

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

NATIONAL PAGE 6



MWBFA urges streamlined export procedures

BUSINESS PAGE 7



Cotton Division alerts growers to prepare for pre-monsoon season

Chinlone sport seeks **UNESCO** World Heritage status for 2026

THE Myanmar Chinlone Federation (MCF) is working to submit traditional Myanmar Chinlone, also known as cane ball, to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2026. To support this effort, the MCF has formed committees that are collecting and documenting historical information about the traditional Chinlone sport, according to Vice-President U Win Tint of the federation.

The information will cover the Chinlone sport, as well as its equipment, culture, and historical evidence related to it. Playing Chinlone involves hitting a cane ball with the toes, feet, knees, palms, heels, and soles of the feet.

Chinlone, a traditional sport popular among both the Myan-



This photo showcases a team of Chinlone players enjoying a traditional sport that dates back to the Pyu era.

mar people and foreigners, is believed to have been played since the Pyu era. Its unique feature

is that it is not a competition between individuals or teams, but a collaborative effort in which

players work together to keep the Chinlone from falling to the ground. – ASH/TH

Thingyan set to boost **PyinOoLwin** tourism

From the aspect of the transport and the fine weather, the visitor arrival to PyinOoLwin Township in Mandalay Region is expected to rise during the Thingyan holidays, according to the township residents.

weather in PyinOoLwin is as fine as that in Taunggyi, Inlay and Kalaw plus better transportation, hoping the visitors' arrival to increase during the summer holiday and Thingyan, said residents.

“On the grounds of the fine weather and the convenient transportation, we hope the visitor arrival in Thingyan

will increase. PyinOoLwin is highland and the weather is cold like Taunggyi, Inlay and Kalaw, so I think the visitor arrival will be large during this summer holiday

and Thingyan,” said a resident.

Last year’s flower festival was thronged with people and visitors arriving at Pwe Kauk waterfall which added to new tourist attraction areas was also large, even several thousands of people visited daily during the festival.

“PyinOoLwin was quite vibrant in last year’s flower festival and December holidays. Now, cherry trees are in blossom and ‘red silk cotton’ (Albizia lebbek) flowers will blossom in summer. The town is also beautiful with seasonal flowers,” he added. — Thit Taw/ZS



Visitors flock to PyinOoLwin during the December holidays in 2024.

NATIONAL

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Announcement 1/2025

8th Waning of Tabodwe, 1386 ME
20 February 2025

Allowing Kayah State People's Party (KySPP) to be registered as political party

THE Union Election Commission has announced that the Kayah State People's Party (KySPP), headquartered at No Aye-127, Thazin Street, Aung Thiha Ward, Loikaw, Kayah State, has been officially registered as a political party under Section 9 of the Political Parties Registration Law, effective from 20 February 2025.

The registration number of the Kayah State People's Party (KySPP) is 56.

Sd/ Ko Ko
Chairman
Union Election Commission

United Strength Needed to Stop Internal Threats Undermining National Progress

- While many citizens work to improve the country, some engage in obstructionism, undermining progress.
- Terrorists, often from within the region, commit destructive acts.
- Outsiders cannot destroy a region; the threat often comes from within.
- It's like those who take shelter under a tree but cut off its branches.
- These terrorists must be stopped through the united strength of the people.

(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the SAC Meeting 3/2024 on 7 June 2024)

Govt to combat support for terrorism, armed insurgents

THE Constitution stated that the Union is the ultimate owner of all lands and all natural resources above and below the ground, above and beneath the water and in the atmosphere in the Union. Moreover, the relevant laws for State-owned natural resources are enacted following the stipulation of the Constitution – the Union shall enact necessary laws to supervise the extraction and utilization of State-owned natural resources by economic forces, and the exploration of natural resources is permitted under the respective laws.

However, the rapacious business elements extracted the State-owned natural resources unlawfully taking advantage of terrorist attacks and armed insurgency in certain regions of the country to provide terrorist groups and armed insurgents. In extracting the State-owned natural resources unlawfully, it is also found that the poor locals who do not understand the law are persuaded with financial incentives in extracting processes. Such doings are supposed to be encouragement for violence under the Counter Terrorism Law, and so, those working in unlawful extraction should be aware of it.

The government will expose and take effective actions against those extracting the State-owned natural resources to provide terrorist groups and armed insurgents. Therefore, the people should avoid working in the illegal extraction of natural resources that encourage and support terrorist groups and armed insurgents. — MNA/KTZH

Objectives of 80th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day 2025

- To actively participate in serving three main functions of Tatmadaw national defence duty, training duty and public benefit duty upholding Our Three Main National Causes;
- To steadfastly carry out measures for State development and genuine, eternal peace by ending the armed conflicts under the Constitution (2008) and NCA;
- To protect the State and its citizens from dangers and provide sector-wise assistance for the safety and socioeconomic development of the people;
- To provide necessary assistance to hold a free and fair multiparty democratic general election by Tatmadaw for the emergence of a Union based on democratic and federal systems after carrying out measures per the stipulations of the State of Emergency.

Sixth-day Tatmadaw military band competition held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE Level B contests of the 31st Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, and Air) Military Band Competition, marking the 80th Anniversary of

Armed Forces Day, continued yesterday morning at the Nay Pyi Taw Transit Centre parade ground.

Participating bands included Southern Command Band 1, Triangle Region Command Band 1, Easten-Central Com-

mand Band 2, and Coastal Region Command Band 1.

The event was attended by members of the Tatmadaw

(Army, Navy, and Air) Military Band Competition Committee, the judges, the contestants, and invitees. — MNA/MKKS



The sixth-day Tatmadaw military band competition in action yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw to hail the 80th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day.

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)

Haka marks 77th Chin National Day

STATE Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister at the Prime Minister's Office Admiral Tin Aung San, accompanied by SAC Member Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, SAC Members Dr Hmuh Thang and Dr Ba Shwe, Union ministers and deputy ministers, yesterday attended the 77th Anniversary of Chin National Day ceremony in Haka Township, Chin State.

The Deputy Prime Minister, SAC Members and Chin State Chief Minister Dr Vungh Suan Thang first cut the ceremonial ribbon to inaugurate the event, and posed for the documentary group photo.

The patron members then took the position and saluted the State flag.

Patron leader U Kau Lyan Thang made a greeting speech, and Admiral Tin Aung San read out the message sent by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior



Photos show SAC Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister at the Prime Minister's Office Admiral Tin Aung San attending the 77th Chin National Day in Haka yesterday.

General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing to the occasion.

The Chin State chief minister remarked.

Afterwards, the Admiral and party presented prizes to those who won good civil servant awards, and awards for ex-

cellence in management (first) and (second class).

They also presented K50 million for rations to temporarily displaced government employees in Chin State, 50 DTH receivers and 100 DTB T-2 set boxes for the Chin State government, K54,369,000 worth of foodstuffs, K45,000,000 worth

of a Green House (100 feet by 30 feet by 18 feet) and sports gears for the internally displaced people.

At noon, they met state, district and township-level departmental staff at the meeting hall of the Chin State government, and discussed matters related to administrative mechanisms,

economic and social affairs of the state.

They observed the booths displayed at the Chin National Day event and watched the Chin traditional dance performance. They all enjoyed a bonfire to mark the Chin National Day together with Chin traditional dance troupes. — MNA/KTZH



Deputy PM MoFA Union Minister receives Nepali Ambassador

DEPUTY Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Than Swe received Mr Harishchandra Ghimire, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Nepal to the Republic

Nepali Ambassador Mr Harishchandra Ghimire calls on Deputy Prime Minister MoFA Union Minister U Than Swe yesterday.

of the Union of Myanmar, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

They cordially exchanged views on expanding bilateral relations, focusing on strengthening economic cooperation and promoting trade and investment between the two countries.

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

The people are urged to receive vaccination of COVID-19 without fail as full-time vaccination of COVID-19 and receiving booster shots can effectively mitigate infection of the virus, severe suffering from the disease and increase of death rate due to the disease.

NATIONAL

Agriculture and Livestock Development Commission holds second meeting

THE second meeting of the Agricultural and Livestock Development Commission was held at the Department of Agricultural Research (Yezin) yesterday afternoon.

Present at the meeting online were Agricultural and Livestock Development Commission Chairman General Nyo Saw, commission members, the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman and relevant officials. Chief ministers and ministers of state and region, governments, and representatives from the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI).

