

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Pilgrimage tour of Cambodian Mohasangharajah to further cement Myanmar-Cambodia friendly relations

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing pays homage to Mohasangharajah Sayadaw of Cambodia and members of the Sangha.



His Holiness Samdech Preah Abhisiri Sugandha Mohasangharajah Dhipadi Dr Bour Kry presents Dhamma gifts to State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his entourage yesterday evening paid homage to members of the Sangha led by His Holiness Samdech Preah Abhisiri Sugandha Mohasangharajah Dhipadi Dr Bour Kry who is one of the Adhipati Sayadaws in Cambodia, staying at KMA Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on his pilgrimage tour of Myanmar.

First, the Senior General and party paid homage to the Adhipati Sayadaw of Cambodia and members of the Sangha. The Senior General supplicated propagation of the Sasana, building of the world's tallest carved sitting marble Buddha image namely the Maravijaya Buddha Image, the pilgrimage tour of the Cambodian Adhipati Sayadaw to further cement friendly relations between the two countries and to promote coop-

eration in religious affairs, and efforts of Myanmar to ensure continuous propagation of the Theravada Buddhism.

In his speech, Adhipati Sayadaw of Cambodia expressed his pleasure during his pilgrimage tour of Myanmar for homage paid by the SAC Chairman Prime Minister. He stated that Myanmar and Cambodia share the same Theravāda Buddhist faith and are culturally inseparable. He also expressed pride and joy that international monk students are studying at Buddhist universities in Myanmar. He continued that he was pleased to express his joy in revering the Maravijaya Buddha Image, the world's tallest carved sitting marble Buddha image. He also extended his prayers for the good health and prosperity of the Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister, and all the people of Myanmar. Further-

more, he prayed for peace, stability, and prosperity in Myanmar, conveying his loving-kindness and good wishes for the nation.

The Senior General offered a replica of the marble Maravijaya Buddha Image and alms to the Cambodian Sayadaw who returned Dhamma gifts.

On 2 February, the Cambodian Adhipati Sayadaw and his members arrived in Yangon and visited prominent religious edifices and monuments including Shwedagon Pagoda. Yesterday evening, the Sayadaw and his members visited the Upatasanti Pagoda and Maravijaya Buddha Image in Nay Pyi Taw where officials conducted the Sayadaw and party around the Buddha image. During his pilgrimage tour in Myanmar, the Cambodian Adhipati Sayadaw will continue his visits to eminent stupas and temples. — MNA/TTA

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NATIONAL

Residents Urged to Stay Vigilant as Terrorists Use Civilians as Human Shields

TERRORISTS launch attacks while hiding behind public houses in towns and villages.

Residents must exercise caution and awareness to avoid these groups, as they use people as human shields in their temporarily controlled areas to successfully combat terrorism.

(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with members of the Kayah State government, state-level departmental officials, town elders and locals on 4 September 2024.)



National Objectives for 78th Anniversary of Union Day 2025

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

Mottos for 78th Union Day 2025

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

Gold Market Rate as of 4 February 2025

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K5,460,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.

Ancient Inwa bustles with tourists on weekends

ANCIENT Inwa was busier with tourists on weekends than ever, according to author and researcher Bo Shake (Yadanapura).

As it is near the highway with easy accessibility, Inwa has attracted many visitors.

Since the dry season this year, there has been a steady influx of tourists, in the past, it was only crowded on full moon and new moon days, but now it

is also busy on weekends.

“Inwa is different from previous years. This year, visitor arrivals have increased significantly during the non-rainy season. This year can be said to be busy with tourists. Tourist arrival is continuous even on weekends, with people from Yangon, Mandalay and the nearby areas. It is easily accessible due to its adjacent location to the highway,” he said.

He added that foreign tourists were among visitors and Inwa could also be busy with travellers in Thingyan.

During this year's tourist season, which is the dry season in Thadingyut and Tazaungdine, a significant increase in domestic tourists has been seen in many destinations, including Bagan-NyaungU, Popa, Kyaiktiyo, Taunggyi, Kalaw, Inlay and Ngwehsaung. — MT/ZN



This image captures visitors and a landmark temple in ancient Inwa.

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)

Fund allocated to temporarily displaced people



Deputy Prime Minister Union Planning & Finance Minister U Win Shein chairs the meeting to offer financial aid to the temporarily displaced people across arm-conflict regions and states..



UNDER the guidance of State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, the government employees and families, and people, who temporarily fled their respective regions and states due to armed conflicts and terrorist attacks, will be offered cash assistance using National Natural Disaster Management Fund, said Deputy Prime

Minister and Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Win Shein, at the meeting to present financial assistance yesterday.

He added that the Head of the State instructed the region and state officials to collect the list of internally displaced people to allocate financial assistance from the National Natural Disaster Management Fund, and the fund added further

allocations for rehabilitation processes of natural disasters including Typhoon Yagi this year in addition to the set annual fund amount.

According to the Natural Disaster Management Law, natural disaster means the destruction of life and property, livelihood, infrastructures, safety, education and health or environment due to

violence and armed insurgencies. The objective of the law also states to coordinate with domestic and foreign government departments and organizations, social organizations, other non-government organizations or international organizations and foreign regional organizations in carrying out natural disaster management activities. In carrying out the rehabilitation and rebuilding processes, all the victims will be presented with food, relief items and rehabilitation materials. Therefore, it conforms with the stipulations, financial rules and regulations of the law. There must be systematic and accurate lists, methods to offer, population, budget status and time. Therefore, the region and state governments should prepare accurate data in advance.

Afterwards, the attendees coordinated the discussion. The government employees and families, and people who temporarily fled their regions should inform the respective region and state administrative departments including Nay Pyi Taw to achieve accurate data. — 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>

Deputy PM MoFA Union Minister receives ICRC Resident Representative

DEPUTY Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe received Mr Arnaud de Baecque, Resident Representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), yesterday at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on the existing and ongoing activities of ICRC in Myanmar.

Also present at the meeting were senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. — MNA



The ICRC Resident Representative calls on Deputy Prime Minister MoFA Union Minister U Than Swe yesterday.

NATIONAL



MoI Union Minister donates MRTV DTH dishes, DVB T-2 boxes to War Veterans Organization

THE Ministry of Information donated 100 MRTV DTH dishes and 300 DVB T-2 set-top boxes for Myanmar war veterans and families yesterday.

Speaking at the donation ceremony, Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn

Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn presents MRTV DTH dishes and DVB T-2 boxes to the Myanmar War Veterans Organization.

expressed pride for Tatmadaw members as they serve the country when they are in service as well as after retirement, and appreciated the cooperation of war veterans with Tatmadaw in State stability processes.

He then briefed the donation for Tatmadaw members and families to ensure supportive actions by considering the misinformation and disinformation.

He handed over 100 MRTV DTH dishes and 300 DVB T-2 set-top boxes to Vice-Chair 1 Lt-Gen Ye Aung (Rtd) of the Myanmar War Veterans Organization. — MNA/KTZH

Government to fund free hepatitis C medication

THE government will provide medicines free for people who have hepatitis C with its funding, said the Kyaikto Township Public Health Department.

Those with hepatitis C infection need to take medication for 3 or 6 months and medication will be provided as of this month, it said.

