

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Article
Matriculation Exam Advice for High School Students
 By Hu Wo (Cuckoo's Song)
PAGE 8-9

NATIONAL **PAGE 5**
 Senior General and family donate modern public science treatises volumes VIII & IX

NATIONAL **PAGE 6**


Govt approves sisal cultivation on idle land

BUSINESS **PAGE 7**


Indonesia leads Myanmar rice imports with 600,000+ tonnes (Apr-Jan)

State Administration Council Chairman and Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to pay official goodwill visit to the Russian Federation at the invitation of President of the Russian Federation Mr Vladimir Putin



At the invitation of Mr Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, State Administration Council Chairman and Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, will pay an official goodwill visit to the Russian Federation in the coming days. During the goodwill visit, the Myanmar delegation will meet Russian President Mr Vladimir Putin, the Speaker of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, and other officials from the Russian government to discuss issues related to friendship, economic affairs and security, and to strengthen strategic cooperation across all sectors. Members of the State Administration Council, Union Ministers, and senior officials will accompany the Prime Minister.

*Information Team
 State Administration Council*

MGJTE 2025 welcomes Myanmar gold & jewellery leaders

THE Malaysia Gold & Jewellery Trade Exhibition (MGJTE) 2025, which will take place on 9-11 May 2025 at Spice Con-

vention Centre, Penang, Malaysia, welcomes the participation of representatives of Myanmar gold and jewellery as-

sociations and the Gold Entrepreneurs Association, according to the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization.

Representatives of the companies and gold buyers will be provided a two-night stay at a five-star hotel. Interested

individuals can enquire about details through email at event@mga.my and at +60 1155511916 of the MGJTE, and via 067

408622 and email [event.td.myantrade@gmail.com](mailto:td.myantrade@gmail.com) of the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization. — NN/KK

NATIONAL

Youth: Balancing Self-Interest with Charity for Nation-Building

- All youths should balance self-interest with a spirit of charity.
- They must strive for personal improvement while fostering a commitment to public welfare and nation-building efforts.

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

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.



The second-day session of the 19th plenary meeting of the Eighth 47-member State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee in progress yesterday in Yangon.

Eighth 47-member SSMNC holds second-day session

THE second-day session of the 19th plenary meeting of the Eighth 47-member State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee was held at the Wizaya Mingala Dhamma Thabin of Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Hill in Yangon yesterday.

Present on the occasion were members of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee led by Presiding Nayaka Sayadaw of Thanlyin Min Kyaung Pahtamapyan Buddhism Learning Aggamaha Pandita Aggamaha Saddhammajotikadhaja Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa, Union Minister for Religious Affairs

and Culture U Tin Oo Lwin and other relevant officials.

State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Chairman Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa presided over the event, and Joint Secretary Sayadaw Aggamaha Gandhavasaka Pandita Aggamaha Saddhammajotikadhaja Bhaddanta Pannya Dhaja acted as the master of ceremonies.

The Sayadaws reported on Vinicchaya, religious affairs and educational matters. The Sayadaws discussed religious and Vinicchaya affairs and concluded the first session.

Sayadaws discussed Vinicchaya affairs, religious matters and educational matters in the second session at 1 pm.

After the meeting, the Thanlyin Minkyaung Sayadaw made decisions and concluded the meeting.

The devotees led by Kyaikkasan Wailuwun (Shwegyin) Monastery Sayadaw Maha Saddhammajotikadhaja Dhaddanta Manita offered the 41st breakfast alms meals and day alms meals to the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee member Sayadaws, who attended the ceremony yesterday. — MNA/KTZH

Weather

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 28 February 2025)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy over the South Andaman Sea and South Bay and a few cloud over the North Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF 1 March 2025: Rain are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagaing, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is 60%. Weather will be partly cloudy in Yangon, Ayeyawady Regions and Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, eastern Shan States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about 5-7 feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated to scattered rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin State.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 March 2025: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 March 2025: A few cloud.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 March 2025: Generally fair weather.

WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND: Weather will be generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay Region and partly cloudy in Yangon Region. — DMH

Top websites and web portals to access Military Service Rules

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

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)

MR introduces express trains, cutting Yangon-Mandalay travel time



Photos capture Deputy Prime Minister and Union Transport & Communications Minister General Mya Tun Oo greeting MR personnel and passengers at Nay Pyi Taw Railway Station (left), and the inaugural express train ceremony in progress (right).

MYANMA Railways has launched new express train services to reduce travel time on the Yangon-Mandalay route from 19 to 11 hours. This expansion includes modern air-conditioned DEMU trains on the Yan-

gon-Nay Pyi Taw route and new air-conditioned coaches on the Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay route.

With Japan's ODA loan and state funds, significant upgrades have been made to railway infrastructure, signalling systems, and rolling stock. The

Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw route now features the No 7 Up and No 8 Down express services, while the Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay section includes the No 27 Up and No 28 Down express services.

Deputy Prime Minister MoTC Union Minister General

Mya Tun Oo and officials marked the occasion with ceremonies at Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay Central Stations. The new services have been well received by passengers for their improved comfort and efficiency. Myanmar Railways continues

to operate the original express trains with a revised schedule and further enhancements planned.

Tickets for these services are available at major stations, government offices, and online. — MNA/KZL

Myanmar, CITIC discuss Kyaukpyu SEZ Deep Seaport

A coordination meeting on the conditions precedent that must be fulfilled by both Myanmar and CITIC for the successful implementation of the Kyaukpyu Special Economic Zone deep seaport project was held yesterday at Meeting Hall 1 of the Ministry of Commerce in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, Dr Kan Zaw, Chairman of the Myanmar Special Economic Zone Central Working Committee and Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations stated that a development plan to enhance cooperation between

Myanmar and China and to promote the deep seaport project should be drafted in line with the current era to expedite the project's commencement, as it plays a key role in the economic development of both Myanmar and China.

Union Minister for Commerce U Tun Ohn, who is also Vice-Chairman of the Myanmar Special Economic Zone Central Working Committee, added that the project is important for Myanmar, and the Myanmar-China Economic Corridor cooperation project, which is strategic

for China, has been launched. Therefore, bilateral trade and investment will be promoted. He highlighted the efforts to complete the work by setting a timeline before the end of the fixed timeline.

Afterwards, the officials from CITIC Consortium Myanmar Port Investment Limited reported on the completion and ongoing plans, and the departmental officials discussed EIA/SIA and the Development Plan. After hearing the reports, Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw concluded the meeting. — MNA/KTZH



Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw and Union Minister U Tun Ohn lead a coordination meeting with CITIC Consortium Myanmar Port Investment Limited officials in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

NATIONAL

SAC Member MoBA Union Minister inspects Ayeyawady, Yangon regions

STATE Administration Council Member Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, accompanied by Ayeyawady Region Security and Border Affairs Minister Colonel Moe Min Naing, Permanent Secretary U Thein Htay, inspected the Training School for Development of Nationalities Youth from Border Areas in Maubin Township on 26 February.

During the inspection tour, the Union minister met the principal, staff, faculty members and students and presented cash prizes. He also cordially met the students and staff and inspected the dormitories, library and staff housing.

On 27 February, the Union minister and party visited a vocational training centre for women in Pathein. He also met the staff, instructors and trainees and presented cash prizes after cordially greeting them. He also inspected the training centre compound.

The Union minister and party observed the completed road



SAC Member Union Minister Lt-Gen Yar Pyae meets the principal, staff, faculty members and students from the Training School for Development of Nationalities Youth from Border Areas in Maubin Township on 26 February.

paving processes connecting the Pathein-Myaungmya-Labutta and Theinla Chaungphya villages. The process was conducted with the 2024-2025 budget. He also coordinated the reports of locals regarding the access to electricity, solar power installation in the village and basic education high school in Theinla village.