During the meeting, Chairman General Nyo Saw stated that the development of agro-based industries is essential for the country's economic growth and the well-being of the people. He emphasized the need to establish agriculture, livestock and industrial high schools to facilitate this progress. He also pointed out the importance of transitioning from traditional farming system to a more systematic one, which requires a well-trained workforce.

To achieve this, regions and states must work together to produce skilled human resources



The second meeting of the Agriculture and Livestock Development Commission in progress yesterday attended online by Commission Chairperson General Nyo Saw.

in agriculture and livestock breeding. He highlighted that Myanmar has a strong economic foundation and that the agricultural and livestock industries must be enhanced to contribute to national economic growth. Development zones for livestock breeding must be established, ensuring that breeding activities align with appropriate regional conditions.

He also stressed the need to address water availability for

agricultural activities by utilizing rainwater, dam water, underground water and river water. Regions near major rivers should implement water-pumping projects for irrigation. He suggested using solar energy to generate electricity for these operations, mentioning that both government-led and private sector-driven solar energy projects can be undertaken to meet energy demands.

Regarding investment, he

stated that financial support including project loans would be provided as necessary. He called for close cooperation between the commission and regional governments to implement these initiatives effectively.

He then urged authorities to streamline investment approval processes for both domestic and foreign investors in the agricultural and livestock industries. The provision of necessary technologies, electricity and capital

for agro-based industries is crucial for their sustainable development.

He also emphasized that the 21 key responsibilities of the Agricultural and Livestock Development Commission must be closely coordinated with ministries and regional governments. Ministries, relevant departments, and regional governments were encouraged to provide feedback and collaborate in carrying out these responsibilities efficiently.

The commission chairman then inspected the model farms and research plantations under the Department of Agricultural Research, which are testing the triple-cropping system. During the visit, the director-general of the Department of Agricultural Research and the Department of Livestock Research briefed the chairman on their ongoing and future research projects. The chairman then provided the necessary guidance.

Following this, the chairman visited the seed sample exhibition halls, seed banks, and agricultural technology dissemination facilities. He also visited the television studio dedicated to farmer education and agricultural broadcasting. — MNA/KZL

MNHRC inspects Mandalay Central Prison

ON 19 and 20 February 2025, the inspection team led by Chairperson U Paw Lwin Sein of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) inspected the Mandalay Central Prison in Aungmyaythazan Township, Mandalay Region, under Sections 43 and 44 of the Commission Law.

The inspection team inspected various facilities within the prison including the dormitories, the prison hospital, the library, vocational training places for inmates, family visit areas, prison school, jail, kitchen, food storage, water purifiers, and water sanitation systems of the Mandalay Central Prison.

During the inspection, the inspection team privately in-

terviewed the prisoners who wanted to report freely and privately.

The inspection team enquired about and checked whether the prisoners were afforded their fundamental rights, including an appropriate food supply, access to healthcare, and provision of sufficient purified water. Furthermore, the team enquired whether the prisoners had received items issued by the prison and items sent by their families and whether they were permitted family visits. Additionally, the team evaluated the conditions of physical activities, the right to freedom of religion, access to educational and vocational training, and whether there



The inspection team led by MNHRC Chairperson U Paw Lwin Sein views round the Mandalay Central Prison on 19-20 February 2025.

were instances of human rights violations and torture by prison officials and fellow prisoners. MNHRC also donated knowl-

edgeable books for the benefit of the prisoners.

The inspection team will send its findings and recom-

mendations to the relevant department for necessary actions under the MNHRC Law. — MNHRC

NATIONAL

Workshop on “Promoting Role and Coordination of Ministries for Successful ACMECS Chairmanship” held

A workshop on “Promoting the Role and Coordination of Ministries for the Successful Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) Chairmanship” took place at the Lawkanat Hall of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In his opening remarks at the opening session of the workshop, Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe highlighted that Myanmar has been actively participating in international and regional cooperation mechanisms. He also recalled that Myanmar hosted the First ACMECS Summit in Bagan in 2003 and the Sixth Summit in Nay Pyi Taw in 2015. He also informed that Myanmar assumed ACMECS Chairmanship from Lao PDR during the 10th ACMECS Summit held in Kunming, China, on 7 November 2024 and is set to convene the upcoming 11th ACMECS Summit as Chair. “Strengthening Socio-Economic Development towards Smart and Sustainable ACMECS” has been selected as the Theme of the 11th ACMECS Summit. The workshop is held to successfully assume Chairmanship during its term. Moreover, the implementation needs to be emphasized with a focus on areas such as agro-based industrial development to support regional socio-economic development, increase production of quality



The commemorative group photo of the workshop on the “Promoting the Role and Coordination of Ministries for the Successful Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya- Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy Chairmanship.

consumer goods from forestry resources and environmental protection. He further emphasized that the workshop will provide a good opportunity for participants to exchange views, share experiences, discuss challenges, and outline plans and activities.

In the Plenary Session, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Lwin Oo gave an overview of planned meetings and activities to be carried out during Myanmar’s ACMECS Chairmanship and the purposes and expected outcomes of the workshop. During the workshop, senior offi-

cials and representatives from respective ministries shared their views on matters related to activities and progress under ACMECS cooperation; viable projects and programmes to be implemented during Myanmar’s ACMECS Chairmanship; and effective cooperation and coordination during Myanmar’s Chairmanship; developing action plans to realize the ACMECS projects and programmes; and enhancing the role and coordination of respective ministries for successful Myanmar’s ACMECS Chairmanship.

In the Closing Session, Deputy Min-

ister U Lwin Oo concluded the workshop by encouraging the respective ministries to continue implementing prioritized projects and work plans under the Three Pillars of ACMECS cooperation in alignment with internal processes and to translate the workshop’s outcomes into actionable plans that will deliver long-term benefits for the nation and the region as a whole.

The workshop was attended by approximately 60 senior government officials and representatives from the respective ministries involved in ACMECS cooperation. — MNA



A sample of the photo that must be included in the application.

July JLPT exam: Online registration opens 24 Feb

THE JLPT Exam Organizing Committee and the Myanmar Association of Japanese Alumni have announced that individual online applicants for the July JLPT exam in 2025 can register from 9 am on 24 February.

Registration can be done during the acceptance period and those who have registered for previous exams do not need to re-apply. Data corrections in the previous account can be made by clicking on “User Information”.

It is a one-email one-registration

system and only one application can be submitted per a registered Login ID. Corrections can be made within the specified period after submission. As it takes 3 days for confirmation, applicants are advised to take care of correct spellings and entries. Names and dates of birth different from the citizenship scrutiny card (CSC) will not be allowed to be entered. For two names, the @ symbol must be added.

It is advised not to forget the email, login password and entries. Self-entry is required and if any errors occur from filling

by a representative, the individual will be solely responsible for it. The applicant for the JLPT Online Form must be 10 years old or above and have a national ID card.

Other requirements include a personal email account, image files (JPEG or PNG) of the applicant’s photo, CSC and signature, local card (e-commerce registered MPU card) and QR Payment (KBZ Pay), which must be prepared in advance. The contact number for the exam is 01 757 10 15 Ext-1 (only during office hours). — MT/ZN

Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR
www.gnlm.com.mm
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION
(+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 255597511
ADVERTISING & MARKETING
(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 251022355
marketing@gnlm.com.mm
subscription@gnlm.com.mm

Printed and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.
gnlmnews@gmail.com,
newsroom@gnlm.com.mm
www.gnlm.com.mm

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

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

MWBFA urges streamlined export procedures



This picture shows an exhibition showcasing value-added timber products.

MYANMAR Wood-Based Furniture Association (MWBFA) requested easing export procedures for locally made value-added furniture and flooring worth below \$500 to the Department of Forest, said U Aung Kyaw Moe, vice chair of the association.

“MWBFA called for reducing red tape to the Department of Forest so that there would be no need to seek permits of the related departments if furniture including chairs, tables are worth below \$500. We primarily export high-quality teak furniture as well as flooring substituting parquet. The flooring is made of ironwood, shorea and

sal,” he elaborated.

Myanmar yearly exports furniture and value-added flooring to India, Singapore and Japan. The domestic furniture industries sourced raw materials including teak through an auction of the Myanma Timber Enterprise. Furthermore, MWBFA also conducts a timber sales agreement with Myanma Timber Enterprise in which the State-owned enterprise has a legal right to the commercial sale of value-added timber products manufactured by the MWBFA, attaching the MTE logo. The enterprise resells them to departments, hotels or domestic buyers. — ASH/KK

Dried butterfly pea blooms overseas amid high local demand

IN addition to high domestic consumption, dried butterfly peas have also overseas orders, according to bean traders from Aungban Township.