People who want to gain access the

free medication can contact nearby hospitals and health departments in time.

Besides, HPV vaccination which can prevent cervical cancer is scheduled to be done on 10 February for girls, born between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015 and aged 9-10 years, outside formal education, in wards and villages, it said.

— MT/ZS



This photo showcases the health education talk at the Kyaikto Township Public Health Department.

MTB, Nature Link Pay ink MoU for mobile financial services collaboration



Officials from the Myanmar Tourism Bank and Nature Link Pay Company Limited (Trusty Pay) pose for the documentary group photo during the MoU signing event.

MYANMAR Tourism Bank (MTB) and Nature Link Pay Company Limited (Trusty Pay) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to cooperate on mobile financial services, the bank announced.

The aim of cooperation on technical services includes linking MTB bank accounts and Trusty Pay to provide deposit and withdrawal services and linking their mobile wallets for real-time

financial transactions.

The MoU was signed at the MTB head office on Sule Road at the end of January, the bank announced on 3 February. The agreement was signed by MTB CEO U Win Lwin and Trusty Pay Managing Director U Maung Shwe, while MTB CTO U Win Ko Htut and Trusty Pay CTO Daw Mya Yadana Soe witnessed the agreement signing. — MT/ZN

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NATIONAL

Ancient pagodas, local handicrafts in Bagan draw travellers



Visitors enjoy traditional aura and scenic views in the Bagan Ancient Cultural Heritage Zone. PHOTO: ZWE MARN

LOCAL and foreign travellers visit Bagan's Ancient Cultural Heritage Zone and tourist destinations, where the ancient cultural heritages are concentrated, during the dry season. The ancient pagodas and the displays of locally produced handicrafts in the Bagan cultural zone not only attract local

and foreign travellers but also provide them with a sense of appreciation.

All the travellers to Bagan enjoy the horse cart ride, buy the hand painting, sand paintings, wall paintings, Vachellia leucophloea tree-hanging puppets, Bagan umbrellas, large bowls, and also take photos.

They also like wearing Thanaka and hair braiding. Moreover, they take a hot-air balloon ride to watch the Bagan region and the beauty of the Ayeyawady River with the scenes of sunrise and sunset.

"Among the ASEAN regions, Myanmar's Bagan ancient cultural zone is a concen-

tration of valuable pagodas and temples. The local and foreign travellers enjoy hand painting and acrylic painting in front of a famous pagoda or temple. The displays of puppets and Bagan umbrellas that are conserved as the cultural heritage of Bagan can create a sense of joy for travellers and highlight

the dignity of Bagan. The architectural artworks and wall paintings of ancient pagodas offer memorable events. Therefore, we warmly welcome the local and foreign travellers to Bagan ancient cultural zone in the non-rainy season," said U Myo Myint Aung, assistant director of the Directorate of Hotel and Tourism (Bagan).

Pathein umbrellas are famous in Myanmar handicrafts, and travellers also recognize the Bagan umbrellas with paintings on canvas. They also buy puppets from six inches to one foot in size. There are 3,822 pagodas, stupas and temples constructed by Bagan Kings in 14,295 square feet wide Bagan.

The displays of puppets and Bagan umbrellas under the Vachellia leucophloea trees at Shwezigon, Htilominlo, Alotawpyae, Arnanda, Buphaya, Thatbyinnyu, Dhammayangi, Shwesandaw, Loka Nanda, Shwekuncha, Manuha, Myazedi, Hngetpyittaung, Tuyin Hill and other pagodas, highlight the picturesque scenes of pagodas and the local and foreign travellers are also satisfied with that. — Thitsa (MNA)/KTZH

Over 400 bar-headed geese spotted in Myitkyina

OVER 400 bar-headed geese have been found on the mid-water sandbank of the Ayeyawady River, Myitkyina Township of Kachin State, since last December.

The migratory birds take shelter in Kachin State's Indawgyi Lake and its wetland areas in winter yearly mostly in October. The bar-headed geese resided on the sandbank of the Ayeyawady River starting in 2014.

The migratory birds fly to Myanmar via the Central Asia Flyway and East-Asia Australian Flyway out of nine flyways, according to Indawgyi Lake Wildlife Sanctuary.

The Bar-headed Goose migrate to the northern part of Thailand, India and the southern part of China including Myanmar between October and April.

They breed in the middle part of Asia and are mostly found in rivers, fields and dams. They are protected bird species in Myanmar and are listed as Least

Concern (LC) by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). — IPRD/KTZH



Panoramic view captures migratory bar-headed geese on Ayeyawady River's mid-water sandbank.

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

Medical entrepreneurs hold 2nd direct sale to public



MEDICINES that were difficult to purchase in the pharmaceutical market are being sold at the wholesale prices offered by about 70 pharmaceutical companies for the second time in Yangon Region, from 3 to 7 February, according to Dr Win Maw Phyto, a central executive committee member of the Myanmar Pharmaceutical and Medical Equipment Entrepreneurs Association.

Dr Win Maw Phyto said: "People can bring their medication cards, medicine bottles, and patient records to purchase medicines that are hard to find in the

market".

The event is being held at the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization (MyanTrade) Yangon Region Headquarters Office, located at the corner of Merchant Street and 30th Street in Pabedan Township, Yangon Region. Similar events are also planned to be held by the Myanmar Pharmaceutical and Medical Equipment Entrepreneurs Association in other regions and states.

In addition to basic household medicines, the current pharmaceutical fair also offers antibiotics, as well as medical devices and healthcare equipment for blood pressure, heart conditions, diabetes, kidney issues, cancer, and bone diseases. — ASH/TH

Direct medication sale at wholesale prices in progress in Yangon.

Student art exhibition 'Beautiful Pottery from Twantay' showcases talent

THE student art exhibition titled "Beautiful Pottery from Twantay" was held on 31 January at the National University

of Arts and Culture (Yangon) in Dagon Myothit (South) Township, Yangon Region.

The exhibition featured 16

paintings created by 16 students from the Painting Department of the university. It was organized to enhance the artistic skills, creativity, and innovation of students from the fourth year to the second year of the master's programme, as well as to improve the quality of their specialized artistic disciplines.

The event was attended by Dr Kaythi Htwe, Rector of the National University of Arts and Culture (Yangon), along with pro-rectors, professors (heads of department), teachers, and students. — ASH/MKKS



This image displays the opening ceremony of the student art exhibition.

Thriller 'Por Rai' starring MRTV-4 actors set to film in Yangon

THE film Por Rai, featuring a majority of MRTV-4 actors, is set to be filmed in Yangon this month, with MRTV-4 actress Ya Mone Myint Myat playing a lead role.

Directed by Zaw Lin Htet, who is also responsible for the script and storyline, the film is a thriller. Explaining the title, actress Su Htet Kahday said, "Por means 'father' in Thai, and Rai refers to something grand or significant. So, Por Rai can be interpreted as 'a great deity or father-like spirit'. My role in the film is that of a strong and bold female character. The setting and plot are also unique, making it an exciting project to



This photo captures actors at the film launch of 'Por Rai'.

work on".

