

Four Objectives of the National Defence and Security Council

1. To steadfastly strive for emergence of political forces and the people's representatives who can implement a genuine, disciplined multi-party democratic system while constantly emphasizing on the national interests of the State.
2. To persistently strive for promoting the socio-economic life of the people through the development of agro-based industries in improving the agricultural sector, the vital foundation of the economic growth of the State.
3. To put emphasis on enhancing the national education and health sectors for sustainable development of the State.
4. To implement multi-party democratic system, with the participation of the people, to ensure the success of multi-party democratic general election process and successfully moving towards with the multi-party democratic system aspired by the entire people.

SSPC Vice-Chairman Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win inspects local regiments and units, and training schools in Bahtoo Cantonment

A portable digital dental X-ray machine donated by the Head of Tatmadaw, along with a CT scanner, is being installed at the Tatmadaw Hospital in Bahtoo Cantonment to enhance healthcare services for military personnel, their families, and locals.

State Security and Peace Commission Vice-Chairman, Defence Services Deputy Commander-in-Chief, and Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, accompanied by senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and the commander of the Eastern Command, inspected local regiments and units, and training schools in Bahtoo Cantonment today.

At the three-storey lecture building of the Tatmadaw (Army) Combat Forces School (Bahtoo), commandants of the Tatmadaw (Army) Combat Forces School (Bahtoo), the Tatmadaw (Army) Officer Training School (Bahtoo), and the Tatmadaw (Army) Non-Commissioned Officer Training School reported to the Vice-Senior General on taking local security measures, undertaking of four military building tasks, and training sessions. The Vice-Senior General fulfilled the requirements of training and administrative matters.

In the afternoon, the Vice-Senior General inspected the Livestock Breeding and Training Battalion in Bahtoo Cantonment. At the battalion office, the commanding officer reported on the implementation of the assigned missions, accomplishment of the guidance given by the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, and operation of the model agriculture and livestock zone. The Vice-Senior General gave instructions to actually achieve benefits



State Security and Peace Commission Vice-Chairman, Defence Services Deputy Commander-in-Chief, and Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win inspects the Livestock Breeding and Training Battalion in Bahtoo Cantonment yesterday.

in agriculture and livestock activities, to sufficiently sell meat, fish and vegetables produced from the agriculture and livestock farms to Tatmadaw members and families of regiments and units at reduced prices less than the market prices and surplus to State service personnel and residents at fair prices for their welfare.

The Vice-Senior General and party in-

spected the building in the model agriculture and livestock zone, raising of layers at the air-conditioned building, breeding of DYL high pedigree piglets through AI insemination, breeding of male hogs and dairy cows, cultivation of sunflower and keeping beehives to successfully pollenate sunflower plants, cultivation of seasonal crops in the greenhouses, pack-

aging of quality seeds, storage of seeds, cultivation of different banana species, test production of natural humus from waste of donkeys and horses, vaccines, feedstuffs produced from the feedstuff factory under the Directorate of Supply and Transport, and production of oil from 10-acre sunflower plantations.

SEE PAGE 3

NATIONAL

Investment in disaster prevention enhances the resilience of the nation

❖ Investment in disaster prevention not only enhances the resilience of the nation but also helps protect economic and other development gains from being lost due to natural disasters.

(An excerpt from the speech delivered by State Administration Council Chairman, Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the second cash donation to provide aid for the people affected by the devastating Mandalay earthquake and to initiate rehabilitation efforts held on 29 May 2025)

- Let us encourage production for prosperity of the Nation.
- Let us ensure education sector for the development of the Nation.
- Let us protect our environment for the prosperity of the Nation.

MNREC designates Sarpyin (extension) protected public forest in Rakhine State

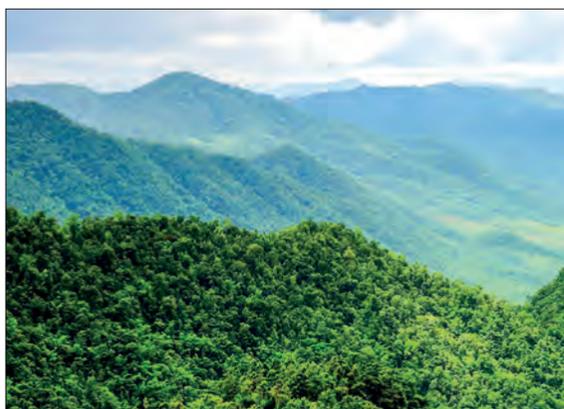
THE Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation announced that 105.815 acres in Taungup Township, within the Taungup District of Rakhine State, were designated as the “Sarpyin (Extension) Protected Public Forest” on 18 February 2026. This was enacted under Notification 8/2026, by exercising the authority conferred under Subsection (e) of Section 6 of the Forest Law (2018).