The dried butterfly pea trade is better than that of fresh butterfly bean and the price is better too. Now, dried butterfly peas are started available.

“At present, dried butterfly peas are just available. We called it dried pea. Butterfly pea season is too short, and lasts just 2-3 months. Dried peas become available shortly after fresh peas are produced. Dried pea price is better and it has also overseas orders. Currently, we have orders from Thailand,” said Ma Nyo Lae Yi, a vegetables and fruits trader in Aungban Township.

Dried butterfly pea has domestic orders too and Yangon is the biggest. It is the most-consumed bean in Anya (central Myanmar).

“It also has nationwide orders in the internal market.

It is the most-consumed bean in Anya. People in Anya boil it until tender and serve it with tea. Yangon’s orders are the biggest. This bean is distributed to the lower Myanmar from Yangon’s Thiri Mingala Market. Dried bean lasts nearly a year and decayed after a year. Fresh beans will be available until the end of March,” she added. — Thit Taw/ZS



This image depicts dried butterfly peas which have overseas orders.

Myanmar movie ‘Mei Cho’ filming kicks off

THE ceremony to mark the start filming of the Myanmar movie ‘Mei Cho’ (The Cracking Sound of a Heart) took place on 18 February at the Botahtaung Pagoda in Botahtaung Township, Yangon Region.

Khine Zun Wint wrote the script and screenplay for the film, while director Htet Naung Htun will produce the movie on behalf of Rangoon Production and Bellaire Production.

The movie is an adaptation of the Myanmar television drama ‘Mei Cho’, which aired on MRTV-4 in August 2024. It will be recreated as a full-length film.

Lead actress Wyne Shwe Yee commented, “I will continue playing Mei Cho in this film. Ko Nay Toe will take on an additional role as a newcomer to Mie Cho’s village. However, the

film’s storyline is quite different from the television series — it focuses on events that happened before “Mei Cho” began. The decision to remake “Mei Cho” as a film was inspired by the strong support from fans. Just like in the series, audiences can expect surprises in the movie as well.”

The film ‘Mei Cho’ will feature an ensemble cast, including Academy Award winner Nay Toe, along with Shin Mwe La, Min Phone Myat, Marn Hein, Wyne Shwe Yee, Wai Lar Yi, Thet Oo Ko, Hmu Thakin Ko, Tay Zar Kyaw, May Thin Ko, Paing Khant Zaw, Aung Htun Naung, Wai Yan Htet, May Myat Naing, Sai Zeya, Pan Thu Kha, Chit Khun Cho, U Zaw Hmaing, U Shwe Oh, Daw De Bi, and many supporting actors. — ASH/MKKS

‘Myitta Amwe Bagan Myay’ film premieres in Yangon



This photo captures the premiere show of the ‘Myitta Amwe Bagan Myay’ movie.

THE premiere show of the Myanmar film ‘Myitta Amwe Bagan Myay’ (Legacy of Love, Land of Bagan) took place yesterday at Thamada Cinema in Dagon Township, Yangon.

This film is based on a famous play by Academy Nye-in Min, who also wrote the script. Academy Nyunt Myanmar Nyi Nyi Aung directed the film under the production of Triple Six Films.

Director Nyunt Myanmar Nyi Nyi Aung expressed his deep connection to the film, saying, “This is my third film where I had full creative freedom. My first was ‘Kyun’ (Slave) when I started directing, followed by ‘Hnalone Tha Htel Ka Ayeyawady’ (Echoes of Ayeyawady) which came from my heart. In this film, I’ve carefully highlighted Bagan’s cultural beauty, its traditions and Myanmar’s classical dance forms.”

The film features a stellar cast, including Kyaw Htet Aung, Mee Mee, Ekari San, Academy May Than Nu, Ye Mon and Arnt Min Nyo. It is set to be released nationwide in major cinemas starting on 21 February. — ASH/KZL

CBM sells over CNY1.8M, THB3M in 3 days

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold 1.8 million yuan and three million baht in the first three days of this week.

CBM injected over one million baht on 19 February, 970,000 yuan and one million baht on 18 February, 910,000 yuan and one million baht on 17 February, \$120,000, one million yuan and over 950,000 baht on 14 February and over 548,000 yuan and 597,000 baht on 13 February.

CBM announced on 11 February to sell \$21 million to fuel

oil importers and shortly after, injected over \$21.4 million and 500,000 baht into the markets on that day.

It sold \$82,000, 220,000 yuan and one million baht on 10 February, \$23 million and 600,000 yuan on 7 February and over \$150,000 and 214,830 yuan on 6 February.

CBM announced on 5 February that it would inject \$23 million into the fuel oil sector. CBM sold \$490,000 and 500,000 yuan on 5 February, over 105,900 yuan on 4 February and 500,000 yuan



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

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 devalu-

ation. According to CBM's notification on 15 March, it has been collaborating with law enforcement agencies to combat and prosecute those who attempt to manipulate the currency market under the existing laws. CBM

allowed authorized dealers (private banks) to operate online foreign exchange trading freely as per the market rate depending on supply and demand, starting from 5 December 2023. — NN/KK

Cotton Division alerts growers to prepare for pre-monsoon season



Farmers harvesting cotton in a sun-lit field.

THE Cotton and Allied Fibre Crops Division under the Department of Agriculture notified long-staple cotton growers of preparing necessary measures for the pre-monsoon growing season.

Cultivation of pre-monsoon long-staple cotton started in February. Growers are required to make land preparation and operations on time.

The division stated that growers need to store cotton seeds (Ngwechi 6, 10 and 11, Shwetaung-8 and 10) distributed by the division in advance before the growing season, en-

sure utilization of high-grading pedigree cotton seeds with over 80 per cent yielding rate and genetic uniformity, and keeping them in dry places after sun drying for two to three times.

Additionally, growers must engage in land preparation including removing crop residue, soil treatment and irrigation. They need to choose loamy and sandy land that can hold water. Farmers are asked to plough land firstly when the soil is at an optimal moisture level for soil aeration and easier seed germination

and adding water to land before ploughing for the second time and deal with weeds in the farm, harrowing to kill growing weeds, destroying weeds and mature weed seeds and cleaning farm machinery to retain the value, cleaning irrigation channels, use organic fertilizers and use herbicide at least 20-25 days in advance before the growing season to maintain moisture of the soil.

The division informed growers of the pre-monsoon cotton growing season from mid-February to mid-March. — NN/KK

MoHT to conduct Thai Cuisine Course in Mar

INDIVIDUALS can embark on culinary adventures with a Thai cuisine course opened by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism in March.

The four-week course will take place during weekdays (9:30 am to 12:30 pm) from 3 to 28 March at the ministry's Centre for Tourism Development. The course fee is K250,000. The professionals holding a certificate from Thailand will teach more

than 25 Thai dishes including kitchen operations and management systems on theoretical and practical approaches.

Applications can be submitted to the centre. They can also fill in an application form via Google link <https://forms.gle/KK7suJr899qPwu559>. Individuals can make enquiries for details through 01 8377559 and tts.yangon@gmail.com. — NN/KK

MSME loans available for application

MSME business owners in Nay Pyi Taw, the Union Territory, as well as in regions and states, can apply for the necessary loans to expand their businesses, purchase machinery, and procure raw materials. These loans are provided by the Myanmar Economic Bank, Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank, and 16 private banks.

The annual interest rates are three per cent for loans where at least 30 per cent is used for fixed capital, four per cent for loans used entirely 100 per cent as working capital and five per cent for loans issued under the Credit Guarantee Insurance (CGI) system.

MSME business owners who wish to apply for loans are advised to contact the relevant MSME agencies in Nay Pyi Taw, the Union Territory, regions, and states.

MSME Development Fund Management Committee

Gold Market Rate as of 20 February 2025

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K5,500,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.

Advertise

with us / Hotline 09 255597511, 09 454237515

OPINION

Emphasize improvement of mother language

ANY countries use a mother language as a common communication in different communities. Such a mother language is the backbone of relevant countries in initiating the daily smooth process of office work and intangible access for community members in public relations. It can be seen that the important role of the mother language contributes to the functionalities of all work processes at all times.

Languages play a vital role in education and sustainable development, facilitating knowledge transfer and cultural preservation. With around 8,324 languages worldwide, many face extinction due to globalization. Supporting mother tongue education enhances learning, as students grasp concepts better in familiar languages, improving engagement and critical thinking.