The cast includes Ye Lwin Oo, Nay Shine, Ya Mone Myint Myat, Su Htet Kahday, Hnin Ei Wint Wah, Zin Thu Aung, Zay Gyi (ISN), Kyawt Kay Thara,

Eaint Phoo Kyal Sin, and many other artists. A launch event for the film was held on 3 February at the Shwedagon Pagoda in Dagon Township, Yangon Region. — ASH/MKKS

MMPO urges media to correct false reports on charity efforts



Artistes donate food supplies to film industry members for the 16th time.

THE Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization (MMPO) has asked media outlets not to publish misleading news about its charity efforts, said the organization's Vice-Chairman U Aye Kyu Lay.

The organization has worked with artistes and donors to distribute food supplies like rice, cooking oil, onions, beans and canned fish for the 16th time. Some media outlets have misrepresented this, claiming artistes are donating competitively before the Myanmar Film Academy Awards. Because of this, the organization issued a request to stop the spread of misunderstandings.

"Our organization focuses on social welfare. Everyone helps voluntarily. Some news reports falsely say artistes are donating to compete before the Academy Awards. That is not

true. We have been making donations for a long time. These false reports make donors hesitate to give more, which is unfair. People should not criticize these efforts. We are donating to help those in need. That is why we are issuing this request and we will take action against those spreading false news," U Aye Kyu Lay told The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

The Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization is a non-government social welfare group founded by film industry pioneers. It will celebrate its 80th anniversary on 8 March 2026.

To keep the organization strong, the government, the Ministry of Information, the Yangon Region government, rice and oil merchant groups, donors, cinema owners, producers and artistes have continued to provide support. — ASH/KZL

CBM sells CNY5M on 3 Feb

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold five million yuan on 3 February.

CBM pumped in \$124M, 13.8M baht and 4.8M yuan into financial markets in January 2025.

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



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

4,754 oil palm acres in Taninthayi, Kawthoung set for privatization



This aerial drone photo shows an oil palm plantation in Taninthayi Region.

THE Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation called for an open tender to Myanmar citizens for leasing 4,754 acres of oil palm in the Taninthayi and Kawthoung areas, the Tender Acceptance and Evaluation Committee stated.

The Department of Agriculture's Perennial Crop Division will lease 2,000 acres of oil palm in Taninthayi Township and 2,753 acres in Kawthoung Township following tender rules and regulations.

Tender forms are available to take

out on 3-14 February at the Agriculture Department (Office 43) in Nay Pyi Taw. The submission deadline is at 1 pm 17 February. Individuals can contact details via the contact numbers of the department 067 3410210 and 067 341118.

— NN/KK



Export-ready pile of melons.

Melon exports to China show promise

MELON and muskmelon are being exported to China and with good prices, the market potential has been fine.

"At present, there is export of melon and muskmelon and prices are good. We can fetch a good price and at the same time, transport costs are getting higher. Currently, we are exporting fruits from Mongla and it is a distant journey. It is the nature that we can make profits or face loss sometimes," said an official from Khwanyo Fruits wholesale trading centre.

The price of melon is now about 3000

yuan per tonne while muskmelon price is 5,000-6,000 yuan per tonne, he said. Since last October, melon and muskmelon export has been done through Mongla, and despite the trade has been promising, the longer journey made some delays, he added.

If melon and muskmelon are fresh, they are favourable and can fetch good prices, he said, that is why the fruit exports require quality, he added.

Similarly, the melon trade has been also fine in the domestic market. — MT/ZS

Smart Farm Korea 2025 (SFKOREA 2025) invites Myanmar businesspeople

SMART Farm Korea 2025 (SFKOREA 2025) is scheduled to take place on 21-23 May 2025 at Changwon Convention Centre, Gyeongsangnam-do Province, and welcomes the participation of Myanmar businesspeople interested in buying smart farm technology and products, according to Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization.

Smart Farm Korea 2025 aims to effectuate the development of the agriculture and livestock sectors and contribute to the farmers who will lead future agriculture and livestock sector development to embrace high-tech smart farming technologies.

About 120 companies are expected to showcase their smart farm technologies, intelligent solutions and products with 400 booths and are expected to attract about 20,000 visitors. The exhibit items consist of future agriculture (automation system), smart factory facility & and equipment (agricultural drone), urban agriculture, return to farming and rural village, agro-livestock materials and equipment, plant factories to produce high-quality agricultural produce year-round, packaging, distribution, and logistics and education in aspects of ICT education, smart farm field practice, animal and plant disease management, agricultural and rural information education, etc.

Those Myanmar buyers who are interested in smart farm technologies and Korean products can also join Business Matchings with international experts to enhance the smart farm sector in the future. The expo will cover two-day hotel accommodation for those who join business matching, according to the recommendation of the SFKOREA Secretariat.

Those enthusiastic buyers from the related institutions can contact the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization at phone number 067 3408622 or email: event.td.myantrade@gmail.com within office hours. Those who want to participate in this as speakers need to fill in a buyer registration form by 25 April 2025 through yeon0225@jm-fair.com. — NN/KK

OPINION

Close the care gap for cancer patients

A SIGNIFICANT step in cancer treatment was marked on 22 January 2025 with the launch of Linear Accelerators (LINAC) at the National Cancer Treatment Centre in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan), Yangon. This centre aims to alleviate patient suffering and improve treatment outcomes. Such good news brought a brighter future to cancer patients.

The government is working to restore and enhance cancer treatment facilities. As part of this initiative, LINAC machines have been installed – one at Mandalay General Hospital in 2023 and another at Yangon General Hospital in 2024. Such initiatives are based on notable efforts of the government and relevant medical specialists. Now, oncologists and specialists are actively using these advanced machines to treat cancer patients.

World Cancer Day, observed on 4 February each year, unites the global community in raising awareness, promoting education, and driving action against cancer. The 2025 theme of the commemorative day, “Close the Care Gap”, urges medical professionals worldwide to enhance treatments and ensure equitable cancer care for all. Through continuous advancements in medical technology and collaboration, both locally and globally, healthcare professionals strive to improve cancer treatment, ultimately benefiting humanity.

In addition to modern medical treatments, Myanmar’s traditional medicine practitioners are also contributing by applying their specialized therapies and extensive experience. As such, specialists in the Western-style medical field and traditional Myanmar medicine practitioners are striving to save the lives of cancer patients with effective treatments as much as possible.

According to the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC), cancer remains the second leading cause of death globally, with millions of new cases and fatalities annually. Its impact extends beyond individuals, affecting families, communities, and entire nations. The growing number of cases, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, underscores the urgent need for improved cancer care, prevention, and research initiatives.

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At the launch ceremony, the Union Minister for Health emphasized efforts to train and develop oncology specialists and medical professionals skilled in cancer treatment. With the structured establishment of the National Cancer Treatment Centre, three LINAC machines will now be operational, significantly expanding patient treatment capacity to 200-400 daily. This progress is made possible through the relentless dedication of healthcare professionals. The Union Minister also stressed that with the nation’s extensive investments, efforts should be made to collaboratively maintain and safeguard the machines to ensure their long-term durability, enabling the provision of sustainable treatment for cancer patients.

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Understanding how scamming businesses operate is very important. It is also their biggest secret. The process includes setting up a base, collecting information, recruiting workers, starting operations, and finally running scams.

WHAT is scamming? How does it work? How are young people connected to it? How can we avoid scamming businesses? I am going to answer these questions, so I would like to encourage you to read it up to the end.