The Ministry designates protected public forests and forest reserves to ensure the ecological sustainability of mountainous regions, support the administrative sector, protect biodiversity, and conserve water resources. These designations also serve to regulate the use of timber, poles, feldspar, and firewood by local communities.

The Sarpyin (Extension) Protected Public Forest will conserve various timber species, including Yellow Rain Tree (Chamcha), Golden Mahogany, Cherry, Dracontomelon, Green

Chiretta, Gmelina arborea, Malabar Neem, Chukrasia tabularis, Wood-oil, and Anthocephalus cadamba. It will also protect medicinal plants such as Bay Leaf, Tinospora cordifolia, Glycosmis pentaphylla, Swiss Cheese Plant, and Rhynchanthus. Wildlife conservation efforts will focus on species such as gibbons, civets, sambar, Indian hog deer, parrots, eagles, hawks, and great hornbills, as well as other rare species, including pythons (Malayopython reticulatus) and pangolins. Furthermore, the designation protects the natural forest areas of Inchon Mountain and its watersheds. This initiative will also facilitate the establishment of community-owned forests, helping to conserve water resources and increase forest cover, thereby fostering more favourable climatic conditions.

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation



Images show the general view of the 105.815-acre Sarpyin protected public forest in Taungup.

Myanmar Gazette

Head of Service Organization transferred and appointed; Appointment of Head of Services Organization confirmed

1. The National Defence and Security Council has transferred and appointed U Hla Aung, Director-General of the Civil Service Affairs Department of the Union Civil Service Board, as Director-General of the Civil Service Selection and Training Department of the same organization from the date he assumes charge of his duties.
2. The National Defence and Security Council has confirmed the appointment of U Hsan Win Tun as Director-General of the Information Technology and Cyber Security Department under the Ministry of Transport and Communications after the one-year probationary period.

5 special civil appeal cases passed judgements; 6 special civil cases heard

A special appeal tribunal consisting of Chief Justice U Tha Htay of the Supreme Court of the Union, and Daw Pyone Pyone Aye, U Win Myint, Daw Soe Khet Khet, Daw Thin Thin Cho, judges of the Supreme Court of the Union, was convened at the Zeyathiri District Court in Nay Pyi Taw, yesterday morning, and passed judgements for five special ap-

peal cases Nos: 42/2025 (Yangon), 28/2025 (Kachin), 43/2025 (Ayeyawady), 45/2025 (Kachin) and 53/2025 (Yangon).

In addition, a total of six special civil appeal cases: Nos 37/2025 (Mandalay), 46/2025 (Yangon), 50/2025 (Kachin), 51/2025 (Kachin), 52/2025 (Yangon) and 54/2025 (Ayeyawady) were heard. — MNA

Myanma Post issues K200 special stamps to honour Myanmar tea

THE Ministry of Transport and Communications has announced that Myanma Post will issue a new special commemorative postage stamp featuring an image of a Myanmar tea plantation (K200) in honour of tea cultivated and produced in Myanmar.

The stamp will be placed on sale

simultaneously from 9:30 am on 26 February 2026 (Thursday), the 11th waxing day of Tabodwe, 1387 ME, at the Nay Pyi Taw Central Post Office, the Yangon General Post Office, the Mandalay General Post Office, and other main post offices in the respective regions and states.

As a special arrangement, date cancellation marks will be stamped on postage stamps and First Day Covers purchased on 26 February 2026 (Thursday) at the Nay Pyi Taw Central Post Office, Yangon General Post Office and Mandalay General Post Office. — MNA/MKKS



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.

(An 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 Pyithu Hluttaw

Announcement 1/2026

8th Waxing of Taboung 1387 ME
23 February 2026

Announcement to Convene First Regular Session of Third Pyithu Hluttaw

UNDER provisions of Sections 424, 123 and 124 (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Section 37 of the Pyithu Hluttaw Law 2012 and Rule 3 of the Pyithu Hluttaw Rules 2013, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker hereby declared that the first regular session of the Third Pyithu Hluttaw will be convened at 10 am on Monday (16 March 2026), 14th Waning of Taboung 1387 ME in Nay Pyi Taw.