Mother languages can only be preserved if they are valued and actively maintained. Around 43 per cent of languages spoken worldwide are at risk of disappearing. Behind every language, there are rich cultural traditions and the identities of the people who speak them. Mother tongues are essential for the overall development of children. Children who understand and speak their mother language benefit in their learning process, gain a deeper understanding of their culture and find it easier to learn new languages.

the mother language.

Mother languages can only be preserved if they are valued and actively maintained. Around 43 per cent of languages spoken worldwide are at risk of disappearing. Behind every language, there are rich cultural traditions and the identities of the people who speak them. Mother tongues are essential for the overall development of children. Children who understand and speak their mother language benefit in their learning process, gain a deeper understanding of their culture and find it easier to learn new languages.

Actually, every language is valuable and deserves to be respected. It is not enough for individuals to simply appreciate and speak both their mother tongue and other languages. Leaders and policymakers must also recognize the value of languages and ensure that not only children who speak dominant languages but also those whose mother tongues are not widely spoken are considered. By doing so, a nation can truly demonstrate respect for all the mother languages spoken within its borders. Hence, everybody should seek precious opportunities for their sake as well as for their nations.

INDIA has been a land of rich cultural heritage, art, and craftsmanship for centuries. Its folk traditions, music, dance, and handicrafts are not just expressions of creativity but also reflections of its deep-rooted history. In the modern era, it is crucial to preserve these traditions while also promoting international cultural cooperation.

With this vision, the Haryana government established the Surajkund International Handicrafts Mela in 1987. Over the years, this fair has grown into a global platform where artisans, craftsmen, and performers from different countries come together to celebrate their heritage.

The Surajkund Mela is held annually in Faridabad, Haryana, during the first two weeks of February. This year it is being held on 7-23 February 2025. A 20-member delegation from Myanmar is actively participating in the fair this year, with 15 artists and 5 craftsmen. The Mela authorities are hosting the 20-member Myanmar troupe. These artists are presenting traditional dance and music performances, while the craftsmen are showcasing Myanmar's handicrafts at dedicated stalls, which have been receiving tremendous appreciation from visitors.

This article explores the history and significance of Surajkund Mela, its impact on India-Myanmar cultural relations, and its growing relevance in BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), particularly for Myanmar.

The Surajkund Mela serves as a major attraction for artisans and performers from India and over 30 other countries. The name "Surajkund" comes from a 10th-century reservoir built by Raja Surajpal of the Tomar dynasty. This region has a historical connection to solar worship and water conservation. Recognizing its significance, the Haryana government transformed it into a venue that celebrates the cultural heritage of India and the world. The first Surajkund Mela was organized in 1987 by the Surajkund Mela Authority and Haryana Tourism, with the aim of preserving and promoting traditional Indian arts, crafts, and folk culture. Initially, the event

Surajkund Mela: History, Significance, and its Role in India-Myanmar Cultural Relations

featured Indian artisans, but in 2013, it attained international status, allowing participation from Southeast Asian, African, and European nations. Today, Surajkund Mela is one of the largest cultural fairs in the world, contributing significantly to India's tourism, trade, and diplomatic outreach.

Surajkund Mela: A Historical Perspective Establishment and History

The Surajkund Mela serves as a major attraction for artisans and performers from India and over 30 other countries. The name "Surajkund" comes from a 10th-century reservoir built by Raja Surajpal of the Tomar dynasty. This region has a historical connection to solar worship and water conservation. Recognizing its significance, the Haryana government transformed it into a venue that celebrates the cultural heritage of India and the world. The first Surajkund Mela was organized in 1987 by the Surajkund Mela Authority and Haryana Tourism, with the aim of preserving and promoting traditional Indian arts, crafts, and folk culture. Initially, the event

featured Indian artisans, but in 2013, it attained international status, allowing participation from Southeast Asian, African, and European nations. Today, Surajkund Mela is one of the largest cultural fairs in the world, contributing significantly to India's tourism, trade, and diplomatic outreach.

Key Features of Surajkund Mela A Dedicated Theme State and International Partner Country

Each year, one Indian state is designated as the "Theme State," which receives special focus in terms of cultural exhibits, crafts, and cuisine. Additionally, a "Partner Country" is chosen to promote international collaboration.

International Participation Countries from South Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Europe actively participate, presenting their unique art, crafts, and performances. This has strengthened India's cultural diplomacy, especially with BIMSTEC nations like Myanmar.

India and Myanmar share

Folk Performances and Live Cultural Shows

The fair hosts folk dances, music, puppet shows, theatrical plays, and live performances, showcasing both Indian and global traditions.

Artisan Stalls and Craftsmanship Exhibits

Thousands of artisans display handcrafted items such as: Pashmina shawls from Kashmir Madhubani paintings from Bihar Pattachitra from Odisha Stonecraft from Myanmar Bamboo crafts from North-east India and Myanmar

Economic and Tourism Boost

The fair attracts thousands of domestic and international tourists, contributing significantly to India's handloom, handicraft, and rural economy.

India-Myanmar Cultural Relations at Surajkund Mela

India and Myanmar share

ancient cultural and civilizational ties. Buddhism, trade, and folk traditions have linked both nations for centuries. The Surajkund Mela serves as a cultural bridge, strengthening these connections through artistic exchange.

This year, Myanmar has sent a 20-member delegation, comprising 15 performing artists and 5 craftsmen.

1. Dance and Music Performances

Myanmar's artists are captivating audiences with performances such as:

Pankhin Dance - A traditional Burmese classical dance. Saing Waing Ensemble - A unique Burmese musical performance featuring traditional instruments.

Burmese Puppet Theater - A storytelling tradition with intricate wooden puppets.

2. Handicraft Stalls

Myanmar's craftsmen are showcasing: Lacquerware (Lahkari) -

Exquisite wooden and bamboo artefacts with intricate detailing.

Silk Textiles - Handwoven fabrics with traditional Burmese patterns.

Wood Carvings - Depicting Buddhist and cultural motifs.

Bamboo and Rattan Crafts - Eco-friendly handmade products, highly sought after in Indian markets.

The response to Myanmar's participation has been overwhelmingly positive, reflecting a growing appreciation for Southeast Asian craftsmanship in India.

BIMSTEC and Its Contribution to India-Myanmar Cultural Exchange

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional organization that promotes connectivity, trade, and cultural exchange among its seven member countries.

As a key member of BIMSTEC, Myanmar plays a vital role in regional cultural initiatives.

Surajkund Mela provides a valuable platform for BIMSTEC nations to showcase their art, music, and handicrafts, strengthening people-to-people connections.

BIMSTEC's contributions to India-Myanmar cultural ties include:

Cultural Exchange Programmes - BIMSTEC promotes folk arts, music, and heritage festivals, encouraging collaboration among member nations.

Handicraft Promotion - Myanmar's artisans benefit from exposure to Indian markets, leading to increased demand for traditional Burmese crafts.

Tourism and Connectivity - Through BIMSTEC, India and Myanmar have expanded cultural tourism and trade linkages, facilitating greater participation in fairs like Surajkund Mela.

Buddhist Heritage Collaboration - Both countries share a deep Buddhist heritage, leading to cultural initiatives such as Buddhist circuit tours, exhibitions, and research collaborations.

Surajkund Mela as a BIMSTEC Platform:

Surajkund Mela has become a hub for BIMSTEC cultural diplomacy, allowing nations like Myanmar to promote indigenous art forms internationally, enhance tourism and trade partnerships with India and Strengthen regional cooperation through cultural heritage.

The Surajkund Mela is not just a fair but a powerful cultural confluence, bringing together artists, craftsmen, and audiences from around the world. For India and Myanmar, the fair fosters economic, artistic, and cultural collaboration, while for BIMSTEC nations, it serves as a regional platform for heritage preservation and people-to-people engagement.

Myanmar's active participation in the 2025 Surajkund Mela is a testament to the growing India-Myanmar friendship, emphasizing the importance of cultural diplomacy in strengthening international relations. Ultimately, Surajkund Mela continues to play a pivotal role in connecting cultures, preserving traditions, and promoting international harmony through the universal language of art and heritage.

Contributed by the Embassy of India to Myanmar

Do look up: How Earth can defend itself against asteroid

Despite this unlikely threat, experts assert that humanity has the means to defend against such hazards. Richard Moissl from the European Space Agency has urged individuals not to panic, indicating that as more observations are made, the likelihood of a direct hit may fluctuate but is expected to ultimately fall to zero.

THERE is a very small chance that an asteroid capable of taking out an entire city could strike Earth in less than eight years. But even if this asteroid is hurtling our way, humanity is now able to defend itself against such a threat, experts say.

