

# Sayadaws chant Paritta from helicopter, blessing Nay Pyi Taw with peace and protection

Venerable Sayadaws recited Paritta from the sky over Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory by helicopter yesterday morning, praying for peace and prosperity for the people and protection from danger.

Six members of the Sangha, led by Aggamaha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Vimalabuddhi of Mingala Zayyon Pali Tekkatho Monastery in Pyinmana Township, flew over Nay Pyi Taw while reciting Paritta.

Six members of the Sangha, led by Aggamaha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Vimalabuddhi of Mingala



Sayadaws recite Paritta aboard a helicopter, praying for peace and protection over Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory.

Zayyon Pali Tekkatho Monastery in Pyinmana Township, flew over Nay Pyi Taw while reciting Paritta. — MNA/MKKS

**NATIONAL** **PAGE 7**

Pacific AA Foundation donates K8B to quake survivors

**NATIONAL** **PAGE 10**



891 prisoners released from Insein prison on Myanmar's New Year Day

## SAC Chairman PM Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets Malaysian PM, ASEAN Rotating Chair

Both leaders emphasized ASEAN solidarity and pledged continued support for Myanmar's earthquake recovery during the Bangkok talks.

Chairman of the State Administration Council, Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, held talks with ASEAN Rotating Chair Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, in Bangkok, Thailand, yesterday evening.

At the talks, they cordially discussed continuous aid from the ASEAN community for the rehabilitation of the earthquake-affected Myanmar with solidarity, and cooperation measures of the Myanmar-ASEAN community.

Also, present at the talks was former Thai Prime Minister Mr Thaksin Shinawatra. — MNA/TTA



NATIONAL

From Sitting to Walking: The Journey of Reading

- ❖ Those who do not read books are like sitting.
- ❖ Literates who do not read are like standing.
- ❖ Literates who read books are like walking.
- ❖ We must encourage everyone, especially the youth, to read.
- ❖ We need to create environments that promote reading.

(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the ceremony to donate books and publications to libraries across the nation and libraries of military headquarters, regiments, and units on 3 April 2024)

Ethiopian President sends message of condolence to Myanmar’s Head of State

DUE to the severe damage, loss of life, and numerous injuries caused by the powerful Mandalay earthquake that struck Myanmar, Mr Taye Atske Selassie, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, sent a message of condolence to State Administration Council Chairman and Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing. The statement expresses deep sorrow over the recent earthquake that struck Mandalay and some parts of Myanmar, which resulted in the loss of many lives and caused significant damage. It mentions that during this time of grief and loss, he shares heartfelt condolences with the government, the people of Myanmar and the families of those who lost their lives. It also conveys wishes for a speedy recovery for those who were injured. — MNA/TTA

**HE Senior General Min Aung Hlaing,  
Chairman of the State Administration Council and  
Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar,  
Nay Pyi Taw,**

Excellency,

I am deeply saddened by the catastrophic loss of lives and devastation caused by the recent earthquake in Mandalay and other places of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

At this time of profound loss and national mourning, I would like to extend my deepest condolences to the people and Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and to the bereaved families. I also wish for the speedy and full recovery of those wounded by this tragic incident.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Taye Atske Selassie  
President  
The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia  
31 March 2025

**Weather**

**Untimely Rainfall Warning 20**

Issued at 6 pm MST on 17 April 2025

ACCORDING to the observations at 5:30 pm MST today, due to the western disturbances and the eastern disturbances, development of convective clouds, rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated to scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Bago, Magway and Sagaing Regions and Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States and fairly widespread to widespread in Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Regions and Kayah, Kayin, Chin and Mon States with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls during today evening to 21 April 2025.

**Advice**

People should be aware of untimely rainfall accompanied with strong wind, thunder, lightning, hails and landslides. — DMH

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**Myanmar National Human Rights Commission**

**Statement 5/2025**

- On the occasion of the Myanmar New Year, on the 5<sup>th</sup> Waning of Tagu, 1387 Myanmar Era (17 April 2025), the Chairman of the State Administration Council granted pardons as a gesture to mark the New Year, to bring peace of mind to the public, to extend social compassion, and to foster understanding of the State’s goodwill and benevolence, as well as to encourage the participation in nation-building activities. Under Order 30/2025, a one-sixth remission of the remaining prison terms was granted to prisoners except for those convicted of specific crimes. Additionally, under Order 31/2025, the sentences of 4,893 prisoners were commuted and pardoned.
- Furthermore, in consideration of maintaining friendly international relations and promoting humanitarian consideration, Order 32/2025 granted sentence remissions and pardons to 13 foreign prisoners, who were then deported.
- The State’s granting of remissions and pardons reflects a positive human rights initiative. Citizens who received pardons would be able to contribute to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of areas affected by earthquakes and also participate in building a democratic and federal union.
- The remission and pardon of sentences for foreign prisoners not only promotes peaceful coexistence but also acknowledges and appreciates the mutual humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and rescue efforts extended among member countries of the global community in times of natural calamities.
- The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission would like to express joy alongside the families of those granted amnesty, welcomes the sentence remissions and pardons, and issues this statement accordingly.

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission  
Date: 17 April 2025



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)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council

Notification 59/2025

5<sup>th</sup> Waning of Tagu 1387 ME  
17 April 2025

THE State Administration Council Chairman has conferred religious titles on the following persons for their utmost efforts in contributing to the four prerequisites to the promotion, propagation and flourishing of Buddhism: -

Thiha Thudhamma Manijotadhara Title

1. Thura U Myint Maung Union Minister (Retd), Ministry of Religious Affairs

Thiha Thudhamma Theingi Title

1. Daw Ohnma Myint Ottarathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw  
2. Daw Nilar Zeyathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw  
3. Daw Thet Thet Aung Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw

4. Daw Than Than Aye Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw  
5. Daw Wah Wah Thin Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw  
6. Daw San San Aye Ottarathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw  
7. Daw Thinza Win Sein Ottarathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw  
8. Dr Daw Nang Kue Ku Zeyathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw  
9. Daw Tin Moe Nwe Zeyathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw  
10. Dr Daw Aye Khaing Nyunt Pobbathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw  
11. Daw Khin Hnin Wai Thingangyun Township, Yangon Region  
12. Daw Marlar Tint Hline Township, Yangon Region  
13. Dr Daw Tin Lin Myint Mayangon Township, Yangon Region  
14. Daw Khin Hla Win Mayangon Township, Yangon Region

Sd/ Min Aung Hlaing  
Senior General  
Chairman  
State Administration Council

SAC hosts New Year Paritta recitation ceremony

THE State Administration Council held a ceremony to listen to the Paritta recitation on the occasion of the Myanmar New Year yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw.

The ceremony was attended by member of the Sangha led by State Ovadacariya Presiding Sayadaw of the Maha Thiha Thudhamma Monastery in Tatkon Abhidha-jah Maharathaguru Bhaddanta Acinna, and Secretary of the State Administration Council General Aung Lin Dwe, State Administration Council Chairman's Office Ministry-4 Union Minister U Aung Kyaw Hoe, deputy ministers, permanent secretaries and departmental officials.

At the ceremony, the congregation received the Nine Precepts from the Sayadaw and listened to Paritta recited by members of the Sangha.

The SAC Secretary and party presented members of the Sangha with offerings. The ceremony concluded with sharing the merits gained.

After the ceremony, the SAC Secretary and party donated alms food to members of the Sangha. — MNA/MKKS

The New Year Paritta chanting event in progress yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.



