PHOTO: KYODO

JAPANESE Finance Minister Katsunobu Kato said Wednesday that he has agreed with new US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent that they will closely consult with each other on foreign exchange moves, but he declined to elaborate.

The agreement comes as investors gauge how President Donald Trump's pledges will affect currency markets, including whether his possible tariff hikes would push up the US dollar amid mounting inflationary pressure in the United States, further weighing on the Japanese yen.

Kato told reporters at his ministry after his online talks that he thanked Bessent for choosing him for his first virtual meeting with a counterpart since taking office earlier this week under Trump, who returned to the White House on 20 January.

"As for foreign exchange, we confirmed we will closely consult as ministers overseeing overall economic and financial matters," Kato said, adding they reaffirmed Japan and the United States will cooperate in tackling global and bilateral challenges. — Kyodo

### BRIEF: ECON

#### Sri Lanka to allocate highest govt spending in recent years

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake said his government will allocate 1.35 trillion rupees (about US\$4.6 billion) for government capital expenditure from the 2025 budget, marking the highest government capital spending in recent times, the President's Media Division (PMD) said in a statement on Wednesday.

Dissanayake made this statement at the Economic Summit 2025 held here on Tuesday night. He said that the government anticipates an economic growth rate exceeding four per cent in 2025, and that this would require providing the necessary facilities to attract and sustain foreign direct investments. He said the government is establishing the necessary mechanisms to ensure that the entire capital expenditure allocation is effectively utilized for intended purposes.

He said securing approval to invest in Sri Lanka now requires clearance from 82 different institutions and that obtaining these approvals takes over two and a half years. He promised that this time would be reduced to six months. — Xinhua

## Spanish economy shines in 2024 with 3.2% growth

THE Spanish economy expanded 3.2 per cent last year thanks to buoyant exports and consumption that have made it one of the fastest-growing developed countries, official data showed on Wednesday.

Spain has been consistently outstripping a mostly sluggish eurozone and the data published by the National Statistics Institute confirmed its standout

performance with 0.8 per cent growth in the final three months of 2024.

The result slightly exceeded forecasts of 3.1 per cent growth by the Bank of Spain and the International Monetary Fund and progressed from an expansion of 2.7 per cent in 2023. Exports in the European Union's fourth-largest economy grew three per cent year-on-year in the final quarter

of 2024 and household consumption increased 3.7 per cent.

The service sector continued to perform strongly from October to December with a jump of 3.9 per cent year-on-year.

Tourism, which represents around 13 per cent of the economy, has driven the sector which has flourished after the COVID-19 crisis paralyzed travel. — AFP



Plaza Mayor in Spain is a historic square in Madrid, renowned for its impressive architecture and vibrant atmosphere, drawing both locals and tourists alike to its lively cafes and events. PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



**EUROFINS ASSUANCE MYANMAR LTD**  
**Notice for Members' Voluntary Winding Up**  
**Under Section 147 of Insolvency Law and Insolvency Rules-9 and 15-B**  
**(Company Registration No. 114455520)**

**Notice is hereby given that**

- (1) the members of EUROFINS ASSUANCE MYANMAR LTD ("the Company") had passed a special resolution on 25 January 2025 that the Company be wound up by way of members' voluntary winding up under the Insolvency Law 2020 with effect from 25 January 2025.
- (2) Daw Zin Mar Thant (holder of Myanmar NRIC No. 12/SaKhaNa (N) 060291 has been appointed as liquidator to conduct the member's voluntary winding up of the Company by a resolution of the members passed on 25 January 2025. A copy of the notice of appointment is set out below.