He proceeded to the Technical Training School for National

Youths in Border Areas in Labutta and observed the practical sessions of different subjects.

He also inspected a vocational training school for women in Labutta, met staff, instructors and trainees of training school 2 and presented cash prizes. He also inspected the artworks of trainees, practical sessions, dormitories, staff housing and a 200,000-gallon water tank.

The Union minister, ac-

companied by Yangon Region Security and Border Affairs Minister Colonel Win Tint and relevant officials, inspected the Nationalities Youth Resource Development Degree College (Yangon) in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township in Yangon Region yesterday.

He met the principal, vice-principal, directors, professors and department heads, and made proper instructions. He

also observed the college compound and construction projects being conducted in the 2024-2025 financial year.

He proceeded to Central Training School in Dagon Myothit (North) Township, met staff and presented cash prizes.

He also inspected the Dagon Myothit District Development Supervisory Office. — MNA/KTZH

SAC Member comforts matriculation students in Ayeyawady

STATE Administration Council Member Mahn Nyein Maung, accompanied by Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister U Tin Maung Win and relevant officials, visited basic education high schools in Maubin Township yesterday and met teachers, school affairs members, town elders and matriculation students.

On his tour, he also inspected the work processes of Global Earth Agro & Aqua Industry Public Company Limited in Pantanaw township, Naga Min Company and Orchid Company

Limited.

Moreover, he visited MaU Creek BEHS, Maubin BEHS, Malatol BEHS and Yelae BEHS in Maubin Township and met with the teachers, officials, town elders and students, and comforted the students. He also provided nutrients and cash prizes to the students.

He then inspected sunflower plantations in the Tawtalote village-tract in Maubin Township. He met farmers and discussed the growth and success of various crops and market status. — MNA/KTZH



SAC Member Mahn Nyein Maung is pictured during his inspection tours in Ayeyawady Region.

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

NATIONAL

Senior General and family donate modern public science treatises volumes VIII & IX

A ceremony to present Public Science Treatises Volumes VIII and IX and modern Public Science Treatises donated by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla to libraries, military headquarters, regiments and units across the nation, along with the Yangon's fifth books and publications donation event, took place in Yangon yesterday.

Speaking at the event, Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, in his capacity as Chairman of the Myanmar Libraries Development Cooperation Committee, mentioned the guidance of the Head of the State highlighting "an illiterate person is like a person sitting who don't move forward while a literate person is like a walking person", and added that a book that one has not read is a new book. Plans are underway to reissue good books out of the old books. The readers should read, memorize and think. Some youths go to wrong way after being persuaded by the unscrupulous people as they do not read and are poor in



Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn and Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein look into the books displayed at yesterday's event.

knowledge.

The Head of State organized reading habit-raising campaigns to develop human resources. However, the unscrupulous people intentionally spread misinformation and disinformation to mislead the people. Therefore, arrangements should be made to provide the public with proper knowledge to know the actual situation.

The Union minister then handed over copies of Public Science Treatises Volumes VIII and IX and 411 copies of modern Public Science Treatises to Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein on behalf of the Prime Minister and his wife for 137 libraries in Yangon. He also presented 50 dishes and 100 DTH devices for Yangon Region to the chief minister.

He then handed over 1,500 copies of Public Science Treatises Volumes VIII and IX and modern Public Science Treatises to the relevant officials on behalf of the Prime Minister and his wife for military headquarters, regiments, and units, and 2,589 copies of Public Science Treatises Volumes VIII and IX and modern Public Science Treatises for the Myanmar Libraries

Foundation.

Afterwards, the Union minister and the regional chief minister drew lots for dishes and DTH devices.

The Union minister and party presented K25 million worth of books and publications donated by the Yangon Region Libraries Supervisory Committee for ward and village libraries for the fifth time to the respective librarians, and National Literary Award winner Sayama Ma Sandar gave a talk on raising reading habit. The students from No 1 BEHS Dagon and No 4 BEHS Ahlon performed and the Union minister presented cash prizes to Sayama Ma Sandar and students. The Union minister and party also attended the Yangon Region agriculture and breeding exhibition marking the 63rd Peasants' Day in Hlinethaya (East) township on the same morning.

At the event, the Union minister and party presented excellency awards in agriculture, breeding and creating a model village for the Mya Sein Yaung meat sector project in Yangon Region. — MNA/KTZH

Government Spokespersons' Capacity-Building Workshop concludes in Nay Pyi Taw

THE third day of the "Capacity-Building Workshop for Government Spokespersons on Effective Public Relations" continued yesterday at Horizon Lake View Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw.

Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Tint attended the event, along with representatives from the Myanmar Press Council, trainers, delegates from ASEAN member states – Cambodia, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Myanmar, Laos and Indonesia – as well as officials from the ASEAN Secretariat and observers from Japan.

In his closing remarks, the deputy minister expressed his gratitude and optimism, highlighting the ASEAN Workshop on Mastering Government Communication's success in

uniting voices from member states. He praised the workshop for enhancing public engagement through strategic communication and fostering transparency, accountability, and trust between governments and citizens.

The deputy minister thanked the participants for their active involvement and valuable contributions, encouraging them to apply the lessons they had learned to their respective ministries and sectors. He stressed the importance of continued collaboration, unity, and understanding within the ASEAN community. Finally, he extended his heartfelt thanks to the ASEAN Secretariat and organizers and wished everyone a safe journey home.

On the third day of the

workshop, trainers also led discussions on the impact of media coverage, reviewing and assessing news disseminated to the public. Participants engaged in group discussions on these key topics.

Following the discussions, the closing ceremony took place, where the deputy minister presented course completion certificates to the participants. Director-General Dr Thida Tin of the Department of Media Development gave a summary of the three-day discussions.

The workshop served as a platform for improving communication strategies, crisis management approaches and the dissemination of clear and effective government information. It also contributed to ASEAN's



Deputy Minister U Ye Tint presents the course completion certificate to the participant.

commitments to capacity-building and regional cooperation.

In the afternoon, ASEAN delegates and trainers departed

from Nay Pyi Taw for Yangon, where they visited the Shwedagon Pagoda in the evening. — MNA/KZL

NATIONAL

Shwedagon to host 2,613th Buddha Pujaniya Taboung festival



This serene photo captures devotees performing good deeds at Shwedagon Pagoda.

THE 2,613th Buddha Pujaniya Taboung Festival will be held at the Shwedagon Pagoda for ten days, from 4 to 13 March, according to the pagoda board of trustees. During the festival, the board of

trustees will hold ceremonies dedicated to worshipping the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha.

“In the 2,613th Shwedagon Pagoda Buddha Pujaniya Taboung Festival, the Maha Pathana recitation will be included, along with the rice-offering ceremony to over 100 monks, including Ovadacariya Sayadaws. Additionally, 28 Buddha statues will be conveyed onto the pagoda platform for public obeisance,” said U Htay Hlaing, a member of the pagoda board of trustees.

The 2,613th Shwedagon Buddha Pujaniya Taboung Festival will include the conveying of 28 Buddha statues onto the pagoda platform. Additionally, 120 monks from various monasteries in Dagon and Bahan Townships will recite the Maha Pathana continuously for 216 hours, from 4 to 13 March, with the recitation concluding on 13 March, the full moon day of Taboung. — ASH/MKKS

Two stars unite for Princess Concert Show

ACADEMY award-winning actress Soe Pyae Thazin and actress Wai Lar Yi, who have been gaining success with the popular Myanmar television drama Kyinphaw, will host the Princess Concert Show at the Beer Bar Live Music Theatre in South Okkalapa Township, Yangon, according to Wai Lar Yi.

The concert will take place on 5 March, featuring performances by Soe Pyae Thazin and Wai Lar Yi, alongside in-house vocalists Aung Zaw, A, K Hein and Chit Lun Zaw from the Beer Bar Live Music Theatre.