SAC Chair's Office Ministry 1 Union Minister comforts patients, offers New Year aid and well-wishes

UNION Minister for the Ministry 1 of the State Administration Council Chairman's Office, Admiral Moe Aung, visited patients receiving

Union Minister Admiral Moe Aung presents cash and relief items yesterday.

treatment at the 1,000-bed General Hospital in Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday. On the occasion of the Myanmar New Year, he provided them with lunch, cash, medicine, food, and drinking water, and extended his wishes for their peace of mind and good health. — MNA/TH



# NATIONAL

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council

Notification 60/2025  
5<sup>th</sup> Waning of Tagu 1387 ME  
17 April 2025

THE State Administration Council Chairman has conferred honorary titles on the following persons for their excellent performances in relevant arenas to develop the State: -

Pyidaungsu Sithu Thingaha Title

Sithu Title

1. Daw Dwe Bu

member

State Administration Council

2. Porel Aung Thein

member

State Administration Council

3. Dr Hmuh Thang

member

State Administration Council

4. Dr Ba Shwe

member

State Administration Council

5. Khun San Lwin

member

State Administration Council

6. U Yan Kyaw

member (Retd)

State Administration Council

7. U Tha Htay

Chief Justice of the Union

Supreme Court of the Union

8. U Aung Zaw Thein

Chairman

Constitutional Tribunal of the Union

9. Lt-Gen Aung Aung

Ministry of Defence

10. Lt-Gen Zaw Myo Tin

Ministry of Defence

11. Lt-Gen Soe Min Oo

Ministry of Defence

12. Lt-Gen Myo Thant Naing

Ministry of Defence

13. Lt-Gen Zaw Win Myint

Ministry of Defence

Honorary Titles for Excellent Performances

Thiri Pyanchi Title

1. U Nyan Tun

Union Minister, Ministry of Electric Power

2. U Tun Ohn

Union Minister, Ministry of Commerce

3. Dr Soe Win

Union Minister, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement

4. Dr Khin Naing Oo

Auditor-General of the Union, Office of the Union Auditor-General

5. U Aung Thaw

Chairman, Union Civil Service Board

6. U Myo Aung

Chief Minister, Mandalay Region Government

7. U Aung Kyi Thein

Chief Minister, Mon State Government

8. U Htein Lin

Chief Minister, Rakhine State Government

9. U Sis Aye

Chairman, Anti-Corruption Commission

Zeya Kyaw Htin Title

1. Maj-Gen Min Min Ko

Ministry of Defence

2. Maj-Gen Zaw Naing Oo

Ministry of Defence

Wunna Kyaw Htin Title

1. U Khin Maung Soe

Ambassador (Retd), Ministry of Foreign Affairs

2. U Yan Naing Oo

Director-General (Retd), Ministry of Culture

3. U Aye Win

President, Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry

4. Daw Khine Khine Nwe (aka) Rosaline

General Secretary, Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry

Alinka Kyaw Swa Title

1. U Kyi Soe

Film Actor

2. Maung Hnin Moe

Film Director

3. Daw Wah Wah Win Shwe

Film Actress

4. Daw Khin Than Nu

Film Actress

Sd/ Min Aung Hlaing  
Senior General  
Chairman  
State Administration Council

## MoTC hosts ceremonial fish release



SAC Member Deputy PM MoTC Union Minister General Mya Tun Oo and wife participate in the ceremonial fish release yesterday.

THE Ministry of Transport and Communications held a ceremony to release fingerlings into the Ngalaikyaba diversion weir, located west of the Nay Pyi Taw City Development Committee office, yesterday.

State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister for Transport and Communications General Mya Tun Oo and his wife, deputy ministers and their wives, departmental officials and their

wives, and staff attended the ceremony.

The General, his wife, and officials first released the fingerlings into the Ngalaikyaba weir. Attendees then released a total of 9,000 fingerlings into the weir. — MNA/KTZH

## MoBA organizes mass fish release for merit

THE Ministry of Border Affairs organized a mass fish release ceremony as a merit-making event at the Mingala Lake in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning, coinciding with the first day of the Myanmar New Year.

Led by the Union minister and his wife, a total of 10,000 fish were released into the Mingala Lake as an act of charity under the spirit of the Myanmar New Year's merit-making tradition.

— MNA/KZL



SAC Member MoBA Union Minister Lt-Gen Yar Pyae and wife perform fish release yesterday.



NATIONAL

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council

Order 30/2025

5<sup>th</sup> Waning of Tagu 1387 ME  
17 April 2025

Remitting prison sentences

THE State Administration Council Chairman has remitted the punishment of prisoners from their respective prisons, jails and camps reducing one-sixth of the sentence they are serving as per the Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401 (i) except for those convicted of murder and rape or jailed for charges under the Explosives Act, Unlawful Association Act, 1878 Arms Act Section 19 (f), 1949, the Arms (Emergency Penalty held) Act (temporary), 1951 Arms (Temporary Amendment) Act, 1924 Shan State Arms Order, 2023 Arms Law, Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, Natural Disaster Management Law, Counter-Terrorism Law and Anti-Corruption Law before 17 April 2025, in commemoration of Myanmar New Year, on humanitarian and compassionate grounds as well as on the goodwill of the government.

By order,  
  
Aung Lin Dwe  
General  
Secretary

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council

Order 31/2025

5<sup>th</sup> Waning of Tagu 1387 ME  
17 April 2025

Pardon Order

THE State Administration Council Chairman has pardoned 4,893 male and female prisoners from their respective prisons, jails and camps as per the Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401 (i) “to serve the new punishment together with the remaining punishment to which she/he was sentenced this time if more offence is committed” in commemoration of Myanmar New Year, luring to participate in national building activities, on humanitarian and compassionate grounds as well as on the goodwill of the government.

By order,  
  
Aung Lin Dwe  
General  
Secretary

Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
State Administration Council

Order 32/2025

5<sup>th</sup> Waning of Tagu 1387 ME  
17 April 2025

Pardon Order

THE State Administration Council Chairman has remitted the punishment of 13 foreign prisoners from the respective prisons, jails and camps, upon the conditions “to serve the new punishment together with the remaining punishment to which he was sentenced this time if more offence is committed” under Code of Criminal Procedure Article 401 (i), in commemoration of Myanmar New Year, on bilateral relation of countries and humanitarian grounds, and they are expelled from Myanmar.

By order,  
  
Aung Lin Dwe  
General  
Secretary



Union Minister Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung and wife host ceremonial fish release yesterday.

MoHA families celebrate  
New Year with fish release  
and tribute to elderly

THE Ministry of Home Affairs held ceremonies yesterday morning to release fish and pay respects to the elderly family members of staff at Mingala Lake, located next to the Pyinmana-Taungnyo Road in Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw.

Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung and his wife, Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Aung Kyaw Kyaw and his wife, Permanent Secretary U Khine Tun Oo and his wife, directors-general, senior officials and their spouses, staff, and family members attended the ceremonies. A total of 3,000 fish, including golden carp fingerlings, were released into Mingala Lake.

Following this, a ceremony to honour the elderly was held at Areindama Hall of the Myanmar Police Force Headquarters. Union Minister Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung and his wife, along with officials, attended the event. As per Myanmar customs and traditions, New Year offerings were presented to 20 elders aged 80 and above who were able to attend the ceremony. On behalf of the elders, a grandmother offered prayers and conveyed good wishes.

A total of 86 elders aged 80 were presented with the above-received cash and personal items; however, only 20 were able to attend the ceremony. — MNA/MKKS

Yangon’s Hlinethaya records  
30mm of rainrate per hour

THE rain rate was recorded at 30 millimetres per hour in Yangon Region’s Hlinethaya Township, said meteorologist U Win Naing, referring to data from weather stations.

“It is alarming that the rain rate in Hlinethaya is calculated in 30 millimetres per hour, so the rainfall will reach 1.18 inches an hour later if it continues raining at this rate, meaning the rainfall will be high. The rain stopped at 2:20 pm and recorded that the rainfall was 15.7 millimetres (0.62 inches),” he said on 17 April.

He said the rain rate and rainfall catchment are different. He added that if it continues raining heavily, the rain rate will be 1.61 inches per hour.

Rain is forecast to continue in Ayeyawady and Yangon regions due to clouds coming from the southwest, while cloudy weather is forecast in upper Myanmar, but there is barely any possibility of rain, he said. — Htun Htun/ZS



NATIONAL

Merit-making activities mark Myanmar New Year's Day in Nay Pyi Taw



Devotees perform meritorious deeds at Maravijaya Buddha Image in Nay Pyi Taw.

AS the Myanmar calendar transitioned from 1386 to 1387, people across Nay Pyi Taw began the New Year with traditional merit-making activities yesterday, reflecting the cultural practice of washing away the impurities of the old year both physically and spiritually.

The morning of Myanmar New Year's Day saw crowds gather at pagodas and monasteries in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area to observe precepts, offer alms and perform acts of generosity. Activities included helping elderly people with personal hygiene, paying homage to parents and teachers, releasing fish and birds as a life-saving act and offering traditional New Year charity feast.