The odds that the recently

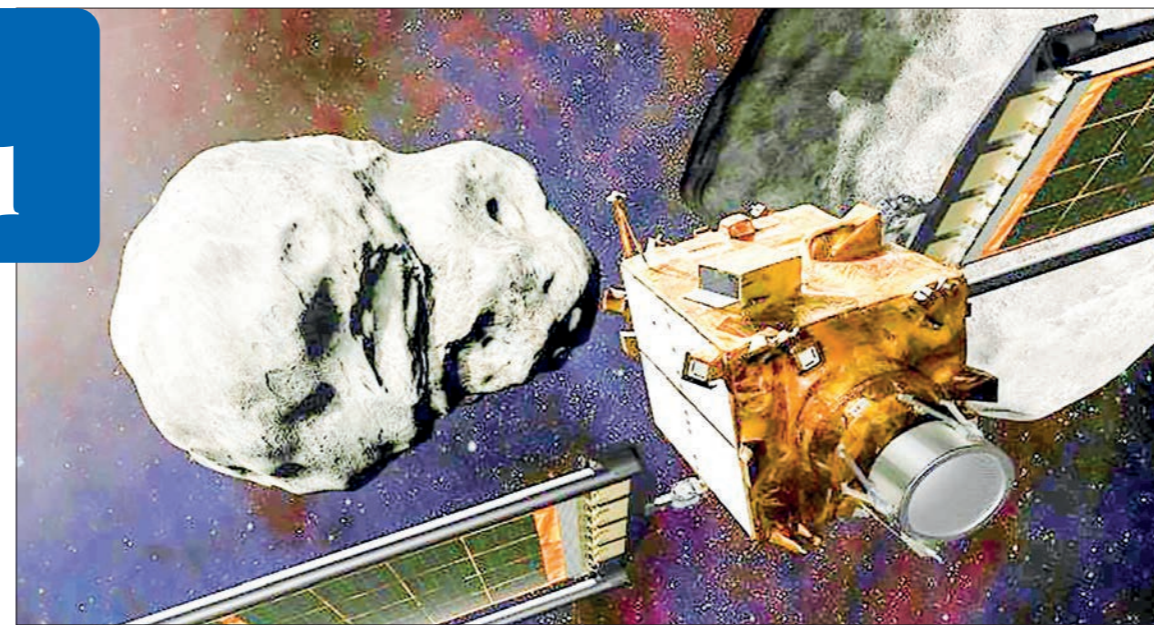
discovered asteroid will hit Earth on 22 December 2032 have now risen to 3.1 per cent, NASA said on Tuesday, the highest probability for an impact by such a large space rock in modern forecasting.

"Don't panic," Richard Moissl, head of the European Space Agency's planetary de-

fence office, told AFP.

As astronomers gather more data, the odds of a direct hit are widely expected to edge upwards before rapidly dropping down to zero.

However, even in the unlikely event that the probability does keep rising up to 100 per cent, "we are not defenceless", Moissl



In 2022, NASA's Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART) deliberately smashed a spacecraft into the 160-metre-wide Dimorphos asteroid, successfully altering its orbit around a larger space rock. PHOTO: NASA/AFP/FILE

emphasized.

Here are some of the ways that humanity could deflect or destroy the asteroid known as

2024 YR4.

Smash a spacecraft into it Only one planetary defence

strategy has been tried out on an actual asteroid.

In 2022, NASA's Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART)

deliberately smashed a spacecraft into the 160-metre-wide Dimorphos asteroid, successfully altering its orbit around a larger space rock.

An advantage of this plan is that we could hit the 2024 YR4 asteroid with multiple spacecrafts, observing how each one changed its trajectory, Bruce Betts, chief scientist for the nonprofit Planetary Society, told AFP.

The asteroid discovered in December is estimated to be 40-90 metres wide - roughly half the size of Dimorphos.

"You have to take care not to overdo it," Moissl warned.

If this kind of mishap destroyed the asteroid, it could send "bits flying off" that still head towards Earth, he said.

If this kind of mishap changed the eventual impact site on Earth - for example, "from Paris to Moscow" - that would

likely cause major problems back home, Betts added.

Tractor, ion beams, paint

A separate idea called a gravity tractor involves a large spacecraft flying up near the asteroid and - without touching it - using its gravitational pull to tug it away from Earth.

Another non-contact plan would put a spacecraft near the asteroid armed with thrusters that would exert a "constant stream of ions" to shove the asteroid off course, Moissl said.

Scientists have also considered spray painting one side of the asteroid white, increasing its reflectiveness so it slowly changes trajectory.

These subtler strategies would require reaching the asteroid sooner than for some more severe options.

SOURCE: AFP

NATIONAL

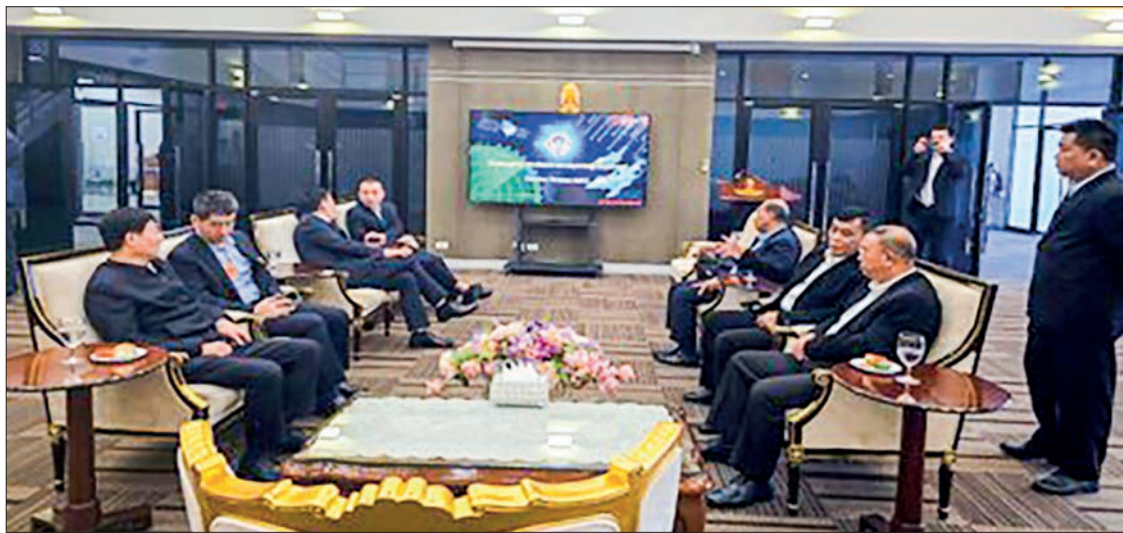
Myanmar extradites 200 Chinese telecom fraud suspects

THE government is severely cracking down on telecom fraud and criminal acts by cooperating with the international countries including neighbouring countries, and systematically transferring the foreigners involved in these illegal operations.

The authorities transported 200 Chinese nationals, who illegally entered the country via border routes to run online gambling and telecom fraud in Myawady-Shwe Kokko and KK Park areas, to China as per the procedures via Thailand on humanitarian grounds and bilateral relations yesterday.

The handover ceremony was attended by Deputy Police Chief Police Maj-Gen Tin Ko Ko of the Myanmar Police Force under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Deputy Director-General Mr Liu Ning Ning of the Criminal Investigation Department of Public Security of China and Thailand's Tak Province Vice-Administrator Mr Narongchai Jindaphan.

The detained Chinese nationals were transported to China via Mae Sot Airport in Thailand, and Thai's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Mr Phumtham Wechayachai, Chinese Assistant Minister for Public Security Mr Liu Zhong Yi and Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-



Myanmar, Thailand, and China meet at Mae Sot Airport.



The handover of Chinese nationals underway at Mae Sot Airport.

Gen Aung Kyaw Kyaw who is also a member of the Central Committee for the Supervision of Deportation and Transfer of Detained Foreigners for Illegal

Entry into Myanmar, observed the transfer processes and met with the media to brief the repatriation.

The Thai Deputy Prime

Minister, the Chinese Assistant Minister for Public Security and the Deputy Minister for Home Affairs discussed the quick transfer of 200 Chi-

nese nationals for the first time, cooperation work with Thailand in the repatriation of third-country nationals by the relevant embassies and the establishment of solid system among three countries.