Wai Lar Yi shared her excitement about the show, saying, “My sister Soe Pyae Thazin and I are planning this Two Lady Show called The Princess Concert Show. We’d love for all our fans to come and enjoy the music. Tay and Mann will also be performing. This opportunity came from the venue, and since my sister wanted to sing, we agreed. We’ll include special performances, including a song named, ‘Sann Sann Pya Pya’. Since we collaborated in the movie Tay, Chaw and Mann, we haven’t had the chance to work together. So, I’m excited to share the stage with my sister, Soe Pyae. It’s been a while since I performed, so I’m a bit nervous, but I’ll do my best. I love Soe Pyae’s singing – she’s not only a great actress but also has a powerful voice”.

The event will also feature live musical support from Ugly Band, with DJ George providing extra entertainment. — ASH/KZL



Billboard of the Princess Concert Show featuring Soe Pyae Thazin and Wai Lar Yi.

MMPO honours 2024 film Academy awardees with gala dinner

THE Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization (MMPO) hosted a dinner in honour of the winners of the 2024 Academy Awards and those who participated in organizing the 2024 Myanmar Film Academy Awards event at the MWD Media Centre in Yangon on 26 February.

MMPO Chairman U Kyi Soe Tun delivered words of thanks to the relevant officials.

The 2024 Myanmar Academy Awards Ceremony was held on 9 February at the Myanmar International Convention Centre I in Nay Pyi Taw, and a total of 16 Academy Awards were presented. — ASH/MKKS



The commemorative group photo of the honourable dinner for Academy winners and organizers.

Govt approves sisal cultivation on idle land

THE Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation stated that the government will grant a permit to use vacant, fallow and virgin land for sisal production in line with the existing law.

Sisal, a tropical and sub-tropical plant, thrives in temperatures above 25 degrees Celsius, and this drought-resistant plant can be grown in dry regions. Sisal plants can reduce soil erosion, and they are resilient to natural disasters compared to other crops.

“The ministry will provide technical assistance as well as help fulfil seed requirements. Land permits will be grant-

ed under the Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Land Management Law. The ministry will coordinate with the Myanmar Investment Commission if they want to establish related factories on the land.



This photo depicts vast fields with rows of sisal plants.

Sisal can grow best in Myanmar as it has arable land and a suitable climate. Therefore, we like to encourage sisal cultivation,” said an official from the ministry.

Value-added products from sisal fibre can generate greater profit than raw materials. Some entrepreneurs eye value-addition to sisal.

Sisal fibre is mainly cultivated in Brazil, Tanzania, Mexico, Kenya and Madagascar. China is the world’s largest sisal importer and also the leading sisal manufacturer with value addition for exports. — ASH/KK

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Indonesia leads Myanmar rice imports with 600,000+ tonnes (Apr-Jan)

INDONESIA is the largest importer of Myanmar's rice, with over 600,000 tonnes in the past ten months of the current financial year 2024-2025 beginning 1 April, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

China is the second largest importer of Myanmar rice with 429,000 tonnes, followed by 300,000 tonnes to Belgium, over 131,000 tonnes to the Philippines, over 96,600 to Senegal, 79,500 to Bangladesh, 46,900 to Cote D'Ivoire, over 44,200 to Mozambique, 42,300 to Poland, over 37,200 to Spain, over 27,100 to Cameroon, 21,300 to the UK, 17,500 to the Netherlands, over 17,000 to Togo, over 13,900 to Ivory Coast and over 13,300 to Italy.

Myanmar's rice and broken rice exports hit over 2.24 million tonnes in the past ten months (April- December) of the current financial year 2024-2025, with an estimated value of US1 billion, statistics of Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) showed.

The federation aims to achieve 2.5 million tonnes of rice exports in the 2024-2025 financial year (April- March).

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



Workers neatly arranging export rice bags at the warehouse.

Ministry of Commerce is working together with the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Myanmar Rice Federation, Myanmar Pulses, Beans, Maize and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association, Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association, Myanmar Industries Association, Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association, Myan-

mar Fisheries Products Processors and Exporters Association to meet monthly export targets and facilitate exports.

The federation is projected to achieve 2.5 million tonnes of rice export in the FY 2023-2024, generating earnings of \$1 billion. However, rice exports fell short of the target with 1.6 million tonnes worth \$845 million.

The Central Bank of Myanmar's monetary policy to control

export earnings impeded rice exports, hurting exporters financially. The El Nino weather condition also hampered rice export, the president of the Myanmar Rice Federation affirmed.

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

Sandalwood sales surge in Ayadaw



This image depicts the sandalwood logs Ayadaw produces.

SANDALWOOD retail trade has been on the rise in Ayadaw Township.

In Ayadaw, wholesalers sell sandalwood majorly to Mandalay, and the retail trade also mounted over the last six months.

"Sandalwood is widely used. We can sell worth from K300,000 to K400,000 a day. I am a retailer. In Ayadaw, sandalwood is one of the best-selling products. The sandalwood trade was also fine over the last six months. The major destination for wholesalers is the Mandalay market. Sandalwood isn't grown in Ayadaw as a particular product. How-

ever, some traders hunt it and resell it in the retail market," said a man who runs Thanaka and sandalwood retail trading in Ayadaw Township.

Sandalwood trade was slightly slow last December, and traders in Pauk Township said they predicted that it would be good if it is allowed to export to China again, as the border trading gates are reportedly going to reopen soon.

Sandalwood is used in sculpturing, making beads, giving them as presents, and using them as herbal remedies. — Thit Taw/ZS

DTVET launches batch 21 welding course

DEPARTMENT of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (DTVET) under the Ministry of Science and Technology and PTTEP International Limited (Yangon branch) operating the Yadana Project will conduct a 12-week welding course batch 12 starting from 17 March 2025 at Yadana Welding Training Center (Aung San) on lower Mingaladon Road, Singu Ward, Insein Township.

The number of trainees is limited to only 15. The applicants who are 18-35 years old must pass elementary school with a good understanding of basic English. They must be healthy enough to join vocational training. Qualified ap-

plicants must take an interview to take the welding course. Yadana Project will fund a trainee K50,000 per month. It will contribute K100,000 towards some expenses of personal protective equipment, and the remaining cost needs to be borne by them.

Applications will be available at Yadana Welding Training Centre (Aung San) from 24 February 2025. Interested individuals can submit applications by 7 March 2025, along with two passport-sized photos, a citizenship scrutiny card and an education certificate. They can enquire about details through 09 777387369 and 01 645759 of the department. — NN/KK



Trainees fully engaged in an intense welding practical session. PHOTO: XINHUA

OPINION

Leverage non-formal education for youths

EDUCATION is a strong support for everyone's life, environment, and nation. Countries that possess good educational environments not only enhance social and economic life but also support the development and progress of the nation. In countries with weak educational environments, social and economic life and national development are lacking. Therefore, every country continues to support and promote education.

According to the 2019 intermediate population and housing census, there are approximately 4.1 million illiterate individuals aged 15 and above, including both youth and elderly people. Therefore, the total number of citizens unable to receive education and living outside of school is around 6.8 million. In Myanmar, approximately one in every seven people among the over 50 million population is excluded from education.

Therefore, education provides the knowledge that allows one to discern between right and wrong, good and bad, and cause and effect. Only when all citizens are well-versed in knowledge can they establish a powerful collective force capable of advancing the nation's interests. In Myanmar, there is a gap in providing educational opportunities for those who are missing out on the chance to learn, and it is urged that we unite to support and fill this gap to ensure the widespread distribution of knowledge.