Government ministries, residential areas and Dhamma centres in Nay Pyi Taw also hosted monks to deliver Dhamma talks and blessing recitations. These ceremonies were accompanied by the sharing of merit, setting a wholesome and auspicious beginning to the new year. — MNA/KZL

Myanmar New Year: Dawei's Shwetaungsa Pagoda draws merit-makers

SHWETAUNGSA Pagoda in Dawei, which is one of the city's most revered religious sites, was bustling with merit-makers engaging in religious observances on the evening of 17 April, which marked the first day of the Myanmar New Year 1387 and an auspicious day for Theravada Buddhists.

Locals from Dawei and visiting pilgrims gathered at the pagoda to offer flowers, cool wa-

ter and oil lamps, in a display of devotion marking the sacred day. Many also chanted Buddhist Sut-tas and recited protective verses while stringing prayer beads.

Later, worshippers performed traditional rituals such as pouring scented water at Bodhi trees and making heartfelt wishes, a gesture believed to bring blessings for the New Year. — Ngwe Zin Yaw (Dawei)/KZL



Devotees making merits at Dawei's Shwetaungsa Pagoda.

Mandalay welcomes New Year with religious activities

MANDALAY devotees visited pagodas across the city, took moral precepts and released fish to welcome the Myanmar New Year yesterday. People also donated meals in the spirit of Satuditha (charity feast).

At the Mahamuni Buddha Image, the sacred image was displayed to devotees via an LED board, allowing pilgrims to offer homage with flowers and offerings. Religious ceremonies also took place at other prominent religious sites, including Sutaungpyae Pagoda on Mandalay Hill and Maha Thakymarazein Pagoda near the foot of the hill.

At Maha Atulawaiyan Monastery, officials led early-morning offerings at 5 am, donating breakfast alms to 108 monks, listening to sermons and offering meals. Elderly citizens aged 90 and above were also honoured. A Dhamma sermon was held at the monastery later that evening.

Throughout the evening, neighbourhoods, streets and Dhamma halls welcomed senior monks who preached



Photos capture devotees and well-wishers making religious events.

protective discourses and moral teachings. — Min Htet Aung(Mandalay Sub-printing House)/KZL



NATIONAL

Rescue and relief efforts continue for earthquake survivors

ON 28 March 2025, Myanmar was struck by a powerful earthquake, which severely affected six regions and states. As of 17 April, the death toll has reached 3,668, with 4,824 injured and 129 still missing.

The Myanmar Fire Brigade and search and rescue teams, both domestic and international, have been carrying out timely rescue operations in the affected areas. Rescue teams have successfully located and saved 653 survivors trapped inside collapsed buildings, and have also recovered the bodies of 752 victims.

In addition, local and international donors have been providing financial aid and relief supplies to the affected population. Between 7 pm on 16 April and 5 pm on 17 April, a total of 77 packages of rainproof shelters from the Myanmar Chinese Taipei Chamber of Commerce arrived at Yangon International Airport.

Efforts are ongoing to ensure that these supplies reach the affected people as quickly as possible, and relief operations continue to be coordinated to provide timely assistance to those in need. — MNA/MKKS

Geophysical survey and inspection confirm Sinthay Dam's structural integrity

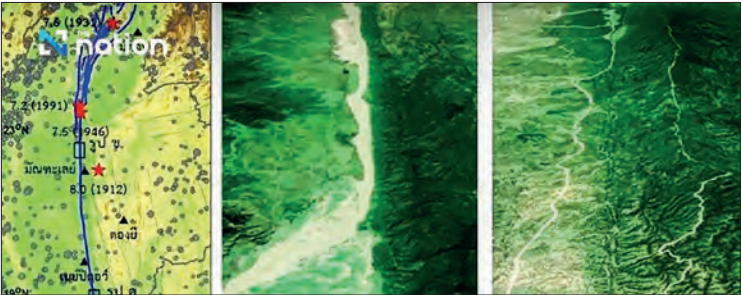
ACCORDING to the geophysical survey and visual inspection, the strength of the Sinthay Dam, which was slightly hit by the Mandalay earthquake, was not affected, and its condition is not of concern.

The above was learned when State Administration Council Vice-Chair, Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win, accompanied by Union ministers, the chairman of the Nay Pyi Taw Council, the commander of the Nay Pyi Taw Command and officials inspected the damage and the repair of the Sinthay Dam on 14 April.

The emergency maintenance work on the reservoir began on 14 April and will be carried out day and night throughout the week to resume water supply to all irrigated acres starting 22 April.

Located near Maezalikyin Village, Tatkon Township, Nay Pyi Taw, the Sinthay Dam project was started in 1996-97 and completed in 1998-99. It is an earthen dam with a drainage area of 308 square miles. The dam is 109 feet high, 1,350 feet long, and has a reservoir capacity of 143,090 acre-feet, with an estimated irrigated area of 11,659 acres. — Htun Htun/ZN

Five experts to lead panel on earthquake hazards



Images from the 28 March issue of The Nation about the Mandalay earthquake.

THE Technology Development Committee of the Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Federation (MCEF) will hold a panel discussion with five prominent experts in the geoscience and engineering industry to spread public awareness about earthquake hazards, the MCEF announced.

The panel discussion on Mitigating Earthquake Disasters Through Knowledge Sharing is open to any interested person with free admission. The panel discussion will be joined by five experts — U Win Zaw, Dr Sone Han, U Saw Htwe Saw, Dr Nyan Myint Kyaw, and Engineer Thein Zaw.

It will be held at 2 pm on 27 April at MCEF Hall. Those interested in attending need to register by contacting No 3, Corner of Thanthuma and Waizayanda roads, Thuwanna Junction, Thingangyun Township, 09 893217109, 09 660282000, and 09 250609740 on or before 26 April. — MT/ZN



This photo reveals the donation by the Pacific AA Foundation.

Pacific AA Foundation donates K8B to quake survivors

THE Pacific AA Foundation is donating a total of K8 billion to earthquake victims, AA Medical Products Ltd said.

Besides an initial allocation of K2.5 billion in the first phase, it will donate an additional K5.5 billion in the second phase, depending on the needs.

The second round of donations includes vaccinations, insulin injections, cancer drugs, and K3.79 billion worth of 17,034,000 pieces of Nipro brand (1cc) syringes from Nipro Corporation, a leading Japanese pharmaceutical company. Medicines worth K 550 million each were donated to 13 general hospitals — 300-bed Mandalay Training Hospital, Meiktila, PyinOoLwin, Kyaukse, Sagaing, Nay Pyi Taw (1,000-bed), Paunglaung, Shwekyapin, Dekkhina, Lewe, Mandalay, Kandawnadi and Mandalay Orthopaedic Hospital.

A total of K830 million were donated for the relief and resettlement of the quake victims of Mandalay, and Sagaing regions, Nay Pyi Taw, Pyinmana, and Lewe – more than K1.8 billion worth of medicines and medical supplies in the first round and K155.7 million for the resettlement of 53 employees of the Pacific AA Group in the second round.

Moreover, 192 people, including those from the Pacific AA Foundation and Roche Myanmar, donated blood, delivered K5 million to provide food and iron supplements for blood donors, and assisted the National Blood Centre with a K5 million donation. The remaining funds will continue to be donated. — MT/ZN

Bhutan medical team completes missions

A 51-member Royal Medical Emergency Response Team from Bhutan returned to their country by flight yesterday.

The medical team was seen off by Ambassador U Thein Zaw and other relevant officials at Nay Pyi Taw Airport.

The medical team provided healthcare services to quake-stricken people together with the medics and nurses of Tatmadaw Medical Corps and the Ministry of Health, starting from 3 to 16 April at the temporary hospital (Paunglaung) established at Paunglaung Stadium in Pyinmana township of Nay Pyi Taw. — MNA/KTZH



## Improve the education sector through reform processes

THE government is committed to creating an inclusive and accessible education system that enhances the skills and knowledge of the nation's citizens. This is essential for fostering a skilled workforce that can drive production and manufacturing. However, due to limitations in human resources within the education sector, reforms are necessary to improve the system.

Educational reform should be a continuous process. The current education system has significant deficiencies, which have led to challenges across various sectors. Therefore, changes are needed to address these issues. As citizens and parents, it is our responsibility to support education, eliminate barriers to teaching, and ensure that children are on the right educational path. By doing so, we can help achieve national development goals and contribute to the success of our collective aspirations.