**Notice of Appointment of liquidator**

- (3) the creditors of the Company are requested to submit their proof of debts or claim together with the detailed particulars and evidence of the debts or claims to the undersigned liquidator within one month from the date of this advertisement, at Room#24, Bldg#16R Martali street, No. (10) Ward, Hlaing Township, Yangon, Myanmar 11051 and electronically to any of the email addresses of the undersigned as indicated below, using the prescribed form, set out below:

<p><b>Form -11</b> <b>(Proof of debt or claim)</b> Insolvency Law 2020, Insolvency Rules 97</p> <p>To Liquidator</p> <p>1. This is to state that _____ Company _____ Company with company registration number _____ was on _____ date and still is justly and truly on _____ date _____ indebted to me an amount of _____</p> <p>[* To fill in (as appropriate) the date when the Order to windup was passed or in the case of voluntary winding up the date when the resolution to wind up was passed.]</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Consideration (how the debt arose)</th> <th>Amount</th> <th>Remarks (include details of voucher substantiating payment and attach copies)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>2. To my knowledge or belief the creditor has not, nor has any person by the creditor's order, had or received any satisfaction or security for the sum or any part of the debt or claim, other than as disclosed in the First Schedule to this document.</p> <p>If any bills or other negotiable securities are held, show them in a schedule in the following form.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Drawer</th> <th>Acceptor</th> <th>Amount</th> <th>Due Date</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>3. The creditor holds no security for the debt or claim, other than as disclosed in the Second Schedule to this document.</p> <p>4. I am authorized in writing by the creditor to make this statement. I know that the debt described above was incurred for the consideration stated and that the debt remains unpaid and unsatisfied.</p> <p>* Strike out irrelevant.</p> <p align="right">Signed _____ Name _____ Date _____</p>	Date	Consideration (how the debt arose)	Amount	Remarks (include details of voucher substantiating payment and attach copies)					Date	Drawer	Acceptor	Amount	Due Date						<p>The creditors of the company who fails to submit the claims within one month from the date of this advertisement will be excluded from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the benefit of a distribution made before your claim is submitted; and</li> <li>objecting to that distribution</li> </ol> <p>Daw Zin Mar Thant NRIC No. 12/SaKhaNa (N) 060291 Liquidator Contact Number: +95 9420782365 Email address: <a href="mailto:zin-mar.thant@ktassurance.com">zin-mar.thant@ktassurance.com</a> EUROFINS ASSUANCE MYANMAR LTD (In liquidation)</p> <p>Mrs. Ngo Thi Xuan Dung Passport No. E00335777 Director Contact Number: +84 902934099 Email address: <a href="mailto:Jenny.DungNgo@eurofinsasia.com">Jenny.DungNgo@eurofinsasia.com</a> EUROFINS ASSUANCE MYANMAR LTD (In liquidation)</p>
Date	Consideration (how the debt arose)	Amount	Remarks (include details of voucher substantiating payment and attach copies)																
Date	Drawer	Acceptor	Amount	Due Date															

# GM 2025 profit forecast clouded by Trump policy unknowns

CEO Mary Barra highlighted proactive engagement with the Trump administration.

GENERAL Motors faced questions Tuesday about the impact of potential moves by the Trump administration targeting trade and the environment, with the uncertainty overshadowing the company's latest results.

The big US automaker reported a quarterly loss due to costs from restructuring a China initiative, though that was offset by a 2025 earnings forecast that topped analyst expectations. However its projections did not try to quantify



A GMC (General Motors) logo is displayed on a tire hubcap at the AutoMobility LA 2024 auto show at the Los Angeles Convention Centre in Los Angeles on 21 November 2024. **PHOTO: ETIENNE LAURENT / AFP**

the effects of new tariffs that Trump has threatened on key markets in which GM operates, such as Mexico, or the White House's planned rollback of policies promoting electric vehi-

cles. Acknowledging the "uncertainty", Chief Executive Mary Barra said the company had been "proactive" in engaging the Trump administration and Congress. — AFP

**CLAIMS DAY NOTICE**  
M.V PHUONG NAM-1 VOY.NO. (25.01)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V PHUONG NAM-1 VOY.NO. (25.01)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **29-1-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MKH** 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: **2301928**

**Shipping Agency Department**  
**Myanma Port Authority**

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# ROLLING UPDATES

## WORLD

## Stampede incident at Mahakumbh is extremely sad: President Murmu

President Murmu expressed sorrow over the tragic stampede at the Mahakumbh in Prayagraj, offering condolences to the victims' families and wishing a speedy recovery to the injured.