Sd/ T Khun Myat
Speaker

Republic of the Union of Myanmar National Defence and Security Council

Announcement 1/2026

8th Waxing of Taboung 1387 ME
23 February 2026

Announcement to Convene First Regular Session of Third Amyotha Hluttaw

Under Sections 427 and 154 (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Section 34 (b) of the Amyotha Hluttaw Law 2012, an announcement was hereby issued that the first regular session of the Third Amyotha Hluttaw will be convened at 10 am on Wednesday (18 March 2026), 1st Waxing of Tagu 1387 ME, in Nay Pyi Taw.

By Order,
Aung Lin Dwe
Executive Chief

Republic of the Union of Myanmar National Defence and Security Council

Announcement 2/2026

8th Waxing of Taboung 1387 ME
23 February 2026

Call to Convene First Regular Session of Third Region/State Hluttaw

UNDER Sections 427 and 171 (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Section 27 (b) of the Region or State Hluttaw Law, an announcement was hereby issued that the first regular session of the Third Region or State Hluttaw will convene at the relevant region or state Hluttaws on Friday, 20 March 2026, 3rd Waxing of Tagu 1387 ME.

By Order,
Aung Lin Dwe
Executive Chief

SSPC Vice-Chairman Deputy Commander-in-Chief of..

FROM PAGE 1

The Livestock Breeding and Training Battalion produces horse-waste natural fertilizer at K10,000 per bag.

The Vice-Senior General and party inspected local regiments and units in Bahtoo cantonment by car and cordially greeted family members. The Vice-Senior General coordinated with officials to fulfil the requirements of those families.

At the local Tatmadaw hospital, an official reported to the Vice-Senior General on health-care services for Tatmadaw members, families and residents and requirements. The Vice-Senior General gave instructions and fulfilled the needs.

He asked about diseases and injuries of Tatmadaw mem-

ber patients receiving medical treatment at the hospital and presented foodstuffs.

Daw Than Than Nwe, the wife of the Vice-Senior General, also comforted patients at the maternal and child medical ward and presented supplies.

At the mess hall of the hospital, the Vice-Senior General observed preparation for the dinner of patients and installation and test running of a portable digital dental X-ray machine provided by the Head of Tatmadaw and a CT scan for Tatmadaw members and families of the station and residents. The Vice-Senior General and his wife presented cash awards for health staff serving at the hospital and donated cash to the medical trust fund of the hospital.



The Vice-Senior General presents foodstuffs to patients at the local Tatmadaw hospital.

They inspected the local training schools in a motorcade. The Vice-Senior General cordial-

ly met families and fulfilled their needs. He also viewed around the trainees having dinner at

the relevant mess halls and gave necessary instructions to officials. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL

Pyithu Hluttaw urges its Reps to report to attend first regular session of Third Pyithu Hluttaw

THE Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker has declared that the first regular session of the Third Pyithu Hluttaw will be convened at the meeting hall of the Pyithu Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw at 10 am on Monday, 16 March 2026. Therefore, letters of invitation were sent to Pyithu Hluttaw representatives to attend the Hluttaw session.

As it is necessary to carry out preparations for the meeting, the Pyithu Hluttaw representatives, whether they have received the letter of invitation or not, must report on their arrivals in Nay Pyi Taw to attend the Hluttaw session at the report sections. These report sections are opened as follows: -

- (a) Guesthouse 2 of the Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee for the Pyithu Hluttaw representatives who will stay at the guesthouse of the Nay Pyi

Taw Development Committee

- (b) The headquarters of the Union Solidarity and Development Party for the Pyithu Hluttaw representatives who will stay at the USDP guesthouse
- (c) The Pyithu Hluttaw Affairs Hall I-1 for the Pyithu Hluttaw representatives who will arrange for their stay under their own arrangement
- (d) No 3 Transit Centre (Ywataw) for the Defence Services Personnel Representatives for the Pyithu Hluttaw

The Pyithu Hluttaw Office has announced that Pyithu Hluttaw representatives have to report no earlier than 10 March 2026 (Tuesday) and no later than 11 March (Wednesday). — MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw Reps urged to report to attend first regular session of Third Amyotha Hluttaw

THE National Defence and Security Council has stated that the first regular session of the Third Amyotha Hluttaw will be convened at the meeting hall of the Amyotha Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw at 10 am on 18 March 2026 (Wednesday). Therefore, letters of invitation were sent to Amyotha Hluttaw representatives to attend the Hluttaw session.