In the upcoming academic year, schools in Nay Pyi Taw will primarily cater to those who have not completed primary education. The government plans to expand this initiative to other regions and states in subsequent academic years. The 2024-2025 academic year saw over 220,000 candidates take university entrance exams, the highest number since the 2021-2022 academic year. In the future, efforts will focus on increasing this number. Education remains a cornerstone of the country's development. Continued reforms and improvements in educational standards are essential for the advancement of human resources and the nation's future success.

contribute to non-formal education.

The Head of State has worked with relevant ministries to ensure the production of the necessary human resources in Myanmar. Polytechnic universities have been established in various regions, including Nay Pyi Taw, and in states and divisions. Government technical colleges, industrial and vocational schools, and higher technical institutions have also been set up to meet the demand for skilled professionals.

In the upcoming academic year, schools in Nay Pyi Taw will primarily cater to those who have not completed primary education. The government plans to expand this initiative to other regions and states in subsequent academic years. The 2024-2025 academic year saw over 220,000 candidates take university entrance exams, the highest number since the 2021-2022 academic year. In the future, efforts will focus on increasing this number. Education remains a cornerstone of the country's development. Continued reforms and improvements in educational standards are essential for the advancement of human resources and the nation's future success.

THROUGHOUT history, wars and conflicts have caused immense suffering across the globe. While political, economic, and territorial factors often receive the most attention, the true roots of the conflict lie much deeper – within the human mind. Emotions such as fear, anger, greed, and misunderstanding can fuel violence when left unchecked. By understanding these inner causes, we gain insight into how to prevent future conflicts and create a more peaceful world. Here, let us explore the mental origins of war, the devastating impacts of World War I and II, and how both global scholarly views and the teachings of Gautama Buddha offer solutions that can guide humanity toward lasting peace.

### Fear and Insecurity

When people feel threatened – whether it's their lives, communities, cultures, or nations – they try to protect themselves. This feeling sometimes turns into aggression, leading to attacks. For example, fear of resource scarcity or concern about losing power of ten triggers wars.

### Greed and Lust for Power

In some individuals, an intense desire to possess wealth, authority, or territory ignites wars. This greed can spread from the individual level to the national level, often disregarding the rights of others.

### Differences and Misunderstandings

A lack of understanding about religious, ethnic, or cultural differences can lead to misconceptions, distrust, and hostility. Leaders or groups sometimes exploit this to incite populations toward war.

### Anger and Desire for Revenge

Throughout history, injustices, oppression, and wounds have caused anger and a desire for vengeance to arise in people. These emotions often lead to violence and perpetuate ongoing wars.

### Group Mentality and Loyalty

Humans naturally tend to be loyal to their groups, ethnicities, or nations. However, this loyalty can create a division between “us” and “them”, making conflicts more likely. All these are part of human nature, and if they can be managed

# The Heart of Conflict, the Soul of Serenity

By Yin Nwe Ko



through education, understanding, compassion, and dialogue, wars could decrease. However, when these mental states are not controlled, conflicts arise, as witnessed throughout history. The following are two prominent examples from world history where human mental states led to wars, as described below.

### World War I (1914-1918)

Key causes of this war included fear, lust for power, and group mentality. European nations were tense due to mutual distrust, military competition (e.g., arms races), and imperialism. In particular, Germany and Britain vied for dominance, leading to the formation of alliance systems. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand acted as a spark, and the loyalty and fears of nations transformed this conflict into a global war.

### World War II (1939-1945)

Anger, a desire for revenge, and greed were among the main causes of this war. After World War I, the Treaty of Versailles left Germany with a sense of injustice and accumulated resentment. Hitler exploited these feelings, inciting the public's desire for vengeance and using greed for territorial expansion as a pretext. On the other hand, nations like Japan and Italy, driven by ambitions for resources and power, expanded the war.

World War I and World War II had immense impacts on humanity. Below, I'll explain the consequences of these two major wars.

### Impacts of World War I (1914-1918) Loss of Life and Injuries

Millions of soldiers died, and civilians were also affected. In total, around 16 million people perished, and over 20 million were injured. This widespread loss devastated families and communities.

### Economic Collapse

Europe's economies collapsed due to the war, resulting in debts and inflation. The resources used during the conflict significantly weakened nations.

### Psychological Trauma

Soldiers experienced conditions like “Shell Shock” (now known as PTSD), a form of psychological trauma. Much of the population witnessed the war's brutality, losing confidence in the future.

### Political Changes

Major empires (e.g., Austro-Hungarian, Russian) disintegrated, and new nations emerged. However, the Treaty of Versailles, by punishing Germany, planted the seeds for another war.

### Impacts of World War II (1939-1945)

### Unprecedented Loss of Life

It's estimated that 70-85 million people died in this war, most of them civilians. In the Holocaust, 6 million Jews and millions from other groups perished, marking the worst genocide in human history.

### Infrastructure Destruction

Major cities (e.g., Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Dresden) were bombed and destroyed, ruining homes, factories, and roads. Most nations took decades to rebuild.

### Psychological and Social Scars

Millions of war refugees became homeless, and families were torn apart. The war's cruelty left deep emotional scars on people's minds.

### Technological and Political Shifts

The use of atomic bombs pushed military technology to a new level and led to the Cold War. Organizations like the United Nations emerged, and global power shifted to the United States and the Soviet Union. These two wars massively impacted humanity's physical, psychological, social, economic, and political lives. The loss of millions of lives, the destruction of cultures, and subsequent conflicts served as warnings to humanity about the terrifying consequences of war.

When combining the suggestions of global scholars with the

teachings of Gautama Buddha to bring peace to the world, one can observe that they share similar fundamental principles. Here, I will integrate points from both perspectives and present a practical solution.

### Education and Dissemination of Knowledge

Scholars assert that education within communities is the most fundamental factor for peace. Organizations like UNESCO point out that education can enhance tolerance, understanding, and cooperation.

### Justice and Equality

Figures like Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai suggest that without social justice and equal rights, lasting peace is impossible. Poverty, discrimination, and inequality are primary causes of conflict.

### Dialogue and Negotiation

The United Nations' peacekeeping efforts prioritize dialogue and conflict resolution. Scholars argue that dialogue is essential for building mutual understanding and trust between parties.

### Emotional Unity

Concepts like psychologist Dr. Marshall Rosenberg's “Nonviolent Communication” highlight empathy, listening, and emotional connection as key elements of peace.

### Teachings of Gautama Buddha

Gautama Buddha's teachings guide individuals to purify their hearts and minds, fostering peace in the world. The main teachings include:

### Loving-Kindness (Metta) and Compassion (Karuna)

In the “Metta Sutta”, Buddha instructs us to cultivate loving-kindness towards all beings and treat them with compassion. The saying, “Loving-kindness can extinguish hatred,” is crucial in reducing enmity among people.

### Moral Discipline (Sila)

The Five Precepts (not killing, not stealing, not engaging in sexual misconduct, not lying, not using intoxicants) serve as a foundation to reduce violence and conflict in society. Adhering to these principles elevates individual morality.

### Patience and Self-Control

The “Dhammapada” states, “Conquer anger with patience.” It advises controlling the mind with mindfulness to reduce anger and greed, helping prevent interpersonal conflicts.

### The Noble Eightfold Path

The Noble Eightfold Path (right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration) guides

individuals to purify their minds and create harmony in the world.

### Integrated Solution

Combining the suggestions of scholars and Buddha's teachings yields the following practical actions:

### Integration of Education and Morality

By blending scholars' emphasis on education with Buddha's focus on moral discipline, ethical education can be incorporated into schools. For example, teaching children to practice loving-kindness, patience, and nonviolence can nurture a peaceful new generation.

### Dialogue and Spreading Loving-Kindness

Encouraging dialogue between conflicting parties while binding them with loving-kindness can bridge divides. For instance, political leaders could be urged to implement Buddha's advice to “overcome anger with loving-kindness” in practice.

### Justice and Compassion

Social justice can be pursued by incorporating Buddha's compassion. Helping the poor with not just material aid but also emotional support can lead to more sustainable peace.

### Mental Training

Combining Buddha's mindfulness practice with scholars' emotional connection strategies, communities can promote meditation and self-control. This enables individuals to manage emotions and reduce conflicts.