Section 28 (a) of the Constitution (2008) states that the Union shall earnestly strive to improve the education and health of the people. In Chapter (5) of the National Education Law, Section 11 specifies that the State shall, in implementing the national education system, relate and carry out such by practising the following means of acquiring education: (a) Formal education; and (c) Informal Education. Through these programmes, the current education gap is being addressed.

The reasons for not receiving education are often linked to various social and economic difficulties. At present, the Ministry of Science and Technology's technical support programme, people in remote areas, regardless of where they are located, have been able to carry out basic literacy programmes using their mobile phones.

Therefore, education provides the knowledge that allows one to discern between right and wrong, good and bad, and cause and effect. Only when all citizens are well-versed in knowledge can they establish a powerful collective force capable of advancing the nation's interests. In Myanmar, there is a gap in providing educational opportunities for those who are missing out on the chance to learn, and it is urged that we unite to support and fill this gap to ensure the widespread distribution of knowledge.

THE nearer the final exam is drawn, the more students' hearts will be pounding, I believe. Funnily enough, students and exams often go hand in hand. It is also natural for students to have exam nerves or test anxiety even before the exam days. Now, there are not so many days left till the matriculation examination. I think that any student who has studied school subjects well or not will feel more or less exam nerves for sure. But students who have conducted enough study on school subjects would like to sit the exam as soon as possible. Only students who have not made ready for studies but are physically and psychologically ready can do well in exams for certain. This article will describe helpful matriculation exam advice for high school students as far as I am aware.

The first thing that students should do before exams is to work out their estimated time for each

question on the paper. For this case, they can look at past papers and may set 1.8 minutes per 1 mark on the 100-mark question paper with a time allowance of 3 hours. Such limited time will not make students hurry into taking the exam; they will be able to answer all the questions which they have to within the allocated time of the exam. If and when students do not fix their expected time for every question beforehand, they will run into difficulty doing the exam, especially when they do not have time to answer objective questions that need calculating patiently or essay-type questions that need to be thought deeply. Students should never spend their valuable exam time answering only one question, especially one that gives a few marks.

Secondly, students must read the whole question paper carefully and thoroughly. Some students do badly in exams even though several questions that they can answer very well are on

Matriculation Exam Advice for High School Students

By Hu Wo (Cuckoo's Song)

the question sheet. That is why they do not read all the questions on the paper from beginning to end. Then, most students who have not answered an adequate number of questions will flunk the exam. Even worse, some students do not read the question until they understand it. The reason is that they do not in all honesty get this question or they read the question carelessly or they do not wish to pass the exam. Whatever it is, any student who has not done the exam completely or adequately will surely

fail the exam. Hence, students ought to read the question paper so earnestly that they will do well in the exam.

Many students are under the illusion that they will have to begin answering the exam questions serially. Thus, students are given to take the exam in serial number except if they have skipped the question which they cannot answer very quickly or they take time to think or they are unable to answer at all. They can start any question number after the alarm bell rings; it depends

on them. Whenever possible, it would be best if students answered all questions in the order of the paper. But as my tip, every student should start with the question number so that they can give the right answer. The question that cannot be given the correct answer in a while is left behind and should be answered by the end of the exam. Here, there is one more point that I want to add. Sometimes students are allowed to choose and answer the questions. At that time, what I always like to say is

'Your choice, your result'. As even some students choose the questions wrongly, they do not get as many marks in the exam as they expect or they tend to fail the exam although they do not want to. Prioritizing the question that students can answer at their best whether its answer may be long or short is of great importance.

As mentioned above, it is no wonder that students have got exam nerves or test anxiety to some extent. Naturally, schoolboys do not feel as much test

anxiety as schoolgirls. However, any student needs to keep calm and sit the exam even if they have not mastered their studies in advance. It was virtually unheard of for any student to flunk the exam with test anxiety. Some students will get nervous as soon as they see a question that they cannot answer at all or be overly happy when they find it pretty easy to answer a question. That should not always be so. In truth, all students must sit still and not be anxious before, while and after they take the exam. I am strongly of the opinion that the only way to overcome test anxiety is enough study and good practice in all studies ahead of time.

After students have answered as many questions as they wish, they should not sit in the examination hall without turning a hair. I have seen that some students take a nap during the exam. It is not a good habit. Check, check, check! Students must check their answer papers

again and again. By the time they do so, they will find if the answer that they have written down is a correct, enough or ample description. Some students are inclined to do peer checking following exams. In reality, such peer checking does nothing, yet this behaviour may depress other students. Most of all, students should have no undesirable feelings between exams. Those feelings will probably even make students flunk in one subject or another. Again, students have to check their roll numbers as well as the numbers and sub-numbers of questions whether they are right or wrong. After all, students should realize that failing the exam is not the end of the world; they also have a chance to try it again the following year. Mostly, they can learn from mistakes. Having passed the exam only once is the best for young students.

WORKING towards more effective tuberculosis (TB) vaccinations, researchers at Weill Cornell Medicine have developed two strains of mycobacteria with "kill switches" that may be activated to stop the bacteria after they elicit an immune response.

Two preclinical research addresses the difficulty of designing bacteria that are safe for use in controlled human infection trials or as improved vaccinations. While tuberculosis is under control in most developed nations, the illness still kills over a million people each year worldwide.

Spreading easily through the air, Mycobacterium tuberculosis can establish a chronic infection in human lungs, which can turn into a deadly respiratory disease. A safe vaccine called BCG, consisting of a weakened strain of the closely related Mycobacterium bovis, has been available for over a century but has limited efficacy.

"BCG protects children from tuberculosis meningitis, but it doesn't effectively protect adults from pulmonary tuberculosis, which is why it's only used in high-incidence countries," said Dr. Dirk Schnappinger, professor of microbiology and immunology at Weill Cornell Medicine and a senior author on both of the new studies.

However, collaborators at the University of Pittsburgh and the National Institutes of Health's Vaccine Research Center previously found that administering high doses of the BCG vaccine directly into the veins, instead of the usual route of giving it under the skin, was better at protecting adult macaque monkeys against lung infection.

Study finds designing self-destructing bacteria make effective tuberculosis vaccines

The new research by Dr Dirk Schnappinger and colleagues aims to develop safer and more potent TB vaccine candidates by engineering mycobacteria strains with built-in "kill switches" that can be activated to stop the bacteria after eliciting an immune response.

In one of the new papers, the team aimed to make this high-dose intravenous injection safer, without destroying the vaccine's ability to stimulate a strong immune response. "We needed a version of BCG that triggers an immune response, but then you can flip a switch to eliminate the bacteria," said Dr. Schnappinger.

After testing about 20 different strategies, the investigators found that lysins, enzymes encoded by viruses that can infect BCG, cause the bacteria to self-destruct. Using a clever bit of molecular engineering, they placed two different lysin genes under the control of gene regulators that respond to an antibiotic. By adding or taking away the antibiotic, they could then flip the kill switch. "The lysins were known, but I don't think they have been utilized as kill switches previously," said Dr. Sabine Ehrh, professor

of microbiology and immunology at Weill Cornell Medicine and a senior author on the papers.

With the newly engineered BCG, the researchers delivered high doses of the vaccine intravenously to antibiotic-treated macaques. When they stopped the antibiotic, the kill switch was activated, promptly ending the infection. The self-destructing bacteria released antigens that further stimulated the animals' immune systems. The result was a robust immune response that protected the monkeys from subsequent lung infections with M. tuberculosis.

"Despite the promising preclinical results, evaluating if the vaccination actually works takes a long time and many people to test it. Tuberculosis doesn't develop quickly and only in a small fraction of the people who are infected," Dr Schnappinger explained.



Such enormous, lengthy clinical trials can cost hundreds of millions of dollars, a major barrier to new vaccines. The urgent need for an effective TB vaccine has prompted researchers to find innovative ways to accelerate vaccine development.