The word “scamming” comes from the Chinese language and is pronounced as “Zhàpiàn,” (in Myanmar “အညွှန်း”). In Chinese, it means “cheating” or “fraud.” Today, scamming businesses are well known in Southeast Asia as fraud operations, mostly working online to trick people.

One important question is: Who started these scamming businesses? Since the word comes from Chinese, many people believe that scamming businesses started in China. When IT technology developed rapidly in China, these businesses also grew internationally.

Scamming businesses have different types. Some mainly target Western countries, especially rich people, retirees, and those over 40 years old. They often focus on wealthy people in America and Europe.

Scamming businesses are not simple fraud operations. They are large-scale businesses that include human trafficking, forced labour, illegal weapons trade, drug smuggling, gambling, and many other illegal activities.

Where are scamming businesses based?

Where do they operate the most? The answer is simple. These businesses are mostly found in poor Southeast Asian countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, the Philippines, and Myanmar. They set up large offices and hire workers in these developing countries.

How do they find workers?

There are two main ways. First, they attract people by offering high salaries but later force them to work. Second, they use human trafficking to kidnap people and make them work against their will. In Myanmar, most of these businesses are located in border areas. They do not operate secretly but in large, well-protected buildings.

How Scamming Businesses Operate

Understanding how scamming businesses operate is very important. It is also their biggest secret. The process includes setting up a base, collecting information, recruiting workers, starting operations, and finally running scams.

Setting Up the Base

As mentioned earlier, scammers choose poor and underdeveloped countries. They negotiate with local border authorities to establish their business. They rent land for 30 to 50 years and build strong buildings with high walls. For security, they also hire armed groups to protect their operations.

Another important need for scammers is the internet. They either use local internet

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By Yin Nwe Ko

services or connect to better internet from neighbouring countries. For example, reports say that scam businesses in Myanmar use internet services from Thailand.

Collecting Information

Many people think that scammers only recruit uneducated or low-skilled workers. However, this is not true. Scamming businesses use digital platforms, IT equipment, and online transactions, so they need skilled workers. Most employees have at least a high school education and are skilled in using the Internet and computers. Some scammers even hire IT experts.

Language Skills in Scam Operations

Workers in scam businesses need to speak at least two or three languages. For example, in Myanmar’s border areas, scammers can speak Myanmar and Chinese or Myanmar and Thai. News reports also confirm this.

Scamming is not just a simple fraud activity. It is a highly organized business that includes illegal activities such as human trafficking, forced labour, illegal trade, and cyber fraud. Understanding their operations helps people become more aware and avoid these dangerous businesses.

How Mid-Level Scammers Operate

Scamming businesses are not run randomly; they follow a well-organized system. Mid-level scammers play an important role in collecting information, avoiding detection, and managing fraud operations efficiently.

Collecting Information Before Scamming

Before they begin their fraud operations, scammers prepare fake bank accounts, cryptocurrency wallets, stock market accounts, and fake websites. These are used to make their scams look real and professional.

When searching for victims, scammers mainly target wealthy people from developed countries. However, there are also scam operations targeting the middle class in Myanmar and other countries. They carefully collect personal details, such as home address, name, family information, job details, and financial status, before approaching their victims.

Scammers gather this information in different ways:



In the end, these scams exploit human greed - the desire for easy money. While everyone has some level of greed, scammers manipulate it to trap victims into financial ruin. By understanding these tactics, people can protect themselves and others from falling prey to these deceptive schemes.

- Buying personal data from businesses or authorities.
- Using online conversations (called “chatting dialogue”) to trick victims into revealing information.
- Following a scripted communication strategy, where senior scammers train employees on what to say based on the victim’s responses.
- Hiring psychology experts to analyze victim behaviour and improve scamming techniques.
- Avoiding Law Enforcement Detection

Scammers operate systematically and take precautions to avoid being caught. Their businesses generate billions of dollars, allowing them to invest in better technology, security, and well-trained employees.

For example, scammers often target retired bankers, stock investors, or foundation managers handling large donations. They study these people’s online activities and gather detailed information before making contact. Their ability to carefully research, plan, and execute fraud makes them highly organized criminal networks rather than simple scammers.

Recruiting workers is a crucial part of

scam operations. As mentioned earlier, scammers mainly target developing countries, poorer regions, and low-wage workers when hiring employees. They lure educated individuals with high-salary job offers and then force them to participate in scam activities.

Target Countries for Recruitment

Scammers recruit workers from China, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, and African nations. They reach out to potential employees through social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Telegram.

Common fake job postings include:

- Translator jobs near border areas.
- Factory jobs with attractive salaries.
- Online marketing or customer service positions.

A 2024 report revealed that there were over 500 Telegram groups dedicated to recruiting Myanmar workers into scam operations.

High Recruitment Fees

To hire workers, scammers are willing to pay huge amounts to recruiters. For example, in 2024, a single Myanmar worker could

be sold to scam groups for 40,000 Thai Baht (about 600,000 MMK).

For workers from poor countries, where salaries range between K300,000 to K500,000 per month, these job offers seem extremely attractive. This is why many educated people from low-income countries fall victim to scam networks.

Scam Business Structure Scam operations generally have three key departments:

- Technical Team – Consists of IT specialists (mainly foreigners) who manage online scams.
 - Target Searching Team – Responsible for finding victims.
 - Communication Team – Handles conversations with victims.
- Each department has around 15 to 20 employees working systematically.

Role of the Technical Team

The technical team is mainly composed of IT professionals who operate scam activities. They create fake social media accounts on platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Skype using attractive photos of young women to gain victims’ trust.

They maintain these fake accounts for three to four months to make them look real.

They also post random social media updates to appear legitimate. This is an ongoing task within the technical team.

Final Stages of the Scam Operation

Once the search team has found potential victims, they begin engaging them in conversation.

Using fake social media accounts created by the technical team, they initiate chats in different ways:

- Casual conversations to build trust.
- Flirtatious messages for male targets.
- Job opportunities, such as investing in new businesses or earning money by watching videos.

As the conversation progresses and the victim becomes emotionally or professionally invested, they are handed over to the communication team for deeper engagement.

Manipulation by the Communication Team

This team, consisting of around 15 people, is responsible for fully convincing the victim. They engage in carefully planned dialogues:

- Sharing fake personal stories to gain trust.
- Showing edited photos as proof of their “authenticity”.
- Talking about their “successful business ventures”.

Through constant interaction, the victim is slowly pulled into the scammers’ trap.

Executing the Final Scam

At this stage, the scammers persuade the victim to invest in fake stock markets, trading platforms, or cryptocurrency exchanges created by the technical team.

Initially, small profits are given to victims, making them believe they are earning real money.

- This psychological trick encourages them to invest larger amounts.
- Eventually, once a significant amount is invested, the scammers:
- Shut down the platform and disappear.
- Use fake links and QR codes to hack victims’ bank accounts.
- Steal money through mobile payment apps.
- Many victims only realize they have been scammed when it’s too late.

In conclusion, this article has provided a step-by-step breakdown of how scam operations function. In the end, these scams exploit human greed – the desire for easy money. While everyone has some level of greed, scammers manipulate it to trap victims into financial ruin. By understanding these tactics, people can protect themselves and others from falling prey to these deceptive schemes.