Scholars focus on knowledge, justice, and dialogue to bring peace to the world, while Gautama Buddha emphasizes purifying the mind with loving-kindness, morality, and mindfulness. Integrating these approaches involves reforming individuals' minds, ensuring just social systems, and fostering communication with compassion to create a peaceful world. This becomes a balanced approach, harmonizing material and mental dimensions.

What you've said is absolutely correct. Research also indicates that the most effective time to reform an individual's mind and behaviour is during their youth. It's only natural that changing deeply ingrained bad habits or thought patterns becomes difficult once someone reaches adulthood and becomes set in their ways. Therefore, I fully support the view that the foundational practices for bringing peace to the world should be taught starting from the primary education level.

### Basic Practices to Include in Primary Education

Based on the suggestions of global scholars and Gautama Buddha's teachings mentioned earlier, the following practices can be taught at the primary level:

### Loving-Kindness and Empathy

Children can be taught to show loving-kindness to one another and understand others' feelings through practical exercises, such as group games.

### Patience and Self-Control

Through simple mindfulness exercises, children can learn to control anger and practice patience. For example, breathing exercises or techniques to calm the mind can be introduced.

### Cooperation

Students can be trained through group projects to build trust with one another and resolve problems through discussion rather than violence.

### Moral Discipline

Basic ethical practices like “not harming others” and “not lying” can be taught using stories or plays to make them easily understandable for children.

As the facts pointed out, the foundation for making the world peaceful must be laid from a young age. By systematically teaching loving-kindness, patience, empathy, and moral discipline in primary education, children can grow into a new generation that values peace. This approach can help prevent the terrifying consequences of conflicts like World War I and World War II, enabling the construction of a world where all humanity can live in harmony, I believe.



# NATIONAL

## ‘Entitled Wives’ premieres on Myanmar New Year, aiding Mandalay quake recovery

THE Myanmar film ‘Entitled Wives’ has been screening in cinemas since the first day of the Myanmar New Year, with proceeds dedicated to the Mandalay earthquake recovery fund.

The powerful earthquake which struck on 28 March 2025 caused extensive loss of life, property, and infrastructure in parts of Myanmar. Deeply saddened by the impact on the public, the cast and crew of the film expressed their heartfelt sympathy.

In response to the disaster, members of the film crew donated essential supplies — including rice, cooking oil, drinking water, tinned fish, and dried noodles — to 200 affected households in areas where aid was urgently needed.

A representative from Moe Kaung Kin Film Production stated, “Starting from the first day of the Myanmar New Year, revenue from the screening of the film will be donated to support reconstruction efforts for those affected by the earthquake”.

Mae Min Bon handled the film’s story, screenplay, and direction. The cast of the film includes Academy Min Oo, Nyi Htut Kaung, Kyaw Htet Aung, Sithu Win, Hein Thiha, Academy Chaw Yadana, Academy Chuu Lay, Phoo Sone, Shwe Thamee, Htet Htet Tun, and several supporting actors. — ASH/KNN



A poster featuring some of the lead actors from the film ‘Entitled Wives’.

## 891 prisoners released from Insein prison on Myanmar’s New Year Day



Photos show inmates released from Mandalay Central Prison (left) and Insein Prison (right). **PHOTO:KANU**

IN commemoration of Myanmar’s New Year and for the sake of public peace and humanitarian concerns, prisoners from various prisons were granted amnesty under Article 401 (a) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, and 891 male and female inmates, including foreigners, were released from Insein prison in Yangon.

Yangon Region Security and Border Affairs Minister Colonel Win Tint and Yangon Region Police Force Commander Police Brig-Gen Sein Lwin delivered speeches to the inmates at the gymnasium of the Insein Prison.

The released prisoners included 10 foreigners, 655 males and 226 females, totalling 891, and they were transported to their respective townships by YBS buses. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/KTZH

## MRCS provides vital drinking water and assesses needs in earthquake-stricken regions



This photo captures the Myanmar Red Cross Society distributing drinking water in Sagaing on 13 April.

WITH support from the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC), the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) is distributing drinking water to earthquake-affected areas in the Mandalay

and Sagaing regions, as well as the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, according to the MRCS.

“We are distributing drinking water at four locations. With the Red Cross Society of China’s support, we provide clean water through purification units in areas near the Mandalay Moat, Amarapura, Sagaing, and Nay Pyi Taw. Currently, we are distributing between 5,000 and 10,000 litres of drinking water per day,” said Daw Moe Thida Win, Director of the Disaster Management Department at the MRCS.

People can bring their water containers to receive water distributed by the MRCS. From 5 to 15 April, the society has distributed over 30,000 litres of water to 1,238 households.

In addition, a systematic assessment is being carried out to identify the needs of earthquake-affected communities and provide appropriate assistance. Red Cross volunteers from Nay Pyi Taw, Mon and Kayin states, and the Ayeyawady Region conducted an assessment in Nanwinaing Village-tract, Lewe Township, Nay Pyi Taw, on 15 April. — ASH/TH

## Actress, donors deliver K100M and critical supplies to Inlay’s quake-hit communities

ACCORDING to actress Phyu Phyu Htwe, she and a group of generous donors travelled to the earthquake-affected areas of Inlay on 17 April to provide a donation totalling K100 million in addition to food and essential supplies.

“This is the fifth time we’ve donated. The cash alone amounts to K100 million. We focused on places with limited access and few visitors. Just like in our previous donations, we included dried noodles and snacks, but this time the main contribution was in cash. We aim to help some families rebuild small houses so they can live comfortably again. The donors who’ve joined me this time are people who believe in me. Every time we go to donate, I also contribute part of my income. When people see me, their faces light up, and this brings me joy. And they often ask me to sing. I sincerely hope and pray that life becomes less burdensome for them,” said Phyu Phyu Htwe. — ASH/MKKS



# YGN palm oil wholesale reference rate remains stable

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil set for the Yangon market stayed the same at K6,770 per viss for the straight three weeks (from 6 to 27 April), according to the Supervisory Committee on Edible Oil Import and Distribution.

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

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

To control overcharging, the Consumer Affairs Department under the Ministry of Commerce informed the consumers of lodging the complaints for overcharging through the call centre hotline in late August. The department urges consumers not to buy palm oil at high prices.

The Committee notified that any person who is involved in price gouging and oil storage to attempt market manipulation will face legal action under



Bottles of edible oil are arranged for sale in the supermarket.

the Essential Goods and Services Law. The department is working together with the Myanmar Oil Dealers' Association and the cooking oil importing companies to offer affordable rates of imported palm oil for consumers. The complaints for overcharging can be lodged over hotline 1535 of the call centre of the Consumers Affairs Department or sent to the Facebook

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

# CBM to inject \$55M into fuel oil sector

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) announced on 16 April that it would sell US\$55 million to fuel oil importers and distributors.

CBM sold US\$1.9 million on 10 April. CBM announced on 7 April that it would pump \$30 million into the fuel oil industry and after that, it sold \$40 million and over six million baht on that day.

CBM injected 500,000 yuan on 4 April and over 2.35 million baht on 3 April into the market.

CBM injected over \$126 million, 320 million baht and 3.6 million yuan in



An exchanger is counting greenbacks at the exchange counter.

March, over \$88 million, 7.5 million yuan and 161 million baht in February and over \$124 million, over 13.8 million baht

and over 4.8 million yuan in January. CBM aims to curb the instability in the foreign exchange market and the currency devaluation. According to CBM's notification on 15 March, it has been 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

## Monywa University of Economics launches master's programmes for 2025-2026

MONYWA University of Economics accepts admission to master's courses for the Academic Year 2025-2026, according to the Academic Affairs Department of the University.

Those qualified students can join the Master of Banking and Finance and Master of Development Studies Programmes in the 2025-2026 academic year.

Those who hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited university, who can complete the course curriculum and who have access to online courses through the Zoom application can apply for them. For civil servants, they need to provide a recommendation letter from the head of the department concerned. They must not attend any other courses at the state-run universities simultaneously.

The application form can be taken from the Department of Student Affairs of Monywa University of Economics or downloaded starting from 7 April 2025. They need to send the application form and the required documents (certificate of bachelor's degree, matriculation exam pass certificate, citizenship scrutiny card, referee letter for work experience, and three passport-sized photographs to email or Viber contact by 30 May 2025.