Arrangements have been made for accommodation of Amyotha Hluttaw representatives in Nay Pyi Taw as follows: -

- (a) Guesthouse 2 of the Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee for the Amyotha Hluttaw representatives who will stay at the guesthouse of the Nay Pyi

Taw Development Committee

- (b) The headquarters of the Union Solidarity and Development Party for the Amyotha Hluttaw representatives who will stay at the USDP guesthouse
- (c) No 3 Transit Centre (Ywataw) for the Defence Services Personnel Representatives for the Amyotha Hluttaw

To attend the Hluttaw session, the Amyotha Hluttaw Office has announced that Amyotha Hluttaw representatives have to report at the Amyotha Hluttaw Affairs Hall I-19 in Nay Pyi Taw, whether they have received letters of invitation, no earlier than 12 March 2026 (Thursday) and no later than 13 March (Friday). — MNA

Hluttaw Reps urged to report to attend first regular session of Third Region or State Hluttaw

THE National Defence and Security Council has stated that the first regular session of the Third Region or State Hluttaw will be convened at the relevant Region or State Hluttaw on 20 March 2026 (Friday). Therefore, letters of invitation will be sent to the Region or State Hluttaw representatives to attend the Hluttaw session.

To attend the Hluttaw session, an announcement has been issued that the Region or State Hluttaw Representatives have to report at the relevant Hluttaw offices, whether they have received letters of invitation, no earlier than 14 March 2026 (Saturday) and no later than 15 March (Sunday). — MNA

MoFA Union Minister accepts Letter of Consular Commission



U Than Swe, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, accepted the Letter of Consular Commission from U Ko Ko Latt, newly-accredited Honorary Consul of the Government of Iceland to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and presented him the exequatur at the office of the Union Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. — MNA

Union Minister U Than Swe receives the Letter of Consular Commission from newly-accredited Honorary Consul U Ko Ko Latt of the Government of Iceland to Myanmar.

MoFA Union Minister receives ICRC Resident Representative

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

They exchanged views on matters related to ICRC's activities in 2025 and further activities of ICRC in Myanmar.

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



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

NATIONAL

Statement on Terrorist Attack on Passenger Aircraft at Myitkyina Airport

THE information has released that KIA and PDF terrorist combined groups attacked the Myanmar National Airlines (MNA) ATR 72-600 passenger aircraft with FPV suicide drones at Myitkyina Airport on 20 February while the plane was preparing to depart for Mandalay after boarding passengers, and as a result, the attack caused damage to the front, middle and rear parts of the aircraft. They intentionally committed terrorist attacks on civilian airlines

that are not related to military affairs but instead play a vital role in facilitating public transportation and the smooth flow of goods across the country, and such action also commits a war crime in accordance with the Geneva Conventions and International Law. The security forces conduct security measures. The entire people also need to condemn such terrorist acts that directly affect the people.

Currently, due to the damage to the apron at the

airport, a NOTAM (Notice to Air Missions) has been issued to temporarily suspend flight operations at Myitkyina Airport. It is hereby announced that efforts are being undertaken to resume normal flight operations in order to ensure smooth public travel and the swift flow of goods.

**Information Team
National Defence and Security Council**

MoFR Union Minister opens coord meeting of MEB annual closing of 2025-2026FY

THE opening ceremony of the Myanmar Economic Bank's 2025-2026 Financial Year annual closing work coordination meeting was held yesterday afternoon at the Myat Pan Tha Zin Hall of the Myanmar Economic Bank (Head Office) in Nay Pyi Taw.

The opening ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Finance and Revenue Dr Kan Zaw, Deputy Minister Daw Than Than Lin, heads of departments under the Ministry and the Central Bank of Myanmar, general managers, 65 region and state managers and district managers in person, and 25 region and state managers and district managers from the remaining state managers and district managers via videoconference.