ARTICLE

NATIONAL

Tatmadaw vessel 'Thanlwin' delivers healthcare along coastal region

THE Tatmadaw hospital vessel (Thanlwin) continued its medical outreach, giving essential healthcare services to residents along the Taninthayi coastal region, including villages near Cocogyun Township in Yangon Region and Haingyikyun Township in Ayeyawady Region. The medical team delivered much-needed medical assistance aboard the vessel.



Coastal residents receive healthcare services from Tatmadaw vessel.

The vessel arrived at Chaungwa Village in Ngaputaw Township, Ayeyawady Region, yesterday morning, where local officials, residents, teachers and students extended a warm welcome. Setting up a temporary clinic at the village's new monastic school, the mobile medical team attended to 559 patients from Chaungwa and nearby villages.

The mobile medical team gave healthcare services to 559 residents from Chaungwa Village and nearby areas in Ngaputaw Township, Ayeyawady Region, yesterday. The team operated from the new monastic school in the village, offering treatments for various medical conditions.

The services covered 114 cases of general illnesses, 44 cases of surgeries, 29 cases of maternal and obstetric care, 43 cases of paediatrics, 115 cases of orthopaedics, 34 cases of ear, nose and throat conditions, 90 cases of eye diseases and 90 cases of dental issues. Six more general surgeries were also performed along with 42 X-rays, 47 ultrasound scans, 39 ECG tests, and 62 laboratory examinations. Fourteen patients requiring further treatment were referred to nearby Tatmadaw hospitals for specialized care. — MNA/KZL

The mobile medical team gave healthcare services to 559 residents from Chaungwa Village and nearby areas in Ngaputaw Township, Ayeyawady Region, yesterday. The team operated from the new monastic school in the village, offering treatments for various medical conditions.

Counter-argument to false information

False reports spread on arson and civilian arrest in Pauk Township

MALICIOUS news media have been found spreading false reports that security forces set fire to Kyauklone Village in Pauk Township, Magway Region, and arrested a civilian.

idating residents. These groups are responsible for acts such as arson in villages that do not support them and the abduction or killing of civilians.

A responsible security official clarified that the reports of security forces burning down houses in the village were false and that no civilians were arrested. He added that insurgents who oppose regional stability have been intim-

Security forces continue to carry out necessary operations to ensure public safety. Meanwhile, subversive news media are deliberately spreading misinformation using misleading photos to create public misunderstanding about security forces. — MNA/KZL



This screenshot validates misinformation.

Japan to recruit 1,500 Myanmar workers



This image captures Myanmar workers at the airport in the previous year.

MORE than 450 Japanese companies will recruit about 1500 Myanmar workers, according to a statement on demand letter released by Myanmar Embassy in Japan.

The embassy has carried out timely verifications of demand letters received from the Ministry of Labour via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it said.

It verifies whether labour

supervisory companies and factories or companies which offered jobs in Japan are officially established or not, and re-submits its findings and remarks to the Ministry of Labour through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

It is about 459 demand letters that the embassy submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after verification until 11 November 2024. According

to it, more than 310 Myanmar male workers and more than 1100 Myanmar female workers would be employed by up to 450 Japanese companies.

A statement on 15 January stipulates over 300 Japanese companies would recruit more than 200 Myanmar male workers and more than 730 Myanmar female workers, totalling more than 900. — MT/ZS

Sapporo Snow Festival unveiled for weeklong extravaganza

THE annual Sapporo Snow Festival in Hokkaido's largest city kicked off an elaborate weeklong affair Tuesday, featuring a multitude of ice and snow sculptures, attractions and food for festivalgoers at the three main sites.

Citizens began pitching in to make sculptures late last month in Odori Park in central Sapporo, the main 1.5-kilometre route with the most impressive creations depicting sports figures, anime characters, iconic buildings and more to entertain visitors.

Aside from several large snow sculptures, the Odori site exhibits more than one hundred smaller snow statues and hosts several music concerts and events, many of which use the sculptural creations as their stage.

"We look forward to visitors taking photos in front of our sculptures," said one person busy at work completing a statue

on the first day citizens came to the park to begin work.

According to the festival executive committee, a total of about 200 ice and snow sculptures are displayed for the festival, held from 4-11 February. Of these, 80 are citizens' snow sculptures.

One of the sculptures depicts Japan's Haruka Kitaguchi, who won the gold medal in the women's javelin at the Paris Olympics last year.

As snow fell heavily at times, Atsushi Igarashi, a company executive from Sapporo, and his friends chiseled a sculpture of "yabee bear", a mascot he invented that takes pride in spreading the Hokkaido dialect.

Last year, his snow sculpture of his bear character took second place in the voting, and Igarashi said with a smile, "This year, I want to take top honours."

— Kyodo



The Sapporo Snow Festival opens in Sapporo, Hokkaido, on 4 February 2025. PHOTO: KYODO

Cannes Film Festival says Juliette Binoche to head jury



(FILES) French actress Juliette Binoche arrives for the Opening Ceremony and the screening of the film "Le Deuxieme Acte" at the 77th edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France, on 14 May 2024. PHOTO: AFP

THE Cannes Film Festival announced Tuesday that it had chosen Juliette Binoche, one of France's best-known actors, to preside over its 78th edition which will take place in May.

The 60-year-old star of

films from "The English Patient" to "Certified Copy" will succeed "Barbie" director Greta Gerwig who served as jury president last year.

Gerwig, the first American film maker to take on

the role, and the rest of the jury awarded the Palme d'Or in 2024 to the film "Anora" by Sean Baker.

"In 1985, I climbed the steps for the first time with the enthusiasm and uncertainty of a young actress," Binoche said in a statement, referring to her first experience in Cannes. "I never imagined returning 40 years later in this honorary role as jury president. "I am aware of the privilege, the responsibility, and the absolute need for humility," she added. Binoche is one of the rare actresses to have won awards at Europe's three biggest film festivals, having been honoured at Cannes, as well as the Venice Film Festival and the Berlinale. She is also among only a handful of French actors to have won an Oscar, taking Best Supporting Actress in the epic 1996 war drama "The English Patient". — AFP

China sees growing private pension funds sales agencies

CHINA saw a growing number of qualified fund sales agencies to cater to the wealth management demands of clients participating in the country's private pension scheme. There were 52 funds sales institutions for private pension as of the end of 2024, up from 37 in 2022, said the Asset Manage-

ment Association of China.

Among them, 19 are commercial banks, including the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China and the Agricultural Bank of China. The rest are 25 securities companies and eight independent sales institutions. — Xinhua



A staff member of an elderly care service centre guides a senior citizen on using smart devices in Dongcheng District in Beijing, capital of China, 31 October 2024. PHOTO: XINHUA

ECONOMY WORLD



Photo taken on 18 July 2023 shows bags of Japan-grown rice sold at a supermarket near Washington.
PHOTO: KYODO

Japan's farm exports up 3.7% to 1.5 tril yen in 2024, new record

THE value of Japan's agricultural, fisheries and forestry product exports rose 3.7 per cent in 2024 from a year earlier to 1.5 trillion yen (\$9.6 billion), setting a new record, driven by growing demand for the country's cuisine overseas, the government said Tuesday.