The entrance exam will be held on 8 June 2025, and the result and interview date will be declared on 12 June 2025. The number of trainees is limited. Those two-year courses will be offered every weekend from 8 am to 5 pm. Those individuals can enquire about details through the contact numbers (MBF: 09 757712395, 4mbf.mue2025@gmail.com, (MDevS: 09 754598281, devs.mue@gmail.com), (Student Affairs Dept: 09 400413081 and 09 259144740, and academiaffairsmue@gmail.com). — NN/KK

# Hotel sector attracts K3.77B worth new investments in Yangon Region

YANGON Region Tourism Committee stated that new investments worth K3.77 billion flowed into the hotel sector in the region.

Yangon Region Tourism Committee granted licences for four hotels at the meeting 1/2025 held at the meeting hall of the Yangon Region government office on 11 April 2025. Additionally, the committee renewed 65 licences of the

hotel, 19 of the guesthouses and two of the hostels. It also endorsed 82 tour licences (inbound/domestic) for new agencies and granted renewal of the 197 licences. It also gave green light to 49 new licences and 57 renewals of the tour licence (outbound), four tour guide licences and 180 licences extension, and ten new domestic pilgrimage tour certificates. Those businesses bring in

K3.77 billion in the hotel sector.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, who also acts as chairman of the committee, during his opening remark at the meeting, discussed tourism sectoral performances in 2014 and possible conditions in the industry this year. He also urged members of the committee to suggest ideas and views for the upcoming tourism season.

He also coordinated the matters raised by the attendees to effectuate tourism development in the region, enhance quality service of the hotels and guesthouses and conduct courses for human resource development under the budget of the regional government in the 2025-2026 financial year. — NN/KK



ECONOMY  
WORLD



Indonesia plans to promote its green energy resources to enter the European market and counter the impact of US tariffs, with a focus on its significant hydropower potential of 3,600 gigawatts. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/PIXABAY**

Indonesia to enter European market with green energy commodities

*Minister Bahlil Lahadalia stated that this initiative could create around 300,000 jobs and generate approximately \$70 billion in foreign exchange.*

INDONESIA has planned to promote its resources of green energy to penetrate the European market as an effort to mitigate impacts from US tariffs, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Bahlil Lahadalia said on Tuesday.

Indonesia has a comparative advantage in green en-

ergy, which can penetrate the market anywhere, including in Europe, and Indonesia has abundant renewable energy potentials, Lahadalia said at an event.

He said the government had assessed that there was potential for the development of hydropower of 3,600 giga-

watts.

“If we are able to do this, this will be able to create jobs of approximately 300,000 and can bring in foreign exchanges of approximately US\$70 billion,” he said.

Lahadalia’s remarks were in response to a 32-per-cent US tariffs on Indonesia. — Xinhua

Automakers hold their breath on Trump’s erratic US tariffs

US President Donald Trump’s aggressive but fast-changing trade policy has foisted difficult questions on carmakers that they have not yet been forced to answer.

While Trump has retreated from some of his most onerous tariffs, carmakers are on the hook for 25 per cent levies on auto imports that went into effect on 3 April.

But so far, the effects of that levy have been muffled because carmakers are still selling vehicles from inventory. Auto companies and industry watchers expect this dynamic to persist



Automakers will need to decide how much of the hit to absorb and how much to pass on if President Donald Trump’s tariffs stay in place. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

for at least a few more weeks.

But if the tariffs stay in place — a big if given Trump’s tendency to reverse course — automakers will need to decide how much of the hit to absorb and how much to pass on. — AFP

EU hopes Trump tariffs can nudge Mercosur deal past finish line

THE potential for a transatlantic trade war is prompting the EU to seek new trading partners, particularly through a long-awaited commerce deal with the Mercosur bloc, which includes Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Despite strong opposition from France, particularly its farmers, incoming German Chancellor Friedrich Merz believes that French President Emmanuel Macron may reconsider his stance on the deal, which aims to create a free-trade area for 700 million consumers.

The EU, facing an unpredictable US partner, is eager to finalize this agreement, which has been in the works for 25 years. To gain support, EU offi-

cials are considering financial assistance for farmers impacted by increased imports. While Poland remains opposed, there are signs of shifting attitudes in Austria, where the Economy Minister now supports the deal.

French Agriculture Minister Annie Genevard has expressed concerns about compromising French agriculture, emphasizing the need for a balanced approach. As the EU prepares to present the deal for final approval, the outcome remains uncertain, with Macron under pressure to maintain national unity amid growing domestic opposition. The issue is expected to resurface when Denmark assumes the EU presidency in July. — AFP

BRIEF : ECON

Fishing rights complicate EU-UK relations as May 19 summit approaches

COD and herring are usually more common on dinner plates than at European security talks, but a diplomatic dispute over mackerel and missiles is heating up between London and Brussels ahead of a significant EU-UK summit on 19 May.

Both sides aim to establish a defense and security pact, especially as Donald Trump’s potential return to the White House raises concerns about US support for NATO.

This summit is seen as a chance to mend post-Brexit tensions, with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer advocating for a “reset” in relations. However, France and other EU nations want to tie defence discussions to successful negotiations in other areas, particularly fishing rights, which remain a contentious issue.

The current agreement allowing European boats access to British waters is set to expire in 2026, and France is pushing for its renewal. While fishing is a small part of the UK economy, it evokes strong emotions tied to the nation’s maritime heritage. — AFP

Spiralling prices remain Filipinos’ top concern: survey

INFLATION remained a top concern for Filipinos, according to a survey by an independent polling firm Wednesday.

In a survey of 2,400 adults conducted from 23 to 29 March, pollster Pulse Asia Research Inc. said that 69 per cent expressed concern about controlling rising prices of essential commodities.

From a list of 16 urgent concerns, the pollster said, “Controlling inflation remains the top issue for seven in 10 Filipinos, who see it a national issue requiring immediate government action.”

The survey said the second urgent national concern is increasing workers’ pay, at 36 per cent. Sharing the third spot are combatting graft and corruption and fighting criminality, at 28 per cent, then reducing poverty, at 27 per cent, and creating more jobs, at 20 per cent. — Xinhua



# Tokyo hotels to be warned for alleged cartel-like price info sharing

*The Japan Fair Trade Commission has notified these hotels about upcoming administrative guidance to stop the practice.*

JAPAN’S antitrust watchdog plans to issue warnings to 15 high-end Tokyo hotel operators for regularly sharing their room rates and occupancy data, deeming the practice as bordering on cartel behavior, a source close to the matter said Thursday. Properties subject to the warning include the Hotel New Otani, Hyatt Regency, Imperial Hotel Tokyo, Keio Plaza Hotel Tokyo, The Okura Tokyo, and the Palace Hotel Tokyo. The Japan Fair Trade Commis-

sion has notified the firms of its impending issuance of administrative guidance that will call for them to cease the practice. The move comes as hotel room rates soar in the Japanese capital due to an influx of overseas visitors. Sales representatives working for the companies gathered nearly every month to share information, including plans for future room prices, the source said, noting the hotels have been holding meetings for decades. — Kyodo



There are several great hotel options near Tokyo Skytree. PHOTO: BOOKING.COM

## Philippine remittances grow by 2.6% in Feb

PERSONAL remittances from overseas Filipinos reached US\$3.02 billion in February, 2.6 per cent higher than the \$2.95 billion recorded in February 2024, the Philippine central bank said Tuesday.

The bank said the remittance increase was observed from land- and sea-based workers.

Correspondingly, the bank said the cumulative remittances reached \$6.27 billion from January to February, 2.7 per cent higher than the \$6.10 billion recorded in the same period of 2024. — Xinhua

## S Korea’s import price falls in Mar

PRICE for imported goods to South Korea fell for the second consecutive month due to cheaper crude oil, central bank data showed Wednesday.

The import price index slipped 0.4 per cent in March from a month earlier, after retreating 1.0

per cent in the previous month, according to the Bank of Korea (BOK).

The successive slide was attributed to cheaper crude oil that offset the local currency’s depreciation versus the US dollar.