In collaboration with researchers from Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health, the team's second paper is an effort to make clinical trials feasible—developing extremely safe strains of TB bacteria that can be used in controlled human infection studies. They engineered a strain of M tuberculosis carrying a triple kill switch, which uses three independent molecular mechanisms to kill the bacteria. Even in severely immunocompromised mice, the switch allowed the investigators to stop the infection on cue, with no detectable bacteria surviving. Now, they are setting up additional tests in mice and non-human primates to confirm the system's reliability with the goal of using the new strain in human challenge trials of new vaccines. "We are starting with one of the most successful human pathogens ever, so we are very aware of the safety concerns, and that challenge has to be met at the highest levels," said Dr Schnappinger.

SOURCE: ANI

"We needed a version of BCG that triggers an immune response, but then you can flip a switch to eliminate the bacteria," said Dr Schnappinger. ILLUSTRATION: PEX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/CONCEPT ART

NATIONAL

People's Military Service Training 8 concludes

THE graduation parades for the People's Military Service Training 8 took place yesterday morning at various training centres across the country, organized by relevant military commands. The ceremonies followed the training graduation schedule with the graduates taking an oath while holding the national flag.

Officials awarded top-performing trainees with distinctions in categories such as Best Trainee, Best Training, Code of Conduct, Best Marksmanship, Best Mine Handling, and Leadership in Section Strategy.

Senior officials, including the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman, chief ministers from regions and states, commanders, and other senior personnel, attended the event. Officials delivered congratulatory speeches to graduates.

The eighth training batch provided military training covering both the theoretical and practical aspects of military strategies.

The graduates received teamwork, nationalism, patriotism, team spirit and esprit de corps after the training, and they will serve duties at different regiments and units for na-



The graduation parade of the People's Military Service Training 8 in action yesterday.

tional defence and security.

In the evening, dinners

were hosted at each training

centre in honour of the gradu-

ates of the People's Military Ser-

vice Training 8. — MNA/MKKS

Myanmar detains 200 foreign undocumented migrants

THE Myanmar government continues its crackdown on illegal activities in border areas, including unlawful online gambling and telecom fraud. Authorities detained 200 foreign illegal entrants yesterday in the Myawady, Shwe Kokko, and KK Park areas, who had entered Myanmar through unauthorized routes.

Officials are collecting the personal information and records of those detained to facilitate their repatriation to their respective countries as



Immigration and officials processing detained foreign undocumented entrants.

soon as possible. Between 30 January and 28 February 2025,

authorities detained a total of 3,125 illegal entrants. Among

them, 757 individuals have already been repatriated to their home countries via Thailand as per legal procedures, while the remaining 2,368 are prepared for transfer.

The detained individuals are nationals from China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Pakistan, India, Uganda, Ethiopia, Nepal, Thailand, Rwanda, Kenya, Kazakhstan, Cambodia, and Chinese Taipei, with the majority being Chinese nationals. — MNA/MKKS

Counter-argument to false information

Security forces accused of killing one in Myingyan

MALICIOUS media outlets intentionally spread fake news, claiming that security forces killed an innocent civilian in Nganan Village, Myingyan Township, Mandalay Region, on 26 February.

According to a security official, security forces did not kill any person from the village.

Subversive media outlets deliberately circulate false claims and misinformation as part of a propaganda campaign, misleading the public about security forces carrying out their duties. — MNA/MKKS

Security forces clash with PDF in Magway, seize weapons and bodies

PDF terrorists, operating under the direction of the NUG and CRPH, were carrying out subversive activities in Magway Region and had taken shelter with weapons and ammunition near Pinmyo Village in Natmawk Township.

Acting on confidential information from residents who oppose actions that threaten regional stability and security, security forces launched an operation yesterday afternoon. During the operation, several PDF terrorists were killed, and

weapons, along with related equipment, were seized.

The incident occurred after security forces received intelligence that PDF terrorists involved in terrorist activities in Magway Region were hiding with weapons and ammunition near Pinmyo Village. During the security operation, a confrontation took place approximately 500 metres east of the village, resulting in an exchange of fire.

Following the clash, security forces recovered three bod-



This image capture seized bodies near Pinmyo Village.

ies, a Glock pistol, and various related items.

The terrorists have been carrying out armed intimidation of locals, committing acts of violence against government employees and innocent civilians and engaging in targeted

killings.

To maintain stability and security in villages, the authorities urge residents to report any information about terrorist activities to security forces in a timely and confidential manner. — MNA/KNN



This screenshot reveals misinformation.

NATIONAL

Myanmar's 2025 anti-trafficking plan kickoff meeting held

THE Implementation Committee on Myanmar's Five-Year Plan to combat human trafficking held its first meeting for 2025 yesterday at the Myanmar Police Force Headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, Myanmar Police Chief Police Lt-Gen Win Zaw Moe stated that Myanmar has been formulating and implementing five-year national plans since 2007. The country is currently in the fourth five-year plan (2022-2026), and the work plan for 2025 has been drafted to continue implementing anti-human trafficking measures. He also mentioned that Myanmar is actively involved in drafting the fifth Mekong Subregion Plan to combat human trafficking among Mekong region countries.

The committee is assisting foreign nationals who have entered Myanmar for various reasons and are facing difficulties. It collaborates with relevant embassies, the International Criminal Police Organization's



The first meeting of the Implementation Committee on Myanmar's Five-Year Plan to combat human trafficking in progress yesterday.

National Central Bureau (NCB), and other agencies to provide aid, rescue operations and repatriation efforts to return them to their respective countries.

In the legal sector, efforts are underway to investigate and

prosecute human trafficking cases, establish strong legal cases and ensure appropriate sentencing under the law. Collaboration between law enforcement, prosecution bodies and relevant government agencies is being

enhanced to ensure effective legal action.

Regarding victim protection, national-level training programmes have been conducted for the rehabilitation of trafficking survivors. The com-

mittee also provides necessary assistance, referral services and psychological and physical rehabilitation in cooperation with relevant departments and humanitarian organizations. Efforts are being made to enhance victim support mechanisms to ensure their reintegration into society.

To combat organized human smuggling and trafficking networks, Myanmar is working towards drafting and enacting an anti-human smuggling law. A legislative drafting committee, comprising representatives from relevant ministries, has been formed to prepare a draft law for the effective prevention and suppression of human smuggling activities.

Following the discussions, committee members openly presented updates on the implementation of the 2025 work plan, challenges faced and ongoing efforts. The meeting concluded with closing remarks from the Myanmar Police Chief. — MNA/KZL

Japan to recruit 1,500 Myanmar workers

MORE than 360 Japanese companies will recruit around 1500 Myanmar workers, according to demand letter statistics released by the Myanmar Embassy in Japan on 28 February.

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 369 demand letters that the embassy submitted to the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs after verification until 3 December 2024. According to it, 431 Myanmar male workers and 1059 Myanmar female workers would be employed by up to 369 Japanese companies.

A statement released on 15 February said that up to 320 Japanese companies would recruit more than 1,100 Myanmar workers. — MT/ZS



This photo reveals some students learning in Singapore.

Final exams for Myanmar children in Singapore this Mar

THE Myanmar Embassy in Singapore has announced that the final examinations for basic education for Myanmar children abroad will be held in March at the Myanmar Embassy in Singapore for the 2024-2025 academic year.

It will take place on 8 March (Saturday) for Grades 1 to 5 and on 9 March (Sunday) for Grades 6 to 11.

The examinations will be held from 9 am to noon for Grades 1 to 3, from 9 am to 2:15 pm for Grades 4 to 5, from 9 am to 3:10 pm for Grades 6 to 9, and from 9 am to 4:05 pm for Grades 10 and 11. The names and seat numbers of the students who will be taking the exam for the respective classes can be obtained from the Myanmar Embassy on the day of the exam. — MT/ZN



This photo captures some Myanmar workers at the airport in 2024.