The 2024 figure marked a new record for the 12th consecutive year, according to

the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and came as Japan aims to boost farm and seafood exports to two trillion yen by 2025, a goal established with the nation's dwindling population in mind.

After the outcome was released, farm minister Taku Eto said at a press conference that the target is a "high hurdle but by no means impossible to achieve, if we continue

to develop production" in line with the needs of each country's market.

In 2024, however, exports to China plunged 29.1 per cent to 168.1 billion yen for a second straight year of decline, hit by its import ban on Japanese seafood in the wake of the discharge of treated radioactive wastewater from the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant. — Kyodo

UBS profit beats forecast as Credit Suisse merger nears end



This photograph shows a sign of the Credit Suisse which reads in German as 'part of the UBS group' and displayed on a branch of Swiss banking giant UBS in the resort of St Moritz on 20 December 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

SWISS banking giant UBS said it remained on track to substantially wrap up its mega-merger with Credit Suisse by the end of 2026, after once again posting better-than-expected quarterly results on Tuesday.

Switzerland's biggest bank reported a net profit of \$770 million for the fourth quarter of 2024, compared with a \$279 million loss in the same period a year earlier as it wrestled with the weight of absorbing its closest domestic rival.

In March 2023, Swiss authorities strong-armed UBS into a \$3.25-billion takeover to prevent Credit Suisse from going under, with what could have been catastrophic consequences for the global financial system. — AFP

China to impose additional tariffs on certain US products

CHINA will impose additional tariffs on certain US products starting from 10 February, the Customs Tariff Commission of the State Council said on Tuesday.

The move is in accordance with the basic principles of international law, and with Chinese laws and regulations such as the tariff law, the foreign trade law and the customs law, according to a statement from the commission.

An additional 15 per cent tariff will be imposed on imported coal and liquefied natural gas originating from the United States, per the statement.

Crude oil, agricultural machinery, automobiles with large displacement, and pickup trucks will be subject to additional tariffs of 10 per cent, the statement said. Lists of specific products that will be subject to additional tariffs can be found in the attached documents.

For these products, corresponding tariffs will be added to the current tariff rates. Current bonded policies as well as tax reduction and exemption policies will not change, and the latest tariffs to be imposed will not be reduced or exempted, according to the statement. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

S Korea's online shopping grows 5.8% in 2024

South Korea's online shopping grew in single digits last year owing to strong demand for food, car accessories, and the travel and transport service, statistical office data showed Tuesday.

Shopping in cyberspace mounted 5.8 per cent to 242.09 trillion won (US\$165.9 billion) in 2024 compared to the previous year, according to Statistics Korea.

It marked the highest since relevant data began to be compiled in 2001.

Transactions of food and beverage in cyberspace advanced 14.8 per cent, while demand for agricultural, livestock and fishery products jumped 17.8 per cent last year.

Online purchases of car accessories increased 15.0 per cent, while demand for the travel and transport and the culture and leisure services expanded 9.3 per cent and 5.8 per cent each. — Xinhua

Philippines to cut retail price of imported rice to US\$0.94

THE Philippines' Department of Agriculture (DA) on Tuesday announced its plan to reduce the maximum suggested retail price (MSRP) of imported rice to 55 pesos (US\$0.94) per kilogrammes from 58 pesos (\$0.99) per kilogramme to provide much-needed relief to Filipino consumers struggling with the high cost of the food staple.

The announcement came one day after Agriculture Secretary Francisco Tiu Laurel declared a food security emergency on rice amid an "extraordinary" rise in local rice prices.

Laurel said he expects a further reduction of the MSRP in the coming weeks, possibly below 50 pesos (\$0.86) per kilogramme by early March.

"After this reduction, we plan to lower it further to 52 pesos (\$0.89) per kilogramme by mid-February and then to 49 pesos (\$0.84) per kilogramme two weeks after. This should reflect the lower global prices of rice and the reduced tariff," Laurel said. — Xinhua

Nintendo cuts FY 2024 net profit forecast amid sluggish Switch sales

NINTENDO Co on Tuesday lowered its net profit forecast for the fiscal year ending March to 270 billion yen (\$1.7 billion) from its earlier projection of 300 billion yen amid fading consumer interest in its long-selling Switch consoles. The Japanese gaming company now forecasts sales of 1.19 trillion yen, down from its previous estimate of 1.28 trillion yen, with demand for both Switch consoles and related software, except for the popular Mario Party series, plummeting.

Sales of the Switch, the firm's mainstay console launched in 2017, plunged 30.6 per cent to 9.54 million units in the



(FILES) This file photo taken on 16 January 2025 shows a man walking past shelves in the gaming section of Nintendo Switch products at a shop in Tokyo. Nintendo were expected to announce their third quarter results later on 4 February 2025. **PHOTO: AFP**

nine months through December, with analysts saying consumers are los-

ing interest as it enters its eighth year on the market. The console's annual

sales projection was lowered to 11 million units from 12.5 million. — Kyodo

Vietnam's stock market poses opportunities, challenges

VIETNAM'S post-Lunar New Year stock market in 2025 presents a complex landscape, with both opportunities and challenges, cited experts on Tuesday.

Securities experts said while foreign capital inflows and economic growth offered optimism, concerns remained over corporate bond maturities and market liquidity.

Experts also pointed out encouraging signs for the period. The VN-Index closed at 1,265 points in the final trading session before 25 January, reflecting investor optimism for

a bright start to the new year.

Dao Hong Duong, head of Industry and Stock Analysis at VPBank Securities, said three out of the last five years had seen post-Lunar New Year market gains, with two years recording growth of over four per cent.

Investor sentiment is generally more positive after the new year, aided by the release of corporate earnings reports and the start of the annual general meeting season, which typically improves market liquidity, he said. — Xinhua

JAL net profit rises 6% in April-Dec on inbound tourism demand

JAPAN Airlines Co said Tuesday it posted a net profit of 91.05 billion yen (\$586 million) in the nine months that ended December, up 6.0 per cent from a year earlier, supported by strong inbound tourism demand.

The major Japanese air carrier's sales rose 10.9 per cent to 1.39 tril-

lion yen for the period. JAL left unchanged its full-year forecast, expecting a net profit of 100 billion yen on sales of 1.93 trillion yen.

ANA Holdings Inc, another major airline company, announced its earnings report on Monday. It said its net profit fell 10.0 per cent to 134.03

billion yen in April-December period, amid an increase in maintenance and personnel costs.

Sales grew 10.3 per cent to 1.70 trillion yen.

ANA lifted its net profit forecast for the year ending March to 140 billion yen, from an earlier projection of 120 billion yen. — Kyodo

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Job Vacancy Announcement

The Embassy of Bangladesh in Yangon is looking for a suitable candidate for the post of Steno-typist (Local Based). Application deadline is **10 February 2025**

The applicants must have the following qualifications:

- Diploma or certification in Graphic Design. However, Bachelor's degree in Graphic Design or a related field is desirable;
- Technical skill on IT;
- Proficiency in typing in both English and Myanmar languages;
- Good command on Myanmar and communicative English Languages.