PRESIDENT Droupadi Murmu has expressed her sorrow over the tragic incident at the Mahakumbh in Prayagraj early yesterday morning, 29 January.

"The stampede incident at Prayagraj Mahakumbh is extremely sad. I express my condolences to the families of the injured devotees and pray to God that all the injured devotees recover soon," Murmu said in a post on X.

Meanwhile, Defence Min-

ister Rajnath Singh expressed his condolences to the bereaved families. "The accident that happened in the ongoing Mahakumbh in Prayagraj is extremely painful. My deepest condolences to the bereaved families of those who have lost their loved ones in this accident.

Along with this, I wish for the speedy recovery of all the injured. Under the guidance of the Chief Minister, the Uttar Pradesh government and the



Prayagraj: Devotees take a dip at Triveni Sangam during ongoing Mahakumbh, in Prayagraj on Tuesday.

PHOTO: ANI

local administration are providing all possible help to the victims," Rajnath Singh said in

a post on X.

Mahakumbh DIG Vaibhav Krishna said that the police are

looking into the cause of the mishap that occurred in the early hours of Wednesday. — ANI

## Trump invited to Japan for 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of A-bombs

THE mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have invited US President Donald Trump to visit this year for the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World War II atomic bombings, officials said Wednesday.

In a joint letter to Trump, the mayors urge him to come and "listen to the testimonies of the hibakusha (bomb survivors) in person, take to heart their fervent wish for peace, and deepen your understanding of the inhumanity of nuclear weapons".

"It is our sincere hope that you will break away from the notion of nuclear reliance and take strong leadership in the abolition of nuclear weapons and the realization of lasting world peace," said the 28 January letter shared with AFP on Wednesday.

The United States dropped an atomic bomb on each Japanese city on 6 and 9 August, 1945 — the only times nuclear weapons have been

used in warfare. Days later Japan surrendered.

Around 140,000 people died in Hiroshima and some 74,000 others in Nagasaki including many who survived the explosions but died later from radiation exposure. — AFP



Around 140,000 people died in Hiroshima, with the United States never apologizing for its use of atomic bombs against Japan. PHOTO: AFP

## St Petersburg's Palace Bridge raised to celebrate Chinese New Year for first time

ST Petersburg's iconic Palace Bridge was raised early Wednesday to celebrate the Chinese New Year, marking a historic first for the city.

The bridge, which usually opens to allow large ships to

pass through during the navigation season from April to November, was illuminated in vibrant red and raised amid the melody of traditional Chinese New Year music.

Consul-General of China

in St Petersburg Luo Zhanhui and Evgeny Grigoriev, chairman of St Petersburg's Committee for Foreign Relations, joined the public in a countdown to the bridge's opening.

— Xinhua

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### South Korean fire authorities say airplane on fire at airport in Busan

A passenger airplane caught on fire at around 10:30 pm local time on Tuesday at Gimhae International Airport in Busan, South Korea, forcing the passengers and crew members to evacuate, Yonhap reported, citing local fire authorities.

Fire authorities said an Air Busan plane bound for China's Hong Kong from the airport in Busan, some 320 kilometres southeast of Seoul, caught on fire at its tail before its takeoff. They added that all 169 passengers and seven crew members aboard were evacuated on an inflatable slide.

Three people were reportedly injured. — Xinhua

#### Israeli PM to visit US for discussion on Gaza truce deal

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will travel to Washington next week at the invitation of US President Donald Trump, according to a statement from Netanyahu's office on Tuesday.

Trump has invited Netanyahu to "a meeting at the White House on (next) Tuesday, 4 February," said the statement.

The meeting is expected to focus on the second phase of the Gaza ceasefire deal, Israel's state-owned Kan TV News reported.

Under the deal, a six-week ceasefire started on 19 January during the first phase. By the 16<sup>th</sup> day of this ceasefire, talks will commence on subsequent phases aimed at addressing the release of remaining Israeli hostages held in the Gaza Strip and further withdrawal of Israeli forces from the enclave. — Xinhua



# SPORTS



## Man Utd, Spurs seek Europa League last 16 and much-needed rest

Roma are at risk of an early Europa League exit.  
PHOTO: AFP

MANCHESTER United and Tottenham are among the sides aiming to ensure direct passage to the Europa League last 16 in Thursday's league phase finale with nine places in the knockout stages up for grabs.