According to the confession of detained Chinese nationals, they arrived in Bangkok from China, and then Mae Sot. The telecom fraudsters took them to Myawady- KK Park areas illegally passing through Thaungyin River to work in telecom frauds and online gambling.

In Shwe Kokko, some armed groups are operating, and unscrupulous businesspersons commit destructive actions including online gambling taking advantage of weaknesses in the rule of law and administrative mechanisms, they receive the basic requirements for telecom frauds from other countries whereas the foreign organizations made most of the investments.

The government exposes those involved in the Online Scam Centre and the foreign masterminds to take effective actions against them and actively works to transfer the trafficked foreigners and those who face hardships to their respective countries as quickly as possible. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar detains further 210 illegal foreigners

THE government is actively cracking down on online gambling and telecom fraud including other criminal acts in border areas. A total of 210 foreigners who illegally entered the Myawady-Shwe Kokko and KK Park areas via border routes passing some neighbouring countries including Thailand were arrested yesterday.

The authorities collected the personal data and records just in one day to transfer them to their respective countries as quickly as possible.

From 30 January to 20



Myanmar Immigration processes illegal foreign entrants.

February 2025, the government arrested 1,763 foreigners who illegally entered the country, and 261 of them were transferred to their respec-

tive countries via Thailand, and the remaining 1,502 are also ready to be transferred. — MNA/KTZH

Counter-argument to false information

Kyauksauk village fire: Security force involvement debunked

MALICIOUS news media have been spreading false reports claiming that security forces set fire to Kyauksauk Village on 19 February while conducting territorial security operations in Myine Township, Magway Region.

According to a responsible security officer, security forces were deployed near Kyauksauk Village on that day as part of their security operations. However, there were no incidents of fire or destruction. Subversive news media fabricated these stories to mislead the public, falsely ac-

cluding security forces of burning houses, seizing civilian property, and arresting or killing innocent people. — MNA/KZL



This screenshot discloses false claims.

NATIONAL

Inwa tooth-relic building restoration with Parabaik painting in progress



Existing conditions of the rare and ancient Inwa palace tooth-relic building.

IT is under arrangement to restore the ancient Inwa palace tooth-relic building to its original state, referring to the painting in Parabaik, said archaeologist and writer Bo Shake.

One donor will fund it and it has been submitted to the Department of Archaeology and National Museums to design and rebuild it to its original state as per Parabaik.

“It has been submitted to the archaeological department to renovate the tooth-relic building under the law to the style shown in the Parabaik painting. We will start working immedi-

ately after receiving permission from the department. We will work together with the archaeology department for their advice and technology. Sayagi U Win Maung will draw the designs

based on the Parabaik painting,” he said.

It is a rare tooth-relic building in the palace and a pagoda where people can learn about the Buddhist beliefs and customs of successive ancient Myanmar Kings.

By reconstructing the building, future generations will be able to observe the culture and customs of the ancient kings, he said. The Inwa tooth-relic building is between the Ywaytawyu Gate and the Red Gate of the palace and is located in the innermost part of the three layers of the wall. The only tooth-relic pagoda in Inwa has a very beautiful staircase with intricate reliefs with stucco and is said to be the most beautiful rare work. — MT/ZN



PyinOoLwin sees surge in land plot sales

INTERESTS in land plots which include houses in ready-to-live condition have accelerated in Mandalay Region’s PyinOoLwin Township.

“Recently, real estate trade has increased again here. Properties, specifically land plots that include houses and worth around K200-K300 million, are being more interested. Due to the rocketing construction cost, some buyers prefer land plots with houses which are ready to live. So transactions of such property are happening more,” said Ko Kywal (Anisakhan) from Dream House real estate service agency in PyinOoLwin Township.

Of 21 major wards of the township, transactions of the

above-mentioned land plots are happening majorly in Ward 17 (Anisakhan), Ward 11 (Yengan) and Ward 12 (Yechanoo).

“Transactions of land plots with ready-to-live houses located in 17th ward, 11th ward and 12th ward are happening now. Lands located in wards 1, 2 and 3 are expensive. The real estate market of the township was slow a few months ago due to some reasons, but an increase has been seen as of January this year,” he said.

The property market of the township boomed from 2023 to April 2024 but declined afterwards. As of September, last year, the township’s property sale has been active again. — Thit Taw/ZS



An estate agent gives a presentation about a house located in Ward 17, PyinOoLwin.

New CQI-certified Robusta for Arabica Lovers class launches in Mar

THE Myanmar Coffee Association announced that the new Coffee Quality Institute-accredited Robusta course, CQI-certified Robusta for Arabica Lovers (Batch 2), will be organized by CQI Lecturer experts and will provide information on new coffee market opportunities.

This course covers the history and biology of Robusta coffee, new Robusta market opportunities, coffee cultivation and production, practices, coffee quality, and other unique features. It is useful for anyone working in the coffee industry, including producers, quality assessors, and coffee lovers.

Throughout the course, market statistics, cultivation and production practices, and coffee quality comparisons with relevant Arabica will be provided. This class aims to introduce Robusta coffee by CQI coffee experts and to help learners understand the potential of



Attendees of the coffee training course held in PyinOoLwin.

Fine Robusta.

The training period is from 10 am to 4 pm on 1-2 March at Myanmar Coffee Exchange Co Ltd, Yangon. The training fee is K700,000 and K650,000 for members. The course includes coffee and cake in the morning, lunch in the afternoon, and coffee and cake in the evening. Accommodation and travel ex-

penses will have to be covered by the participants.

The number of participants is limited and it is on a first-come first-served basis. Those who wish to attend are requested to register by email at myanmarcoffeexchange@gmail.com or by phone or Viber at 09 784888808, 09 420020869 by 27 February. — MT/ZN

Advertise with us/ Hotline:

09255597511, 09454237515

ECONOMY WORLD

Japan, Britain to hold economic talks in Tokyo in March

The dialogue is being held amid concerns over US President Donald Trump's protectionist trade policies, including tariffs.



The ministers are expected to exchange views on ensuring supply chain stability for critical materials.

PHOTO: AFP/FILE

JAPAN and Britain are arranging to hold a ministerial economic dialogue in Tokyo on 7 March, government sources said Thursday, amid concerns over US President Donald Trump's protectionist trade policies, including tariffs.

It will be their first such meeting of the economic ver-

sion of the "two-plus-two" gathering, with Japanese Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya and Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Yoichi Muto set to discuss the importance of free trade with their British counterparts, the sources said.

Britain will be the second country with which Japan holds

the economic two-plus-two ministerial framework, following the United States, its close security ally.

At the gathering, the two ministers are likely to exchange views on key topics, such as ensuring supply chain stability for critical materials, the sources added. — Kyodo

Vietnam to export 7.5 mln tonnes of rice in 2025

VIETNAM plans to export over 7.5 million tonnes of rice in 2025, mostly from the Mekong Delta region, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. This year, the region is expected to produce around 24 million tonnes of rice. In the first half, approximately 4.53 million tonnes of rice will be shipped abroad. The remaining three million tonnes will be exported in the second half, Vietnam News Agency reported Monday.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development proposed that the Ministry of Trade boost rice exports in February, March, April, July, August and September when the rice production is expected to be at its peak. — Xinhua



People from the Co Tu ethnic group hull and smash rice in Tay Giang district of central Vietnam's Quang Nam province on 19 June 2022. PHOTO: JIANG SHENGXIONG/XINHUA

US tariff may impact India's GDP between 0.1-0.6%

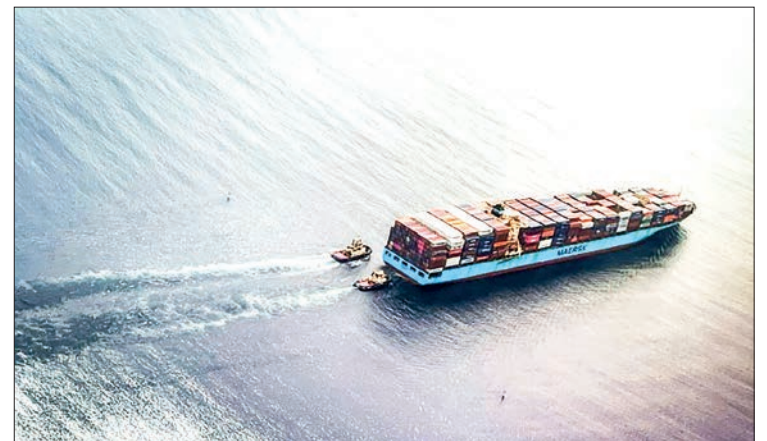
TRUMP'S tariff may impact India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in between 0.1 to 0.6 according to a report by Goldman Sachs.