For details please contact:
Email: mission.yangon@mofa.gov.bd
Phone: 01-7515275

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V CAPE FELTON VOY.NO. (928N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CAPE FELTON VOY.NO. (928N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **5-2-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

(ONE) OCEAN NETWORK EXPRESS LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (250N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (250N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **5-2-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V SITC WENDE VOY.NO. (2502S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SITC WENDE VOY.NO. (2502S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **5-2-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** 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**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD



A photo shows a view of the town of Fira on the Greek island of Santorini in the Aegean Sea, on 4 February 2025. Fresh overnight tremors shook Greece's top tourist island Santorini, media reports said, prompting people to sleep outdoors and others to leave by plane or ferry. **PHOTO: AFP**

Thousands leave as fresh tremors shake Greece's Santorini

THOUSANDS of people were leaving the Greek island of Santorini by sea and air for a third day on Tuesday, as an unprecedented series of earthquakes shook the top travel destination.

Some 6,000 people have already left the island, known for its spectacular cliffside views and a dormant volcano, which has been hit by hundreds of tremors since last week, officials said.

A quake with a magnitude of 4.9 hit early on Tuesday

morning amid other smaller tremors. No injuries or damage were reported on Santorini and the neighbouring islands of Anafi, Ios and Amorgos, which have also been affected by the seismic activity.

Experts say the region has not experienced seismic activity on this scale in recent history and do not know how long it will last.

"This is the first time this is happening, we have not seen it before," Athanassios Ganas, research director at the nation-

al observatory's institute of geodynamics, told state TV ERT.

He noted that the area had been hit with over 40 earthquakes with a magnitude of over 4.0 in the past 72 hours.

Santorini lies atop a volcano which last erupted in 1950 — but an experts' committee on Monday said the current phenomenon was "not linked to volcanic activity".

According to the Greek coastguard, over 4,600 people have left the island by ferry since Sunday alone. — AFP

Residents warned of ongoing flood threat in northeastern Australia

HEAVY rainfall has eased, but evacuated residents of northeastern Australia have been told it is not yet safe to return home amid widespread flooding.

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) on Tuesday morning cancelled a severe weather warning that had been in place since Friday for Queensland's North

Tropical Coast region.

Parts of the region have received almost two metres of rainfall since Friday, causing widespread dangerous flooding.

Queensland Premier David Crisafulli said on Tuesday morning that rainfall in Townsville, the second-largest city in the region, overnight was less severe than

predicted.

He said that the coastal towns of Ingham, Cardwell and Halifax — all between 95 and 140 kilometres northwest of Townsville — have been hit the hardest by flooding, with information still coming through about the "devastation" in those communities. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel to send delegation to Doha for talks on continuation of Gaza deal: PM's office

ISRAEL is preparing to send a delegation to Qatar for talks on the next phase of the Gaza ceasefire agreement, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said in a statement on Tuesday.

"Israel is preparing for the working-echelon delegation to leave for Doha at the end of this week in order to discuss technical details related to the continued implementation of the agreement," the statement said.

Next week, the Security Cabinet is expected to convene to discuss Israel's overall position regarding the second stage of the deal, which according to the office, "will guide the continuation of the negotiations." The announcement followed Netanyahu's meetings in Washington with US National Security Advisor Mike Waltz and President Donald Trump's special envoy to the Middle East, Steve Witkoff. Netanyahu is set to meet Trump later Tuesday. Netanyahu's office said discussions would focus on the fragile truce and efforts to end the war in Gaza. The prime minister also hinted at discussions on efforts to advance a possible normalization agreement between Israel and Saudi Arabia.

The Gaza deal includes a 42-day initial phase of truce, during which a total of 33 hostages and hundreds of Palestinians held in Israeli jails are to be released. Talks on implementing the second phase were due to begin on the 16th day of the ceasefire, which fell on Monday. — Xinhua

Hamas says ready to negotiate for 2nd phase of ceasefire

A source from the political bureau of Hamas said on Monday that the movement is ready to engage in indirect negotiations with Israel to implement the second phase of the ceasefire and a potential prisoner-for-hostage exchange.

The source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said, "Hamas has fulfilled all the terms of the agreement and is ready to start indirect negotiations with Israel to finalize the second phase, which aims to ease the suffering of our people."

Under the three-phase ceasefire agreement reached between Israel and Hamas last month, negotiations on implementing the second phase were to begin before the 16th day of phase one, which falls on Monday.

However, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu travelled to Washington on Sunday to meet with US President Donald Trump. Media reports indicated that Netanyahu decided to delay sending a negotiation team to Qatar for talks on the second phase until after his meeting with Trump. — Xinhua



A handout photo taken on 2 February 2025 and released by the Queensland Fire Department on 3 February 2025 shows an aerial view of flood-affected areas around Townsville, Queensland.

PHOTO: HANDOUT/QUEENSLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT/AFP

SPORTS

Man City move for Gonzalez, Tel joins Spurs on deadline day

MANCHESTER City signed Nico Gonzalez from Porto in the biggest move from Premier League clubs on Monday's transfer deadline day, while Bayern Munich's Mathys Tel headed to Tottenham on loan.

City's midfield frailties without Ballon d'Or winner Rodri, who is out for the season due to a serious knee injury, were exposed in a 5-1 thrashing at Arsenal on Sunday.

Pep Guardiola's men find themselves in a battle just to qualify for next season's Champions League, with the defending champions sitting fifth in the Premier League, 15 points behind leaders Liverpool.

City were also in need of reinforcements for a blockbuster Champions League play-off round tie against holders Real Madrid later this month.

Former Barcelona midfielder Gonzalez, 23, arrives for a reported fee of 60 million euros (£50 million, \$62 million).

"This is the perfect opportunity for me at this stage of my career," said Gonzalez.

"I know the reputation Pep has and I cannot wait to work with him. In fact, I am honoured he wants me to play in his team."

City have already splashed out more than £120 million in January on Egypt forward Omar Marmoush and young defenders Vitor Reis and Abdukodir Khusanov.

Tel's U-turn

Tottenham were busy in the final hours of the window as they bolstered Ange Postecoglou's injury-ravaged squad.

Tel reportedly turned down the opportunity to join Spurs earlier in the window after a £50 million deal was agreed with the German giants.

But the French under-21 international has now moved to north London until the end of the season with an option to make the move permanent in the summer.

Spurs, though, were frustrated in their bid to add more defensive recruits on deadline day.

The BBC reported Crystal Palace rejected a £70 million bid for captain Marc Guehi, who has just 18 months left to run of his contract at Selhurst Park.

Chelsea's Axel Disasi had been linked with a move across London, but instead joined Aston Villa, with the move only confirmed two hours after the window shut.

Villa also added more firepower with the signing of Marco Asensio on loan from Paris Saint-Germain. — AFP

Shan United to play Svay Rieng FC today



The team coaches and captains of Shan United and Svay Rieng FC at the pre-match press conference. PHOTO: SUFC

THE pre-match press conference for the 2024-2025 ASEAN Club Championship Group A final match, where Cambodia's Svay Rieng FC will compete against Myanmar's Shan United FC was held yesterday in Cambodia. Both teams' coaches and team captains attended the event.

Shan United FC's coach, Japanese national Hiroki remarked, "The opposing team has some excellent attackers and

one of their wing players is particularly strong for Southeast Asia. To avoid conceding goals, we've ensured thorough preparation for this match".