At the ceremony, Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw noted that Myanmar Economic Bank (MEB) is a state-owned bank with the widest banking network. It plays an important role in the country as a key player in the financial sector. He pointed out that it is necessary to systematically monitor and inspect state funds in accordance with banking rules and regulations to prevent waste and losses due to the large flow of money and its importance in the development of the country's economic sector. It is also necessary to properly utilize funds and authority, to ensure that procedures are correct, and to systematically implement accounting and bookkeeping. He highlighted that those in charge need to set a weekly schedule to complete the work on time, implement it systematically, and carefully verify and approve the banking transactions.

It must be borne in mind that increas-



Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw addresses the opening event of the Myanmar Economic Bank's 2025-2026FY annual closing work coordination meeting yesterday.

ing deposits, which are the main source of funds for the banks, play an important role, and the deposits received are lent to entrepreneurs. If deposits decrease, it will affect the bank's ability to lend. Therefore, it is necessary to continuously analyse the cash flow into the bank, interest payments, and loan interest recovery by deposit type and take steps to achieve profitability. Now, the managers of the MEB have been providing loans to various sectors, intending to improve the agricultural sector, which is the main and fundamental pillar of the country's economic development, developing the industrial sector based on agriculture and livestock and MSME developments to improve the socioeconomic life of the people. He encouraged them to make loans systematically in accordance with banking procedures and to repay them within the specified period. By doing so, it will help to reduce Non-performing loans

(NPL) and create quality loans.

He noted that it is found that customers of the bank can use banking services promptly due to expanding mobile and financial technology (Fin-tech) services through domestic and international financial service providers, and it is possible to reduce the burden of staff, time, and paperwork. At the same time, the e-ID system will be implemented, and UID numbers will be collected to make pension payments to retired employees more convenient and smooth. On the other hand, the FI Gateway system has been implemented in (39) branches of the MEB as of December 2025, connected to the CBM Net to reduce cash consumption and to make it easier to deposit civil servant salaries and pensions into the MEB Pay Wallet. The centralized e-pension system is also being implemented in 185 bank branches by December 2025, covering 85.87 per cent of the pensioners.

He highlighted that we are also continuously working on implementing the core banking system, and we will continue to expand the remaining digital banking services from the core banking system.

He urged bank officials to pay attention to and cooperate with the existing laws, rules, and regulations, and to strive to achieve a win-win-win situation between the government, the public, and the bank. He also instructed all bank officials to study and work together to improve banking services and performance for the public.

The state-owned Myanmar Economic Bank holds an annual closing meeting for each financial year. This year's meeting will include sector-wise discussions with the Central Bank of Myanmar, as well as readings, sector-wise discussions, and awards ceremonies for business performance and excellence from 23 to 26 February. — MoFR

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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

Chinese nationals arrested in latest raid on online scams in Shan State (South)

THE Myanmar government emphasizes the elimination process of online scams and gambling, which harm the international community as well as the entire world, as a national duty. To ensure that such activities gain no foothold within the country, the government is actively conducting suppression operations in coordination not only with domestic forces but also with the governments of neighbouring countries. On 22 February, the authorities arrested Chinese nationals engaged in online scam and gambling activities in Laikha Township, Shan State (South), together with equipment used in their operations.

While conducting aerial security operations, a combined team comprising security members discovered suspicious buildings about 3,000 metres west of Naung Lone Village in the Wan Pan village-tract of Laikha Township. At about 12 noon on 22 February, inspection operations were carried out, revealing that the site was being used for online scams and gambling activities. Twenty Chinese male nationals involved in



Online scammers are seen being arrested alongside seized accommodation facilities and scam-related materials.

such activities were arrested along with related equipment, including one 80-foot by 20-foot residential building, one 80-foot by 20-foot warehouse, one 50-foot by 20-foot dining hall, one 10-room toilet facility, two STAR-LINK satellite dishes, and other associated materials. Similarly, at about 6:15 pm on the same day, five further illegal Chinese nationals were found about 2,500 metres west of Tapmawk Village in Laikha Township. Upon inspection, they were identi-

fied as being involved in online scams and gambling activities and were subsequently arrested and detained.