ECONOMY WORLD

China's economic, social progress in 2024

This growth is attributed to the country's focus on high-quality development, reforms, and modernization efforts.



This photo taken from Jingshan Hill on 12 August 2024 shows the skyscrapers of the central business district (CBD) on a sunny day in Beijing, capital of China. **PHOTO: LI XIN/XINHUA**

DESPITE intensifying external headwinds and rising domestic pressures, China's economy maintained growth momentum in 2024. This resilience is attributed to the country's efforts to promote high-quality development while deepening reform and open up, as it takes solid steps towards achieving Chinese modernization. The following are some notable facts and figures released by the National Bureau of Statistics on Friday.

- Gross domestic product (GDP) grew five per cent year on year to hit 134.91 trillion yuan (about US\$18.81 trillion), while the per capita GDP rose 5.1 per cent year on year to 95,749 yuan.

- The tertiary industry accounted for 56.7 per cent of GDP, while final consumption expenditure drove GDP growth

by 2.2 percentage points.

- A total of 12.56 million jobs were created in urban areas, up 120,000 from the previous year, and the surveyed urban unemployment rate stood at 5.1 per cent.

- China's per capita disposable income was 41,314 yuan, up 5.3 per cent year on year in nominal terms.

- New quality productive forces saw steady development, with the output of new energy vehicles soaring 38.7 per cent year on year to 13.17 million units, while the production of service robots increased by 15.6 per cent from the previous year.

- The number of new foreign-funded companies on the Chinese mainland totaled 59,080, expanding by 9.9 per cent year on year.—Xinhua

BRIEF: ECON

EU response to US tariff hikes will be 'proportionate': Spanish PM

SPANISH Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said Thursday that if the United States went ahead with 25 per cent tariffs on goods imported from the European Union, the bloc's response would be "proportionate".

"We are going to defend our interests against those who want to attack European economies with tariffs that are completely unjustified and that also covertly threaten our economic sovereignty," the Socialist premier said during a speech in the northern Spanish town of Zamudio.

"We in the European Union ... are going to adopt measures in response that are proportionate to that challenge," he added.

US President Donald Trump threatened Wednesday to impose 25 per cent tariffs on goods imported from the European Union as frictions soared between Washington and its European allies. — AFP

Uzbekistan's national debt exceeds US\$40 bln in 2024

UZBEKISTAN'S national debt exceeded US\$40 billion as of the end of 2024, Uzbek media reported Thursday, citing the country's Ministry of Economy and Finance.

According to the report, by the end of the fourth quarter of 2024, Uzbekistan's national debt reached \$40.2 billion, which is equivalent to 35 per cent of the country's gross domestic product.

Out of the total national debt, \$33.7 billion was external debt, and the internal debt accounted for nearly \$6.5 billion.

Uzbekistan's national debt has been increasing over the past five years. In 2023 this figure reached \$34.9 billion, the report said — Xinhua

Trump ends Chevron permit in major blow to Venezuela

US President Donald Trump said Wednesday he was revoking permission for oil giant Chevron to operate in Venezuela, removing a crucial source of revenue in a wobbly economy run by leftist adversary Nicolas Maduro.

Trump accused Maduro of failing to live up to promises to take back deported Venezuelans as pledged to a US envoy, whose visit to Caracas had initially been seen as a

sign the new US administration would focus on pragmatic engagement rather than upping pressure.

Former president Joe Biden in 2022 eased sanctions and gave Chevron permission to operate in Venezuela in return for the release of detained Americans and a promise by Maduro to allow fair elections.

Biden reimposed most sanctions as it became clear that Maduro was sidelining

the opposition but maintained the concession to Chevron, in part out of concern of causing a spike in oil prices in the United States before elections.

"We are hereby reversing the concessions that Crooked Joe Biden gave to Nicolas Maduro," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform.

Trump, who rarely faults authoritarian leaders over democracy, said that the election conditions had not been met by Maduro, who was sworn in to a third term last month despite wide accusations of vote rigging.

"Additionally, the regime has not been transporting the violent criminals that they sent into our Country (the Good Ole' USA) back to Venezuela at the rapid pace that they had agreed to," Trump wrote.

Chevron, the only US oil company in Venezuela, had previously stopped production in the country in 2018 due to sanctions by Trump in his first term. — AFP



A tanker sails near an oil refining plant of state-owned Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) in Puerto La Cruz in November 2021. **PHOTO: YURI CORTEZAFP/FILE**

Indonesia to ban crude oil exports to optimize domestic refining

THE Indonesian government plans to ban crude oil exports to optimize domestic refinery capacity and better manage the national oil supply.

“If previously we exported crude oil, we will no longer allow it to be exported,” Indonesian Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Bahlil Lahadalia was quoted Thursday by local media as telling a press conference.

He said that domestic oil processing would align with the capacity of existing refineries while awaiting improvements

through more advanced technology. To achieve this, the government would implement a blending process for different types of crude oil to meet domestic industrial specifications.

He also noted that the government would revise fuel oil import permits, reducing the validity period from one year to six months to enhance oversight and flexibility in managing the national fuel supply.

“The import permit for fuel oil, which previously lasted for one year, will now be changed to six



An oil refinery is seen from a ferry in Balikpapan in Indonesia's East Kalimantan province. PHOTO: YASUYOSHI CHIBA/AFP/FILE

months, with evaluations every three months,” Lahadalia said.

He added that importing companies must hold the appropriate business

licenses, such as processing or trading business licenses. — Xinhua

Nepal imports more agricultural products in new FY

Nepal imported agricultural products worth 205 billion rupees in the first seven months of the current 2024-25 financial year, marking a rise of 36.67 per cent over the same period of last fiscal year. The South Asian country spent most on the import of vegetables, which were worth 25.87 billion rupees, followed by rice and paddy at 25.37 billion rupees, according to the Department of Customs.

Animal feed and fruits worth 16 billion rupees and 12.32 billion rupees were also imported by mid-February. — Xinhua

Amazon Web Services announces new quantum computing chip

AMAZON Web Services (AWS) on Thursday announced Ocelot, a new quantum computing chip that can reduce the costs of implementing quantum error correction by up to 90 per cent, compared to current approaches.

Developed by the team at the AWS Centre for Quantum Computing at the California Institute

of Technology, Ocelot represents a breakthrough in the pursuit to build fault-tolerant quantum computers capable of solving problems of commercial and scientific importance that are beyond the reach of today's conventional computers, the company said.

AWS used a novel design for Ocelot's archi-

tecture, building error correction in from the ground up and using the “cat qubit”. Cat qubits — named after the famous Schrödinger's cat thought experiment — intrinsically suppress certain forms of errors, reducing the resources required for quantum error correction, the company said.

AWS researchers have combined cat qubit technology and additional quantum error correction components for the first time onto a microchip that can be manufactured in a scalable fashion using processes borrowed from the microelectronics industry.

“Today's announcement represents an important step in developing efficient means to scaling up to practical, fault-tolerant quantum computers,” the company added. — Xinhua



Developed by the team at the AWS Centre for Quantum Computing at the California Institute of Technology, Ocelot represents a breakthrough in the pursuit to build fault-tolerant quantum computers capable of solving problems of commercial and scientific importance that are beyond the reach of today's conventional computers. PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE / AMAZON

Nikkei stock index tumbles to 5-month low on US tariff concern

TOKYO stocks tumbled Friday, with the key Nikkei index losing nearly three per cent to end at a five-month low as a wide range of issues were sold on concern over US President Donald Trump's latest tariff policies.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average ended down 1,100.67 points, or 2.88 per cent, from Thursday at 37,155.50, closing

at its lowest level since 19 September. The broader Topix index finished 54.16 points, or 1.98 per cent, lower at 2,682.09.