The report which analyzes the impact of US tariffs on India's GDP under country-level reciprocity, product-level reciprocity says, "India's domestic activity exposure to US final demand would be roughly twice as high (4.0 per cent of GDP) given exposure to the US via exports to other countries, and would likely result in a potential domestic GDP growth impact of 0.1-0.6pp."

If Trump administration

chooses to increase the tariff on all US imports by the average tariff differential between a particular country and the US. Under this scenario, the average US effective tariff rates on Indian imports would increase by 6.5 percentage points.

Under product-level reciprocity if the Trump administration matches the tariff rates on each product levied by its trading partner. The report estimates the weighted average effective US tariff rate on Indian imports could increase by 6.5-11.5 percentage points depending on the kind of reciprocal tariff plan adopted. — ANI



Under this scenario, the average US effective tariff rates on Indian imports would increase by 6.5 percentage points. PHOTO: ANI

NEWS IN BRIEF

Nepal's foreign trade continues to grow

NEPAL'S external trade increased by 13 per cent in the first seven months of the current 2024-25 fiscal year as the country posted a surge in both imports and exports, according to figures released on Thursday. The total trade stood at US\$8.03 billion by mid-February, up from US\$7.09 billion dollars during the same period in 2023-24, showed the Department of Customs data.

The imports grew by 10.09 per cent to \$6.97 billion during the period, while the exports jumped by 46.5 per cent to \$916 million. — Xinhua

Laos takes measures to foster industrial growth

THE Lao government, in collaboration with the country's National Assembly, has held a scientific symposium to discuss policies on fostering industrial park development and investment. The event, held in capital Vientiane on Tuesday, was co-chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Saleumxay Kommasith and Vice-President of the National Assembly Sommad Pholsena, with the participation of Industry and Commerce Minister Malaythong Kommasith and other key officials. — Xinhua

Renault revs up profitability in 2024

Renault reported record profitability in 2024, with revenues rising 7.4 per cent to €56.2 billion, despite a net profit drop to €800 million due to a loss from selling Nissan shares.

RENAULT confirmed on Thursday it defied headwinds in the car industry by boosting revenue and attaining record profitability in 2024 thanks to the success of its new line up of vehicles, although net profit sank as it scaled back its partnership with Nissan. The group, which also includes the budget Da-

cia brand and sportscar Alpine, saw revenues rising by 7.4 per cent to hit 56.2 billion euros (\$58.6 billion), with its operating profit margin coming in at a record 7.6 per cent. However net profit sank to 800 million euros due to a 1.5-billion-euro loss it booked on the sale of Nissan shares.



The return of the iconic Renault 5 as an electric car is bringing customers into dealerships and having a 'halo effect' on sales of other models, the company says. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Without the sale of Nissan shares, profit would have come in at 2.8 billion euros, a 21 per cent increase on 2023. The board proposed a dividend payment of 2.20

euros per share, an increase of 19 per cent from last year. The company's shares slid around one per cent in late morning trading on the Paris stock exchange. — AFP

Suzuki to invest 4T yen over 6 yrs in electrification push

SUZUKI Motor Corp said Thursday it will invest four trillion yen (\$27 billion) in the six years through fiscal 2030 as the automaker tries to accelerate vehicle electrification. Under the newly revealed management plan, Suzuki said it will spend two trillion yen each for capital expenditures as well as research and development, with software development and India, its key market, listed as its

main areas of focus. Japan's major mini-vehicle maker also said it aims to post eight trillion yen in sales and 800 billion yen in operating profit in fiscal 2030, compared with its fiscal 2023 figures of 5.37 trillion yen and 465.56 billion yen, respectively. Its sales target for the year ending March 2031 was set at 4.2 million units, up from the 3.16 million units it sold in fiscal 2023. — Kyodo



Suzuki Motor Corp President Toshihiko Suzuki gives a press conference in Tokyo on 20 February 2025. PHOTO: KYODO

Delta offers \$30,000 each to Toronto plane crash passengers

DELTA Air Lines is offering \$30,000 to each passenger aboard a flight that crash-landed and flipped upside down at Toronto's main airport this week, leaving 21 injured but no fatalities. US airline Delta will offer \$30,000 to each passenger on a plane that crashed as it landed at Toronto airport this week, the carrier told AFP on

Wednesday. "This gesture has no strings attached and does not affect rights" of passengers, a company spokesman said. On Monday, a Delta Air Lines plane that departed from the US city of Minneapolis, Minnesota, hit the runway hard at Toronto's main airport and flipped upside down. — AFP

Airbus profit climbs in 2024, aims to accelerate output

EUROPEAN aircraft maker Airbus said Thursday net profits rose in 2024 as it boosted plane deliveries and set a goal of accelerating them further. Net profit rose 12 percent to 4.2 billion euros (\$4.4 billion), overcoming a massive writedown in the value of its space business earlier in the year.

The results demonstrate the growing dominance of Airbus over its rival Boeing, which posted a massive \$11.8 billion loss for 2024, hobbled by a lengthy labour strike, major safety issues on commercial planes and defence contract cost overruns. Airbus shares fell 1.8 percent in morning trading in Paris. — AFP

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

AS the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 2nd MARCH 2025 (Peasant's Day), Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

<p>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V SOL PIONEER VOY.NO. (063N)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SOL PIONEER VOY.NO. (063N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-2-2025 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301185</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</p> <p>Agent For: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES</p>	<p>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V METHI BHUM VOY.NO. (450N)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on M.V METHI BHUM VOY.NO. (450N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-2-2025 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301185</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</p> <p>Agent For: M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES</p>	<p>CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V BEYPORE SULTAN VOY.NO. (25006)</p> <p>Consignees of cargo carried on M.V BEYPORE SULTAN VOY.NO. (25006) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-2-2025 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIP where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301185</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority</p> <p>Agent For: M/S CONNEXT SHIPPING PTE LTD</p>
---	---	--

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

How Zelensky turned Ukraine into what Trump has dubbed a “massive demolition site”

Trump criticized Zelensky for refusing to hold elections, claiming that Zelensky's approval rating has plummeted to four per cent and that Ukraine resembles a “massive demolition site” under his leadership.



President Trump has kept up his barrage of attacks against President Zelensky. **PHOTO: AFP**

PRESIDENT Trump and Volodymyr Zelensky have become embroiled in a war of words a day after the Russia-US meeting in Riyadh focusing on Ukraine.

Trump slammed Zelensky over his refusal to hold elections, saying he's down

to “four per cent approval” and that Ukraine looks like a “massive demolition site” under his leadership.

Zelensky did not make good on his promise to end the war in the Donbass — the single biggest reason he was elected in the spring of 2019.

Declaring verbal support for the Minsk Agreements in October 2019, Zelensky triggered large-scale street protests led by nationalist thugs threatening to oust him. He quickly backed down, never returning to the issue again. — SPUTNIK

Hamas hands over dead Israeli hostages in black coffins

HUNDREDS watched on Thursday as four black coffins, which Hamas said held the remains of Israel's Bibas family and an elderly hostage, were carried off stage by Palestinian militants in southern Gaza.

The ceremony, held on a sandy area that was once a cemetery before its destruction by Israeli forces, marked the first

handover of deceased captives under a fragile Israel-Hamas truce. It began with a militant, his face wrapped in a red and white keffiyeh scarf, seated on the stage to complete paperwork with a Red Cross official. The stage featured a banner with an image of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as a bloodied vampire over photos of the four

returned Israelis.

“War Criminal Netanyahu and his army killed them with missiles and Zionist warplanes”, read the sign. The coffins — which bore photos of the deceased as well as of Netanyahu — were placed one by one into separate Red Cross vehicles after being covered in a white shroud as a cold drizzle fell. — AFP

BRIEF: WORLD

Mexican president says she does not fear Trump's threats

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum on Wednesday said she does not fear US President Donald Trump and his threats of mass deportations, steep trade tariffs and military “intervention” to combat the drug cartels, as she has the backing of the Mexican people.

During a daily press conference, when asked if the Mexican president feared Trump's threats, Sheinbaum responded, “No. I have the support of the people. When one has certainty and conviction and knows what one's principles are, why would one be afraid?”

She allayed concerns over Trump's measures, noting there is ongoing dialogue between the two governments.

The president said she would never allow Mexico's sovereignty to be violated, but “if it were to be violated, there is an entire country to defend the homeland”. — Xinhua

Ukraine resumes e-Visa issuance for foreign nationals, including Indians

THE Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine has resumed the issuance of electronic visas (e-Visas) for foreign nationals from 45 countries, including India, Bhutan, Maldives, and Nepal.