According to the confession of those arrested, the Chinese citizens worked in China as construction workers, drivers, and in other occupations. Due to financial difficulties, they sought employment opportunities via WeChat, where they were persuaded with promises of well-paid jobs along the China-Myanmar border. Through contacts

on WeChat, they entered Myanmar illegally in stages, some travelling from Xishuangbanna in China to Pangsang and then to Mongyai. In contrast, others travelled from Changchun in China to Mongla in Myanmar. Then, they were grouped with other illegal entrants and transported in stages by unknown individuals. Their mobile phones were kept, and their faces were covered with a cloth during transportation. Some previously worked in online scam op-

erations near Mongyai before arriving in December 2025 at a location near Naung Lone Village in Laikha Township, Shan State (South), to continue online scam and gambling activities. At that location, about 60 people were engaged in online scam operations and were guarded by about seven members of a Shan armed group wearing green uniforms. On 22 February 2026, 60 people departed the site in two vehicles, accompanied by an armed group in another vehicle. During the process of relocating the groups to various locations, security forces carried out arrests at the respective sites.

The seized equipment related to telecom fraud and online gambling activities will be handled in accordance with established procedures, and the arrestees will be taken to effective legal action in line with the law. The government continues to actively cooperate in combating online scams and gambling, and also transfers the foreign nationals involved in these cases to their respective countries through legal inspection on humanitarian grounds and bilateral relationships. — MNA/KTZH

Bilateral cooperation facilitates deportation of foreign nationals involved in cybercrime at Myanmar-Thai Border

ELEVEN Pakistani nationals, who entered Myanmar illegally through border routes via neighbouring countries, including Thailand, were deported today. These individuals had been involved in criminal activities, including illegal online gambling and online scams, in the Myawady-Shwe Kokko area of Kayin State. They were repatriated via the Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge II in line with the legal procedures, guided by humanitarian principles and the spirit of bilateral friendship. Additionally, two Indian nationals were identified and detained for investigation pending deportation.

To ensure the repatriation process was conducted systematically and smoothly, Myawady

District Management and Administration Committee Chairman and District Administrator U Kaung San Linn, met with relevant departmental officials. He oversaw the verification of records and data for accuracy and coordinated necessary logistics.

The deportation ceremony was attended by U Kyaw Kyaw Than, Deputy Director of the Ministry of Immigration and Population, and other officials. Also present were Mr Fahd Saleem, First Secretary of the Pakistani Embassy to Thailand, and officials from the Tak Province Immigration Department in Thailand. The Myanmar authorities formally handed over the relevant repatriation documents to their international

counterparts.

Furthermore, two Indian nationals who had entered the area near Myawady through illegal routes were identified and detained. Investigations are currently underway to facilitate their deportation.

From 30 January 2025 to 23 February 2026, a total of 14,208 foreign nationals who entered Myawaddy Township illegally have been detained. All have undergone screening; 13,128 of them have already been systematically deported to their respective home countries via Thailand in accordance with legal protocols. The remaining 1,080 foreign nationals are currently in safe custody and are prepared for repatriation to their respective countries.



Officials processing the deportation of undocumented foreign entrants.

The State is actively collaborating with neighbouring countries, regional partners, and international organisations to identify and take decisive action against foreign nationals involved in or orchestrating on-

line scam centres. Furthermore, the government is coordinating effectively to ensure the swift repatriation of foreign nationals who have fallen into distress or become victims of human trafficking. — MNA/MKKS

NATIONAL

Myanmar shrimp exports hit 9,000MT in 10 months (Apr-Jan)

THE Department of Fisheries stated that almost 9,000 metric tonnes of shrimp worth US\$27.769 million were conveyed to international markets in the past ten months of the current financial year 2025-2026 beginning 1 April. Myanmar sent over 8,100 metric tonnes of shrimp worth \$23.3 million by sea in the past ten months, while 815.79 metric tonnes of shrimp valued at \$4.45 million were exported to neighbouring countries at the border, totalling 8,950.86 metric tonnes.

Myanmar exported over 9,000 tonnes of shrimp in the last FY 2024-2025, bagging \$30 million, the department stated. Myanmar steadily exports seafood to 40 countries, including China, Thailand, Bangladesh and Japan through maritime and border trade channels. — NN/KK

Fish workers sorting shrimp at the port for export processing at cold storage facilities.



Morning Yangon River cruise to Seikkyi Kanaungto launched

MORNING Sightseeing Tour announced that the Yangon River Cruise tour has expanded to Seikkyi Kanaungto.