Shan United FC's captain Nanda Kyaw stated, "While the result of this match won't affect our progression from the group stage, we will still be facing them in the AFC Challenge League in March. So, both the coaches and players

are fully prepared".

Svay Rieng FC and Shan United FC will compete today at 7 pm Myanmar Standard Time in Cambodia. Although neither team has the chance to progress further in the competition, they will face off again in the quarterfinals of the 2024-2025 AFC Challenge League in March, where they will prepare for their encounter. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Thailand SEA Games to showcase men's, women's football, futsal



This picture captures the Myanmar women's football team competing at the 2023 SEA Games, where they won silver. PHOTO: MFF

THE 33rd SEA Games in Thailand will include both men's and women's tournaments in football and futsal. As the host nation holds a strong record in these sports, Thailand has ensured their inclusion in the event.

Men's football has been a part of the SEA Games since 1959, while the women's tournament was added in 1985. Futsal was introduced in 2007 when Thailand hosted the games but has only appeared intermittently depending on the host country's preference. It was previously included in 2007, 2011, 2013, 2017 and 2021. This year marks its sixth appearance.

In the men's football competition, only five nations have won gold. Thailand leads with 16 titles, followed by Malaysia six times, Myanmar five and

both Vietnam and Indonesia three times. In women's football, Vietnam has claimed eight championships while Thailand has won five times. Thailand has also dominated futsal, winning gold in all five previous editions where the sport was contested.

The Myanmar Football Federation has confirmed participation in all four competitions. The men's and women's football teams along with the men's and women's futsal teams, will compete at the Thailand SEA Games with preparations currently underway. At the 2023 Cambodia SEA Games, Myanmar's women's football team secured silver while the men's team finished fourth. Futsal was not included in that edition. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Neuer signs new Bayern Munich deal

FORMER Germany international goalkeeper Manuel Neuer has signed a one-year contract extension that will keep him at Bayern Munich until June 2026, the record German champions announced on Monday.

Since joining Bayern in 2011, Neuer has made 547 appearances for the club in all competitions, playing a key role in several domestic and European triumphs. During his time with Bayern, he has won 11 Bundesliga titles, two UEFA Champions League trophies and five German Cups.

"Manuel Neuer is the best goalkeeper of his generation and already a legend at Bayern. When people talk about the goalkeeper of our time, they talk about Manuel Neuer, all over the world. He is an absolute role model, both on and off the pitch. We are delighted that this unique and successful relationship will continue," said Bayern sporting director Max Eberl.

Neuer's influence goes far beyond shot-stopping. His ability to organize the defence and launch counterattacks with precise distribution has been a key factor in Bayern's continued success. — Xinhua



Tariff wars threaten maritime trade, says Eurogate president



Eurogate President Michael Blach receives an interview with Xinhua in Wilhelmshaven, Germany, 24 January 2025. PHOTO: XINHUA

PROTECTIONIST policies are putting global trade at risk and straining the maritime shipping industry, warned the president of Eurogate Group, a German container terminal operator.

In a recent interview with Xinhua, Eurogate President Michael Blach said mounting geopolitical tensions and unpredictable trade policies are compounding long-standing pressures on the maritime shipping sector, including the transition to cleaner energy and stricter environmental regulations.

"There is no doubt that protectionist tendencies are growing," Blach said, voicing concern over the US tariff threats. He added that such measures are "the wrong way to go", emphasizing the importance of collaboration and a strong commitment to free trade.

Tariff wars would drive up costs, dampen trade volumes, and push supply chains overseas, all of which could undermine demand for maritime trade, Blach said.

He went on to underscore the role global trade has played for decades in driving global economic prosperity and fostering international ties. "Free trade has not only propelled economic growth but also contributed to peace and stability."

He called on trade stakeholders worldwide to seek alternatives to tariff barriers and ensure global commerce continues to thrive.

According to Blach, one example of international collaboration is Eurogate's partnership with Chinese and German companies to establish a direct shipping route between China's Ningbo-Zhoushan

Port and Wilhelmshaven, Germany's only deep-water port. Known as the "China-Europe Express," this route is the fastest maritime connection between Europe and China's Yangtze River Delta region, with its inaugural container ship arriving in Wilhelmshaven on 24 January.

Blach highlighted the route's efficiency, cutting shipping time to just 26 days, about two weeks faster than traditional lanes. "We are pleased with our long-term partnership with Ningbo and confident that this express service will boost China-Europe trade volumes and stimulate trade activity between the two regions," he said.

While praising the robust and enduring cooperation between German and Chinese firms in the port and shipping sectors, the Eurogate president also acknowledged the positive role of the China-Europe freight train network connecting China with European countries like Germany, Poland and Spain. He said rail transport and maritime shipping are "complementary".

"Their synergy enables optimized intermodal solutions and enhances the overall efficiency and resilience across the China-Europe trade corridor," he said.

Looking ahead, Blach expressed optimism about the future of maritime logistics between Europe and China. "We look forward to deepening communication and cooperation with them (Chinese ports and technology companies), learning from each other, and jointly contributing to the sustainable development of the global shipping industry," he added. — Xinhua

Indonesia eager to join BRICS online platform initiative

INDONESIA is eager to participate in the BRICS online platform initiative, Indonesian Culture Minister Fadli Zon told Sputnik in an interview marking the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Russia and Indonesia.

In October 2024, Russian Minister of Culture Olga Lyubimova proposed creating a unified BRICS online platform to share films, TV series, and live broadcasts of cultural events among BRICS member states.

Indonesia's membership of BRICS opens new opportunities for cultural exchange, creative collaboration, and global discussions on cultural policy and heritage preservation, he said.

Zon highlighted Indonesia's desire to expand cooperation with Russian museums and explore their shared cultural heritage.

"As part of our 75th-anniversary celebrations, Indonesia is actively working with Russia on film screenings, exhibitions, and artistic exchanges. We strongly believe that these cultural engagements strengthen mutual understanding and global cultural diversity," he said.

The minister noted that Russian literature played an "essential role" in shaping his understanding of history, philosophy and society. He said he considers his Bachelor's degree in Russian literature a valuable asset that continues to influence his work today. — SPUTNIK

Democrats blast Musk as US aid agency HQ shuttered

THE US government's giant humanitarian agency closed its headquarters to staff Monday amid moves by Elon Musk, the world's richest person and President Donald Trump's controversial aide, to seize control in actions decried by critics as "plain illegal".

Workers at the US Agency for International Development (USAID) were told to stay out of its Washington office after

its website went dark over the weekend, with Secretary of State Marco Rubio announcing Monday it would come under his control.

Rubio said in a statement the agency had "long strayed from its original mission of responsibly advancing American interests abroad" and that he was launching a review of its activities ahead of a "potential reorganization".

But there was widespread confusion, as some 600 staffers found themselves locked out of their computer systems, ABC News reported.

Democrats were denied entry to the public lobby of the agency's headquarters by police blocking the doors as they joined around 50 demonstrators brandishing banners demanding: "Save USAID, save lives." — AFP



Protestors gather outside of USAID headquarters on 3 February 2025 in Washington, DC. Elon Musk, tech billionaire and head of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), said in a social media post that he and US President Donald Trump will shut down the foreign assistance agency. PHOTO: KAYLA BARTKOWSKI/GETTY IMAGES/AFP