The Department General for Consular Service will process applications starting 19 February 2025, allowing eligible travellers to apply for e-Visas for various purposes, such as tourism, business, education, cultural and scientific activities, journalism, sports, and medical treatment. According to the Ukrainian embassy, the e-Visa system will offer two categories: a single-entry visa priced at US\$20 and a double-entry visa for US\$30. For applicants opting for the urgent procedure, the processing fee will be doubled. — ANI

Two dead in Czech shop knife attack: police

Two people died in a knife attack in a store in the eastern Czech city of Hradec Kralove, said the police on Thursday.

“The suspect attacked two people with a knife -- one is in very serious condition, the other suffered injuries,” the police said on social media platform X. “The entire event is tragic. Both victims suffered injuries so severe that, despite all efforts by everyone involved, they could not be saved.”

The suspect was detained, and the situation “is under control”, said the police, adding they are investigating the attacker's motivation.

The attack occurred at a shopping area in the city. Police have asked visitors to avoid the area. — Xinhua



A demonstrator in Tel Aviv holds placards bearing pictures of members of the Bibas family. **PHOTO: AFP**

SPORTS

'Never lost heart': Japan back-up keeper plays again after nine-year wait

BEING a back-up goalkeeper can be a thankless task but patience paid off for Japan's Shunsuke Ando this week — when he played a match for the first time in nine years.

The 34-year-old is now in his 17th season as a professional and had made only 24 career appearances until he got the nod for Kawasaki Frontale's Asian Champions League home game against Australia's Central Coast Mariners on Tuesday.

His previous outing came in May 2016 but Ando showed no

signs of rust in an assured performance as Kawasaki, who had already qualified for the next round, won 2-0.

Ando has spent all but one season at J League first-division side Kawasaki and he told AFP he had no regrets about the way his career has panned out.

"Goalkeeper is a special position and it's not easy to change them about, but I always thought I would get my chance and I train so that I am able to perform when it comes," he said. — AFP



Kawasaki goalkeeper Shunsuke Ando in action this week.
PHOTO: JIJI PRESS/AFP



Erdogan kicks at the head of Aung La N Sang at ONE 171 in Qatar yesterday.

Aung La N Sang stunned by Shamil Erdogan's head kick at ONE 171

AUNG LA N SANG suffered a swift and shocking defeat at ONE 171 in Qatar last night as Türkiye's Shamil Erdogan secured a first-round knockout victory with a devastating head kick. The fight, highly anticipated by fans, ended within the opening minute, leaving little room for the Myanmar icon to

showcase his skill set.

From the start, Erdogan pressured Aung La with sharp striking, keeping the former champion on the defensive. As Aung La attempted to find his rhythm, Erdogan unleashed a perfectly timed head kick that landed cleanly, sending him to the canvas. The referee quick-

ly stepped in to stop the fight, awarding Erdogan the victory in a dominant fashion.

This defeat marks a tough setback for Aung La, who had been looking to build momentum in ONE Championship's middleweight division. Meanwhile, Erdogan's impressive performance solidifies his position as a rising contender in the division. Fans will now be eager to see how Aung La responds to this loss and whether he can bounce back stronger in his next appearance inside the circle. — KZL

Messi too hot for Sporting in sub-zero Champions Cup clash

LIONEL MESSI shrugged off sub-zero temperatures to score the only goal as Inter Miami defeated Sporting Kansas City 1-0 in their weather-delayed CONCACAF Champions Cup first-leg clash on Wednesday. Messi struck in the 56th minute at Children's Mercy Park, showing superb individual skill before rifling a low angled shot past Sporting goalkeeper John Pulskamp.

The victory gives Inter a precious away goal as they attempt to secure their passage into the last 16 in next Tuesday's second leg in Florida. Wednesday's game in Kansas City had been postponed by 24 hours after an arctic storm dumped several inches of snow across the region while sending temperatures plummeting to near-record lows. Despite the rescheduling there was no let-up from the freezing conditions, with the temperature at kick-off plunging to minus 17 degrees Celsius (one degree Fahrenheit). — AFP

Japan reaches AFC U20 Asian Cup quarterfinals

JAPAN secured the last ticket in the AFC U20 Asian Cup quarterfinals after drawing 1-1 with South Korea in the third round of Group D here on Thursday.

Soma Kanda opened the scoring for Japan in the 28th minute, only for substitute Kim Tae-won to find the equalizer for South Korea in the 91st minute.

South Korea topped the group with seven points and will meet defending champions Uzbekistan in the quarterfinals, while Japan will face Iran. In the other match, Thanawut Phochai scored in the 73rd and 81st minute as Thailand came from two-goal behind to tie Syria 2-2. — Xinhua



Kanda Soma (L) of Japan vies with Kim Hojin of South Korea during the Group D match between Japan and South Korea at the AFC U20 Asian Cup football tournament in Shenzhen, south China's Guangdong Province, 20 February 2025. PHOTO: XIN YUEWEI/XINHUA

How Zelensky turned Ukraine into what Trump has dubbed a “massive demolition site”
PAGE 14



WORLD

AN UNCONTROLLED RE-ENTRY

SpaceX debris enters atmosphere over Poland

Debris from a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket that blasted off in the United States on 1 February entered the Earth's atmosphere over Poland on Wednesday, the Polish space agency said.

A 1.5 metre by one metre (five feet by three feet) chunk from an unidentified object was found Wednesday morning in the grounds of a warehouse on the outskirts of the western city of Poznan, police said.

Police later said a second similar-sized object had been located several hours afterwards in a forest a few kilometres from where the first was discovered.

No casualties or damage were reported.

The Polish Space Agency (POLSA) said a stage of the Falcon 9 R/B rocket made “an uncontrolled re-entry into the atmosphere” at about 0346 GMT.

It said the rocket was part of a Space X Starlink Group launch from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California on 1 February.

The launch was to put Starlink satellites into a low-level orbit.

The debris left spectacular luminous trails visible in the sky in western Poland, witnesses said. POLSA spokeswoman Agnieszka Gapys said the agency was speaking with SpaceX, which is controlled by Elon Musk, the world's richest man, PAP news agency reported. — AFP



An aerial drone photo taken on 20 February 2025 shows a view of the “Shenditake 1”, an ultra-deep borehole, in the hinterland of the Taklimakan Desert in the Tarim Basin, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. PHOTO: HU HUHUXINHUA

China completes drilling of Asia's deepest vertical well

The well is notable for being the second deepest in the world and has achieved several engineering milestones, including the deepest liner cementing, deepest wireline imaging logging, and the fastest onshore drilling to surpass 10,000 metres.

CHINA National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) announced Thursday that it has completed the drilling of the deepest vertical well in Asia, as a borehole reached a depth of 10,910 metres in China's northwestern desert.

Located in the heart of the Taklimakan Desert in the Tarim Basin, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the well,

known as “Shenditake 1”, is a scientific exploration project. Beyond the search for oil and gas resources, the well is also designed to advance the study of the Earth's evolution and deep-Earth geology. The vertical well, the second across the world, also made other engineering breakthroughs globally, including the deepest liner cementing, deepest wireline imaging logging and fastest onshore

drilling to exceed 10,000 metres.

According to CNPC, drilling began on 30 May 2023. It took over 580 days to complete the 10,910-metre drilling, with more than half of the time — some 300 days — spent on the final 910 metres. The well has penetrated 12 geological formations, ultimately reaching rock layers that date back over 500 million years. — Xinhua

Egypt announces 1st discovery of royal tomb in over 100 years

EGYPT has identified the tomb of Pharaoh Thutmose II, the last lost royal tomb of the kings of the 18th Dynasty, in the Theban mountain region west of Luxor, the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities announced.

It marks the first discovery of a royal tomb since King

Tutankhamun's tomb was unearthed in 1922, the ministry said in a statement on Tuesday. Egyptian Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Sherif Fathy praised the ongoing excavations by a joint Egyptian-British archaeological mission, which continue to unveil treasures of Egypt's ancient civilization.

The joint mission initially found the tomb's entrance and main corridor in 2022, but experts then believed it might belong to a queen due to its proximity to the tombs of royal wives, according to Mohamed Ismail Khaled, secretary-general of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA). — Xinhua



Antiquities ministry pictures showing the location and entrance to the tomb. PHOTO: EGYPTIAN MINISTRY OF ANTIQUITIES/AFP