On the top-tier Prime Market, decliners were led by nonferrous metal, machinery and electric appliance issues.

The US dollar temporarily weakened to the lower 149 yen range as the yen, seen as a safe-ha-

ven asset, was bought following the plunge in Japanese stocks. But it later climbed to around the 150 yen line on prospects that the US tariff policies will drive up inflation.

At 5 pm, the dollar fetched 150.43-45 yen compared with 149.77-87 yen in New York and 149.26-28 yen in Tokyo at 5 pm Thursday. — Kyodo

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

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

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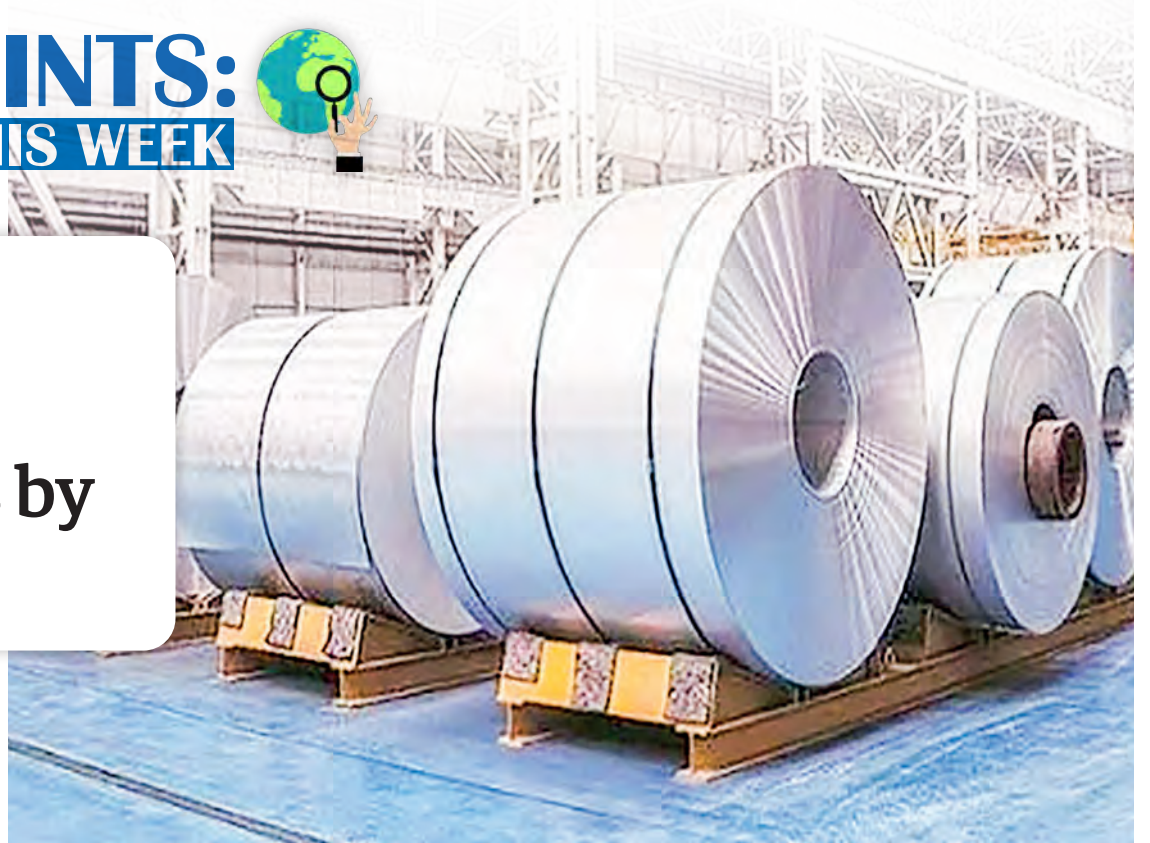
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GLOBAL VIEWPOINTS: FEATURED REPORTS FOR THIS WEEK



India must grow 7.8% annually to achieve developed nation status by 2047: World Bank



In the immediate term, the Indian economy is projected to grow between 6.3 per cent to 6.8 per cent in the financial year 2025-26, as per the country's latest Economic Survey. **PHOTO: ANI**

The World Bank recognizes that India has already been growing at a fast pace, averaging 6.3% between 2000 and 2024, providing a strong foundation for its future ambitions.

THE World Bank on Friday said India will need to grow by 7.8 per cent on average over the next 22 years to achieve the country's aspirations of becoming a developed country by 2047.

A new World Bank report released on Friday finds that this target of India is possible. Recognizing India's fast-paced growth averaging 6.3 per cent between 2000 and 2024, the report notes that India's past achievements provide the foundation for its future ambitions.

Getting there however would require reforms and their implementation to be as ambitious as the target itself, the World Bank

said in a statement, soon after unveiling the report. "Lessons from countries like Chile, Korea and Poland show how they have successfully made the transition from middle- to high-income countries by deepening their integration into the global economy," said Auguste Tano Kouame, World Bank Country Director.

"India can chart its own path by stepping up the pace of reforms and building on its past achievements," he added.

The report evaluates three scenarios for India's growth trajectory over the next 22 years. The scenario which enables India to reach high-income status

in a generation, requires: achieving faster and inclusive growth across states; increasing total investment from current 33.5 per cent of GDP to 40 per cent (both in real terms) by 2035; increasing overall labour force participation from 56.4 per cent to above 65 per cent; and accelerating overall productivity growth. — ANI

The emergency committee on Mpox met for the third time on Tuesday and advised WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus that the situation still constituted a PHEIC.

The decision was "based on the continuing rise in numbers and geographic spread, the violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo — which hampers the response — as well as a lack of funding to implement the response plan", said the brief statement.

Tedros concurred with the committee's advice, extending the PHEIC first declared on 14 August last year.

A PHEIC is the highest level of alarm under the International Health Regulations, which are legally binding on 196 countries.

The UN health agency's chief had declared the emergency amid a rapid spread of the disease, formerly known as monkeypox, in Africa and especially in the DR Congo. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

The UN health agency's chief had declared the emergency amid a rapid spread of the disease, formerly known as monkeypox, in Africa and especially in the DR Congo.

Mpox is caused by a virus from the same family as smallpox. It can be transmitted to humans by infected animals but can also be passed between people through close physical contact. — AFP

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WHO decides Mpox epidemic still global health emergency

Mpox is caused by a virus from the same family as smallpox. It can be transmitted to humans by infected animals but can also be passed between people through close physical contact.

MPOX remains an international public health emergency, the World Health Organization said Thursday after deciding the epidemic still merits the highest level of alert, with cases rising and its geographic spread widening.

"The Mpox upsurge continues to meet the criteria of a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC)," said a WHO statement.

The UN health agency's chief had declared the emergency amid a rapid spread of the disease, formerly known as monkeypox, in Africa and especially in the DR Congo. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Over 500,000 Afghans displaced due to climate disasters in 2024: IOM

MORE than half a million people in Afghanistan were displaced due to climate disasters in 2024, the International Organization for Migration said in a country report published on Tuesday.

"Nearly nine million individuals were impacted by climate hazards in the last 12 months, with over 500,000 displaced by floods, drought, and other disasters," according to the IOM report.

"Roughly three in five of those displaced relocated elsewhere within their province of origin", with the western Herat and Farah provinces among the hardest hit, it said.

This week, 39 people were killed due to floods, hail and storms in southwestern Afghanistan, mainly in Farah, according to local authorities. Afghanistan is among the poorest countries in the world after decades of war and is ranked the sixth most vulnerable to climate change, which is spurring extreme weather. — AFP



SPORTS

Disgraced ref Coote banned by UEFA until 2026

EUROPEAN football's governing body UEFA has banned disgraced ex-Premier League referee David Coote from any officiating activity until June 2026.