Price for Dubai crude, South Korea’s benchmark,

averaged US\$72.49 per barrel in March, down from \$77.92 in the previous month. The average won/dollar exchange rate gained to 1,456.95 won per dollar in March from 1,445.56 won in February. Price for imported raw materials dived 3.3 per cent in March on a monthly basis, continuing to shrink for the second straight month.

Import price for intermediary goods increased 0.7 per cent on higher price for chemicals, metal products, machinery and equipment as well as computer, electronic and optical devices. — Xinhua



Photo taken on 7 March 2023 shows a container terminal at the port of Busan, South Korea. PHOTO: WANG YILIANG/XINHUA

## Fiji launches new policy to boost affordable housing

FIJI’S Ministry of Housing has officially launched the National Housing Policy 2025-2030, aiming to improve access to affordable, adequate and inclusive housing across the country.

The new policy prior-

itizes regulatory reform, the expansion of social housing programmes, and enhancing affordability through strategic partnerships and targeted support for low-income households, reported Fiji Broadcasting Corporation

on Thursday.

Minister for Housing and Local Government Maciu Nalumisa said the policy lowers housing costs by promoting prefabricated homes and reducing material taxes. — Xinhua

## Kazakhstani bank launches WeChat QR payment service for Chinese tourists

KAZAKHSTAN’S Halyk Bank has launched a new cashless payment method using the popular Chinese messaging app WeChat, according to the local newspaper “DKNNews” on Tuesday.

Kazakhstani entrepreneurs can now accept payments from Chinese citizens through a universal QR code, which is scanned via the WeChat Pay app

at the bank’s point-of-sale (POS) terminals.

To make a payment, users simply open WeChat Pay on their smartphone, scan the QR code, and confirm the transaction. Payments are processed directly through Halyk Bank’s processing system, which guarantees high speed, security, and no additional fees.

“We aim to simplify

payments for Chinese tourists by providing them with a familiar and accessible method of paying for goods and services,” said a representative from Halyk Bank.

WeChat Pay is one of the most popular digital payment solutions in China. The service is widely used by both large companies and individual sellers. — Xinhua

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M.V T12 APPLE VOY.NO. (A2504E)

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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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ROLLING UPDATES  
WORLD

US eliminates unit countering foreign disinformation

*The agency's funding was not extended by Congress in December, following allegations of censorship of conservative views.*



The State Department's Global Engagement Centre (GEC) has long faced scrutiny from Republican lawmakers, who accused it of censoring and surveilling Americans. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE United States on Wednesday eliminated a key government agency that tracked foreign disinformation, framing the move as an effort to preserve “free speech”.  
The closure of the Counter Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference hub, previously known as the Global Engagement Centre (GEC), comes as leading experts monitoring propaganda have been raising the alarm

about the risk of disinformation campaigns from US adversaries.  
In December, just weeks ahead of President Donald Trump’s inauguration, the US Congress failed to extend the agency’s funding following years of Republican allegations that it censored conservative views.  
In a statement on Wednesday, Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced the closure

of the unit, saying it was the responsibility of government officials to “preserve and protect the freedom for Americans to exercise their free speech.”  
“Under the previous administration, this office, which cost taxpayers more than \$50 million per year, spent millions of dollars to actively silence and censor the voices of Americans they were supposed to be serving,” Rubio said. “That ends today.” — AFP

Sweden unveils supplementary budget to boost growth amid global uncertainty

THE Swedish government on Tuesday unveiled its 2025 Spring Budget, pledging 11.5 billion Swedish kronor (US\$1.18 billion) to stimulate growth and mitigate the impact of ongoing global economic uncertainty.  
The supplementary budget, which follows the full-year proposal presented last autumn, aims to steer the country through a sluggish economic phase while boosting defence,

increasing domestic security, and maintaining support for Ukraine, the government said in a statement.  
It also includes continued funding for what authorities describe as the largest crackdown on organized crime in Sweden’s history.  
The Swedish economy is currently underperforming, the government said, adding that this additional budget propos-

es new measures to stimulate demand, curb unemployment and accelerate the transition to a climate-friendly industrial base.  
The government cited elevated geopolitical and economic risks, pointing in particular to the recent US sharp tariff hikes.  
At a news conference, Finance Minister Elisabeth Svantesson called the economic situation unprecedented. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Foreign experts hope Russia and US to collaborate in preventing global conflict

THE foreign expert communities show hope that Moscow and Washington will join forces to prevent a global conflict, the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) said on Wednesday.  
“As for Russian-US relations in the context of past and current events, foreign experts express hope for a new unification of efforts between Moscow and Washington capable of preventing the world from sliding into a new global conflict and resisting possible provocations from both Ukraine and the ‘distraught Europeans,’ traditionally incited by the UK,” the statement read. — SPUTNIK

Iranian FM stresses continued cooperation with IAEA

IRANIAN Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi highlighted Tehran’s determination to continue cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).  
During his meeting with visiting IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi on Wednesday, the two sides exchanged views on Iran-IAEA cooperation and the indirect talks between Iran and the United States over Iran’s nuclear programme, according to a statement of the Iranian Foreign Ministry. Araghchi informed Grossi of his indirect talks with US Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff on the nuclear issue and Washington’s sanctions on Tehran. Araghchi urged the IAEA to play a professional role despite certain parties’ “unjustified” pressures, said the statement. — Xinhua

5 killed as hailstorm batters through Islamabad

FIVE persons died and 19 people sustained injuries as a fierce hailstorm battered multiple cities in Islamabad in Pakistan’s Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, ARY News reported.  
As per details, the storm, with lightning and strong winds, brought down walls and caused fatal incidents across the northern part of the country, according to ARY News.  
In Jhelum, three people, including a woman, were killed when the walls of their homes collapsed. In Kot Addu, a youth died after being struck by lightning. In Rawalpindi’s Ratta Amral area, the wall of a mosque collapsed, claiming the life of a young boy. Five of the injured are in critical condition, authorities reported. — ANI



Cars que up during rush hour in Stockholm on 29 May 2020. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

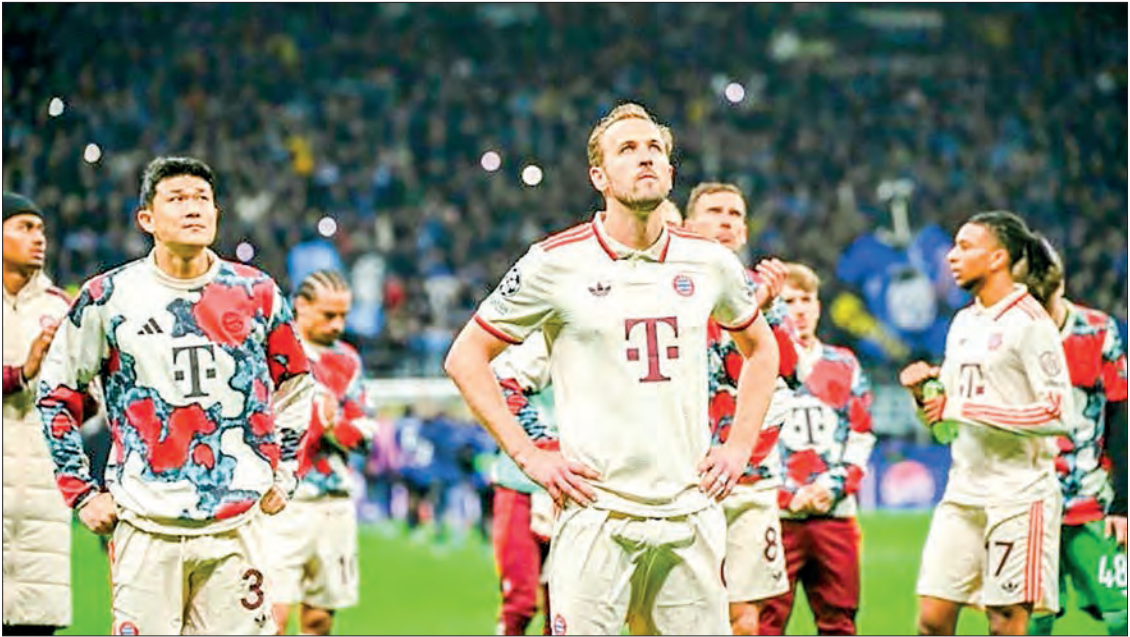


SPORTS

Bayern forced to watch on as home final dream 'shattered'

WHEN the football world casts its eyes at Munich's Allianz Arena in May for the Champions League final, home side Bayern Munich will be mere spectators. The German giants were felled by Inter Milan at the quarterfinal stage 4-3 on aggregate after Wednesday's 2-2 draw at the San Siro. While Bayern more than matched the Italian champions despite a crippling injury crisis, the manner of the elimination

will be most concerning for the German giants. Bayern were unable to make their dominance of possession and chances count against Inter. The six-time Champions League winners consider the European stage to be their own but were let down by poor game management in crucial moments across both legs. In Munich, Bayern were still captivated by the serendipity of Thomas Mueller's late equalizer



Bayern Munich players digest their elimination from the Champions League quarterfinals at the hands of Inter Milan. PHOTO: AFP

when Davide Frattesi scored the winner for Inter on the break three minutes later. In Milan, Harry Kane had

levelled the tie but Bayern conceded two goals in three minutes, giving the hosts an aggregate lead they would never relinquish.