The struggling English giants are labouring in the bottom half of the Premier League table but do sit in the top eight of the Europa League.

Only the top eight progress automatically into the last 16,

while ninth to 24<sup>th</sup> have to endure the rigours of a two-legged play-off round next month.

United boss Ruben Amorim is desperate to have two free midweeks for extra time on the training field to try and imbed his ideas after a turbulent first two months in charge.

The Red Devils have played 17 games in 64 days since Amorim took charge for the first time.

United have found Eu-

rope's second-tier competition much easier to negotiate than domestic duties with four consecutive wins meaning they just need a point away to FCSB.

The Romanian champions, though, can also secure a top-eight finish should they pull off a famous victory.

"We have to surpass ourselves, but we have done this before many times, so we will do it again," said FCSB striker Florin Tanase. — AFP



PHOTO: ONE CHAMPIONSHIP

## Aung La Nsang to face Shamil Erdogan in rematch at ONE 171

MYANMAR'S Aung La Nsang will face Turkiye's Shamil Erdogan in a rematch at the ONE 171 competition, set to take place in Qatar on 20 February. The two fighters previously met at ONE 168 on 6 September 2024 in the United States and after more than five months, they are set to compete once again.

In their first fight, Aung La Nsang lost by submission in the

second round after two minutes and 48 seconds. Now, he will aim to make a comeback and secure a victory. This will be Aung La Nsang's first fight of 2025 and a win is essential for him to stay competitive.

Aung La Nsang has competed in 45 professional MMA bouts, with 30 wins, 14 losses and no draws. — Shine Htet Zaw/KZL

## Harbin welcomes Spring Festival with anticipation for Asian Winter Games

WITH just over a week to go until the opening of the 9<sup>th</sup> Asian Winter Games, the streets of Harbin are alive with both the festive spirit of the Spring Festival and growing excitement for the upcoming sporting event.

At the Harbin Ice-Snow World, a theme park dedicated to the Asian Win-

ter Games, visitors are treated with a spectacular drone show celebrating the Chinese New Year.

The park also features a variety of ice sculptures with festive themes, including a carp symbolizing prosperity and the Chinese character Fu (meaning good fortune) carved in ice. — Xinhua

## Figure skating: Ice dancer Tim Koleto hangs up skates

AMERICAN-BORN Japanese ice dancer Takeru Komatsubara, also known as Tim Koleto, announced his retirement from competitive figure skating Wednesday on Instagram.

He and his wife Misato Komatsubara, who formed an ice dance duo in 2016 before their marriage, helped Japan earn the team event's silver medal at the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.

"I want to thank Misato for being my partner for eight spectacular years," said the 33-year-old, who obtained Japanese citizenship in 2020. Misato retired in the spring of 2024.

"This has been the journey of a lifetime. I am and will always remain so grateful for everything I was able to achieve and all the adventures I was so lucky to experience," Takeru said. — Kyodo

## Flick makes Szczesny first choice goalkeeper at Barcelona



Barcelona's German coach Hansi Flick said he and his staff were backing Wojciech Szczesny in goal over Inaki Pena. PHOTO: AFP

FC Barcelona head coach Hansi Flick confirmed on Tuesday that Wojciech Szczesny has become his first-choice goalkeeper ahead of Inaki Pena.

Former Arsenal, Roma and Juventus keeper Szczesny joined Barcelona in October, coming out of retirement after Marc-Andre ter Stegen sustained a season-ending knee injury. However,

fitness concerns and Pena's good form initially delayed Szczesny's debut until 4 January, when he featured in Barca's 4-0 Copa del Rey victory over fourth-tier Barbastro.

He then played in both matches as Barcelona claimed the Spanish Supercup - though he was sent off in the final with around half an hour remaining.