Coote, 42, was sacked by Premier League Match Officials Ltd (PGMOL) in December after a video emerged showing him making derogatory comments about Liverpool and the club's former manager Jurgen Klopp.

A separate video subsequently showed Coote snorting white powder, reportedly during Euro 2024, and PGMOL said the official was in serious breach of his employment contract and his actions made his position "untenable". UEFA's control, ethics and disciplinary body met last week and ruled Coote had violated the basic rules of decent conduct and brought football, and UEFA in particular, into disrepute.

In a January interview Coote came out as gay and said his struggle to hide his sexuality had contributed to bad choices, such as the video about Liverpool and his use of drugs.

He said he was "truly sorry for any offence caused by my actions". — AFP



Former Premier League referee David Coote. PHOTO: AFP/FILE



Sports fans and well-wishers welcome the victorious Myanmar national women's football team at the airport.

Myanmar Women's Football Team celebrated at airport

THE Myanmar women's football team, which won the championship trophy at the International Women's Championship, a four-nation invitational tournament hosted by Nepal, returned to Yangon International Airport on the morning of 28 February.

Deputy Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs U Zaw Min Htet, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, members of the Yangon Region government, Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) President U Zaw Zaw and his wife, Women's Football Committee Chairperson Daw Khin Sabai Kyi, MFF Vice-President Professor Dr Khin Saw

Oo, other officials, and enthusiastic sports fans warmly welcomed the team at the airport.

Speaking about the team's victory, U Zaw Zaw said, "This success is due to the dedication of our young players and the unwavering support of our fans. We are deeply grateful to everyone. Each player from the victorious Myanmar women's team has been awarded K2.5 million from me and K2.5 million from the Yangon Region Government, making a total of K5 million each. More well-deserved rewards will follow. However, there is still much to do, and we must not be

complacent at this stage".

Following the arrival, officials congratulated the victorious players and coaching staff, presented them with floral garlands, and delivered congratulatory speeches. The team then took group photos to mark the occasion, and financial awards were distributed.

Later, MFF President U Zaw Zaw hosted a celebratory luncheon for the Myanmar national women's team at Novotel Yangon Max Hotel. During the event, he encouraged them to continue striving for success in the FIFA World Cup qualifiers. — Htun Htun/KNN

'Unique' Isak will be back for Newcastle soon: Howe

EDDIE Howe on Friday calmed fears over Alexander Isak's fitness but said he would not take risks over his star forward at such a critical stage of the season.

The 25-year-old Sweden international, who has scored 21 goals in the current campaign, sat out Wednesday's 2-0 Premier League defeat at Liverpool with a slight groin injury and will be assessed ahead of Sun-

day's FA Cup fifth-round clash with Brighton at St James' Park.

In just two weeks' time, Newcastle face Liverpool in the League Cup final at Wembley, hunting for their first major trophy in more than half a century.

They are also pushing for a top-four spot in the Premier League.

Howe, speaking at his pre-match press conference, denied Newcastle

were a "one-man team".

But he said: "Alex brings unique qualities in that centre-forward role, that pivotal middle role that we need. We have other ways of playing, other skill-sets that we can utilize".

Callum Wilson, making just his ninth appearance of an injury-hit season, led the line at Anfield in Isak's absence, passing up a glorious chance to level the scores at 1-1. — AFP

Olympic champion Lydia Ko strikes it hot in Singapore

LYDIA Ko surged up a tight leaderboard with a five-under-par 67 in scorching Singapore on Friday to trail South Korea's Kim A-lim by one shot after the second round of the HSBC Women's World Championship.

New Zealander Ko goes into the weekend in second place having entered round two of the LPGA event in a share of seventh, three shots off the pace.

The Paris Olympic champion parred the first four holes before picking up two birdies on holes five and eight.

A pair of birdies on 12 and 13, followed by another gain on 16, saw her close her bogey-free round for a two-day total of

six-under-par 138 at Sentosa Golf Club.

"The real key to me for playing well is hitting a lot of greens. I was able to do that a lot better today versus yesterday," said Ko.

"My game has been trending in the right direction and it was good to see a few putts drop here and there".

After the highs of 2024 where she won the gold medal in Paris and was inducted into the LPGA Hall of Fame, a relaxed Ko is seeking new challenges for the 2025 season.

"I'm definitely having more fun and I feel like I'm in a position where I can try new things and not veer off what was good from last year," said Ko. — AFP



Lydia Ko of New Zealand looks on after a shot during round two of the HSBC Women's Championship. PHOTO: AFP

India must grow 7.8% annually to achieve developed nation status by 2047: World Bank

PAGE 14



WORLD

“RELIABLE NUKE SHIELD”

N Korea launches strategic cruise missile

North Korea has launched strategic cruise missiles in waters off its west coast to demonstrate the potential of its nuclear deterrence, local media reported adding that its leader Kim Jong-un has called for thorough war preparedness with the country's nuclear forces and readiness for their use. Kim oversaw the missile launch and called for permanently defending the country's sovereign right and security with the “reliable nuclear shield”, Seoul's Yonhap cited the North's official Korean Central News Agency.

South Korea's military confirmed the missile firing, noting it had detected the launches of multiple cruise missiles towards the Yellow Sea at about 8 am on Wednesday, and they were being analyzed by South Korean and US intelligence authorities, Yonhap reported.

As per the KCNA the goal of the exercise was to demonstrate the Korean army's “counterattack capability in any space” and “the readiness of its various nuke operation means” to “the enemies, who are seriously violating the security environment of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and fostering and escalating the confrontation environment.” — ANI



Europe's largest port Rotterdam. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/SHUTTERSTOCK

Kremlin says trade wars negatively affect all countries

Russia opposes the use of trade wars and tariffs in the global economy, as Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov believes they have negative impacts on all countries involved.

RUSSIA opposes trade wars in the world as they negatively affect all countries, local media reported Thursday, citing Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov.

“We would not want to see many trade wars in the world. Because, one way or another, this will negatively affect all countries,” Peskov said, commenting on the United States' plan to impose

25-per-cent tariffs on goods from the European Union.

The spokesman noted that Russia is now mainly focused on friendly countries, including BRICS partners.

“There we build our modalities that best meet both our interests and the interests of partners. There we try to do without tariff wars,” Peskov added. — Xinhua

Japan govt OKs bill that allows state to advise firms over AI risks



The Combined Exhibition of Advanced Technologies, Japan's major annual electronics show also known as CEATEC, opens at the Makuhari Messe convention centre in Chiba on 15 October 2024. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ KYODO/FILE

THE government on Friday approved a bill allowing the state to assess cases of misuse of artificial intelligence and advise firms on the issue, in what would be Japan's first legislation dedicated to the rapidly spreading technology.

The government hopes to reassure companies and the public about utilizing generative AI amid concerns about how abuses could lead to the spread of disinformation and privacy violations.

The draft law obligates companies to cooperate with the government's AI measures. When the use of AI involves human rights violations, the names of the companies concerned will be disclosed to the public. To avoid over-regulation, the bill does not include penalty provisions, leaving it up to businesses to improve

safety and transparency surrounding the use of AI by themselves. “While AI has benefits, it carries risks such as the spread of misinformation and more sophisticated crimes,” Minoru Kiuchi, minister in charge of AI policy, told a press conference Friday.

Japan aims to attract companies seeking to develop and use AI, Kiuchi said, noting that the goal of the new law is to balance technology innovation acceleration and addressing risks. The government has so far been asking AI-related companies to take appropriate measures against rights violations based on nonbinding guidelines. Under the draft law, the government also plans to establish a task force led by Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba that will play a key role in deciding AI policy. All Cabinet ministers will join it. — Kyodo