In the short term, Bayern will lament their bad luck with injuries and missing chances in front of goal. — AFP

India wins 10m air pistol mixed team gold at ISSF World Cup

INDIA'S Suruchi Inder Singh and Saurabh Chaudhary claimed the 10-metre air pistol mixed team title at the ISSF World Cup Lima leg on Wednesday, while two Chinese pairs settled for silver and bronze. China and India faced off in both mixed team bronze and

gold medal deciders. In the gold medal match, China's Hu Kai and Yao Qianxun were off to a rocky start against Singh and Chaudhary, trailing 2-0 after the first series. The Chinese pair rallied with six consecutive points to force the Indian team to timeout at 6-2. Hu and Yao

held a narrow 9-7 lead after both teams tied the eighth series at 20.7 points each. The match pivoted dramatically in the ninth series as the Indians unleashed a 10-point streak to overtake the Chinese pair, sealing a 17-9 victory for their second gold of the Lima leg. — Xinhua

Ancelotti exposed as Real Madrid struggle to accommodate Mbappe

KYLIAN Mbappe's arrival at Real Madrid was envisioned to expand their Champions League domination, but he was muzzled by Arsenal as Los

Blancos crashed out in the quarterfinals, leaving coach Carlo Ancelotti on the brink. The holders find themselves picking up the pieces



Real Madrid's French forward Kylian Mbappe could not help his team overcome Arsenal. PHOTO: AFP

after Arsenal surgically despatched them with a 5-1 aggregate triumph on Wednesday and now it is Ancelotti who needs a miracle comeback to survive in his post. The Gunners reached the final four with a 2-1 away win and will face Mbappe's former side Paris Saint-Germain, soaring without the French superstar, who left in search of European silverware with the record 15-time winners. Mbappe limped off with an ankle injury in the final stages against Arsenal, leaving Madrid's 'remontada' ambitions in tatters and his coach under the microscope. — AFP

Van Dijk signs new Liverpool contract

LIVERPOOL captain Virgil van Dijk on Thursday signed a new two-year contract with the club, ending months of fevered speculation over his future just a week after Mohamed Salah extended his stay.

The announcement comes with Liverpool potentially just days away from winning the Premier League title in Arne Slot's first season in charge.

"I'm very happy, very proud," said Van Dijk, whose existing deal, like Salah's, had been set to expire at the end of the season. "There are so many emotions obviously that go through my head right now speaking about it. It's a proud feeling, it's a feeling of joy. It's just incredible. The journey I've had so far in my career, to be able to extend it with another two years at this club is amazing and I'm so happy." With new deals confirmed for Salah and Van Dijk, the future of defender Trent Alexander-Arnold



Liverpool captain Virgil van Dijk has signed a new contract keeping him at Anfield. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

remains unresolved. The England international, who returned to training on Wednesday after a month out because of injury, is out of contract at the end of the season and has been heavily linked with a move to Real Madrid. Van Dijk, 33, has made 314 appearances for Liverpool, scoring 27 goals. He has won the Premier League, Champions League, FA Cup, two League Cups, the UEFA Super Cup and the Club World Cup, all under former manager Jurgen Klopp. — AFP





# WORLD

CHINESE President Xi Jinping on Thursday met Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni.

Xi arrived in Phnom Penh earlier on Thursday for a state visit.

In another development, Xi said on Thursday he looks forward to cementing friendship and promoting cooperation with Cambodia.

He made the remarks in a written statement upon his arrival in Phnom Penh for a state visit to Cambodia.

Xi was warmly welcomed by Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni, Cambodian People's Party President and Senate President Samdech Techo Hun Sen and other senior officials at the airport during a grand welcome ceremony held by the king.

In the statement, Xi expressed his pleasure in visiting Cambodia again and said he looks forward to meeting and holding talks with King Sihamoni, Queen Mother Norodom Monineath Sihanouk, Samdech Techo Hun Sen and Prime Minister Hun Manet.

Noting that his visit came on the occasion of the Khmer New Year, Xi, on behalf of the Chinese government and people, extended warm New Year greetings to the Cambodian government and people.

He said Cambodia is a time-honored civilization, adding that the splendid Khmer civilization, created by the hard-working and talented Cambodian people, has made important contributions to the progress of human civilization. Xi said that in recent years, Cambodia has vigorously implemented the Pentagonal Strategy, achieving rapid economic growth and continuous improvement of people's livelihood.

— Xinhua

## Xi says looking forward to cementing friendship, promoting cooperation with Cambodia

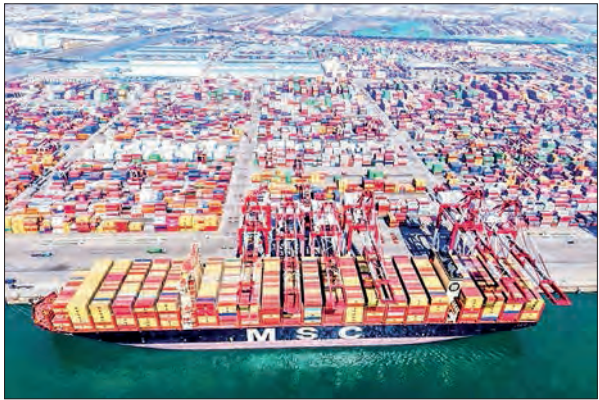
*The visit included plans for discussions with King Sihamoni, Queen Mother Norodom Monineath Sihanouk, and Prime Minister Hun Manet.*



Chinese President Xi Jinping arrives in Phnom Penh for a state visit to Cambodia at the invitation of Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni on 17 April 2025. PHOTO: YAO QILIN/XINHUA

## WTO chief says 'very concerned' as tariffs cut into global trade

THE World Trade Organization (WTO) has warned that global trade is expected to decline this year due to President Donald Trump's tariff policies, which



Global trade could fall by as much as 1.5 per cent this year, the WTO warned. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

could have "severe negative consequences" for the world economy. Trump has imposed a 10 per cent tariff on various imports and 25 per cent tariffs on steel, aluminum, and cars, while escalating a trade war with China, resulting in retaliatory tariffs.

WTO chief Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala expressed concern over a projected 81 per cent drop in trade volumes between the US and China, which could hinder global growth, particularly affecting vulnerable economies.

The WTO's annual trade outlook predicts a 0.2 per cent decline in world merchandise trade this year, with a modest recovery of 2.5 per cent expected in 2026.

North America is anticipated to see significant declines in exports and imports, while Asia may experience modest growth. Okonjo-Iweala emphasized the need for reform within the WTO to adapt to current global realities and mitigate the risks of economic fragmentation along geopolitical lines.— AFP

AMID EXCITING DISCOVERIES

Webb spots strongest 'hints' yet of life on distant planet

Astronomers using the James Webb Space Telescope have detected promising signs of potential life on the exoplanet K2-18b, located 124 light years away in the Leo constellation.

The researchers found traces of dimethyl sulfide (DMS) and dimethyl disulfide in the planet's atmosphere, chemicals typically produced by life on Earth, particularly by marine algae.

While these findings are intriguing, scientists urge caution, emphasizing that further observations are needed to confirm the results. K2-18b, which is more than eight times the mass of Earth and orbits within a habitable zone, has been considered a candidate for hosting microbial life. However, some experts remain skeptical, suggesting that the detected chemicals could have non-biological origins. — AFP