Although Pena returned in goal for Barca's 2-0 Copa del Rey win at home to Betis and a 1-1 LaLiga draw at Getafe, Szczesny was chosen for the Champions League clash away to Benfica, which ended 5-4 in Barca's favor. Despite conceding a penalty and being at fault in Benfica's second goal, Flick kept Szczesny in the side for the subsequent 7-1 thrashing of Valencia.

Asked about his decision for Barca's final Champions League group-stage match at home to Atalanta, Flick made it clear that Szczesny is now his primary choice in goal. — Xinhua



Stampede incident at Mahakumbh is extremely sad: President Murmu  
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# WORLD

CHINA'S consumer goods trade-in programme remained highly popular at the start of the year, especially during the Spring Festival shopping season.

The Ministry of Commerce (MOC) reported receiving subsidy applications for 10.79 million electronic devices over a four-day period starting 20 January, following the inclusion of mobile phones, tablets and smartwatches in the trade-in subsidy programme, marking a significant expansion of the initiative launched in March last year.

Moreover, automobile and home appliance trade-ins had reached 34,000 and 1.04 million units, respectively, as of 23 January, according to the ministry. The Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, is the most important holiday in China and an occasion for family reunions, and it falls on 29 January this year.

The strong participation in the trade-in programme boosted consumer sentiment in the holiday market. According to Sheng Qiuping, vice-commerce minister, the programme, along with a series of shopping promotion events, will help meet the growing demand for Spring Festival shopping. Since last year, "trade-in" has become a buzzword in China's consumer market, driving steady retail sales growth and boosting consumer sentiment.

In 2024, more than 6.8 million vehicles, including gasoline-powered and electric cars, were traded in, while over 56 million home appliances, such as refrigerators, washing machines and computers, were sold under the programme. — Xinhua

## Trade-in programme boosts China's Spring Festival shopping season

*China's consumer trade-in programme saw high participation during the Spring Festival season, with millions of electronic devices, vehicles, and appliances traded in, boosting retail sales and consumer sentiment.*



Customers apply for subsidies under the trade-in programme for consumer goods in Hangzhou City, east China's Zhejiang Province, 31 October 2024. XINHUA/XU YU

## One in two cars will be electric by 2035: Counterpoint report

ONE in every two cars will be an electric vehicle by 2035, with fastest growth expected from India, Latin America, Japan, and Southeast Asia, as per a report from Counterpoint

Technology Market Research. Counterpoint Research is a global research firm specializing in products in the technology, media and telecom industry.

The automobile industry, particularly the EV segment, is at an inflection point with its adoption increasingly rising by the day.

While the overall passenger vehicle market struggled in 2024, the EV segment told a different story – thanks to booming demand. Global passenger vehicle (PV) sales in 2024 remained stagnant, growing by just 1 per cent year-on-year, according to Counterpoint Research's latest Global Passenger Vehicle Forecast. Geopolitical tensions, fear of looming recession and reduced consumer spending in key markets have all contributed to this temporary slowdown in the global automotive market. — ANI



EV sales grew 22 per cent globally in 2024 despite a market slowdown. PHOTO: ANI

## Putin: Russia ready to pick negotiators for direct talks with Zelensky, but he can't sign peace deal

PRESIDENT Putin has expressed readiness to find negotiators to speak directly with Volodymyr Zelensky.

"If he wants to take part in negotiations, I will select such people, it's not an issue. The question is about the final signing of the documents," Putin said in a TV interview Tuesday, noting that Zelensky's legitimacy has expired, and he therefore "does not have the right to sign anything".

Under Ukrainian law, the end of the president's term means his powers are transferred to the chairman of the Verkhovna Rada parliament, and in accordance with the Constitution, even mar-

tial law does not give him the right to extend his authority, Putin said.

Zelensky's powers officially ran out last spring, but he remained in office after cancelling elections, citing martial law. "On the question of the final signing of the documents...there cannot be a single mistake or wrinkle. Everything must be polished," Putin emphasized. Furthermore, direct talks cannot start if Zelensky does not lift his self-imposed ban, Putin said.

"If there is a desire, any legal question can be resolved. So far, we simply don't see such a desire" from the Ukrainian side, the president said. — SPUTNIK