Earlier, they offered only specialized sunset Yangon River cruise tours on weekends and during gazetted holidays, taking passengers towards the mouth of the sea. Now, they have discovered more spectacular scenery of Seikkyi Kanaungto starting from 15 February. Morning Sightseeing Tour explored the new destination on 22 February again with the Royal Green River Cruise. The cruise will depart from Botahtaung Jetty, take passengers across the Yangon River, pass under the Yangon-Dala bridge, turn to the Twantay Canal and get to Seikkyi Kanaungto destina-



Cruise ships are seen running on the Yangon River.

tion. The ship's departure is set at 9:30 am, and arrival at Botahtaung Jetty is estimated between 12:30-1 pm.

Cruise tour to Seikkyi Kanaungto costs K35,000 for adult and K25,000 for child aged four to 11 years.

Yangon Water Bus was once a popular scenic ferry ride, carrying nostalgic charm with breathtaking routes, including Twantay. This sunset budget boat trip achieved success. — ASH/KK

MPIE calls for open tender for JV

THE Myanma Pharmaceutical Industries Enterprise (MPIE) under the Ministry of Industry has invited an open tender to build a joint venture for increasing the production of Intravenous Antibiotics and

new pharmaceuticals at the Myanma Pharmaceutical Factory (Inyaung).

Tender documents are available at the MPIE in Nay Pyi Taw Office 37 starting from 23 February, and the deadline

for submission of tender proposals is 4 pm on 9 March. Individuals can enquire about details of the tender through www.industry.gov.mm or the following numbers: 067 3408140 and 067 3408370. — NN/KK

IWUMD bids for procurement of diesel for Sinthay Dam's repair work

THE Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department (IWUMD) invited interested parties to submit an open tender in line with rules and regulations to purchase diesel required for repair work of Sinthay Dam and preliminary preparation works of Myohla Reservoir under the National Disaster Management Fund, according to its tender acceptance and evaluation committee.

Tender form will be sold between 25 February and 6

March (4:30 pm). Tender proposal will be accepted by 9 March, along with a sample of diesel. Following the closure of the bidding process, price proposals will be opened at 11 am on 11 March at the Religious House in the compound of the Director's office.

Interested individuals can enquire about details by dialling 09 5096001 and 09 421070122 of the Finance Division of the Director's office of the IWUMD in Nay Pyi Taw. — NN/KK

Construction, Housing, Power & Engineering Tech Expo set for Yangon Convention Centre

THE Myanmar Construction, Housing, Electric Power, Engineering Technology Exhibition is scheduled to take place at the Yangon Convention Centre on 6-8 March, featuring construction technologies and machinery, housing projects, household and industrial electrical appliances, solar and related accessories, generators, transformers and engineering technology-related services.

This expo will include technical discussion talks, business networking events, air conditioning installation and repair skills competition, and the launch of electronic products.

For participating in the expo, interested business entities can register through the Silver Sea Event Management at 09 409400055, 09 409400066, and 09 409400077. — NN/KK

OPINION

Raise awareness for people to avoid the dangers of drugs

IN the modern era, neocolonialists use narcotic drugs as a tool to undermine a country or its nationals. Although times have changed, the exploitation of drugs for personal gain remains the same. In addition to the social, economic, health, and moral damages suffered by those who fall victim to drug abuse, excessive use and various other factors can pose dangers that may even lead to sudden death.

Currently, young people are more willing to accept and adapt to trends and changes. Both young females and males seeking enjoyment experiment with drug use – not just alcohol and beer, but also synthetic drugs such as ecstasy, ketamine, and happy water. These drugs temporarily help an individual endure physical

and mental strain beyond normal capacity, allowing them to cope with fatigue for a certain period. What often starts as casual experimentation with different types of drugs among friends can quickly escalate, with many unknowingly falling into a life dominated by drug addiction.

Synthetic drugs are illegal and clandestine substances, which means no one can know exactly what toxins or how strong the chemical compounds they contain are, making them extremely dangerous. Once a person naturally becomes physically and mentally addicted to drug use, it becomes very difficult to quit and can destroy their social and economic life. In addition, possessing or using drugs is a punishable offence under the law. Therefore, it is crucial to avoid the dangers of drugs and to ensure that neither oneself nor one's family fall into a life of drug addiction.

Ecstasy is a psychoactive drug used in treating certain mental disorders and for psychological assessments. Taking Ecstasy in amounts greater than medically required can damage the heart, kidneys, liver, and brain, and in severe cases, may lead to death. Ketamine is used in some medical treatments as a sedative and also in veterinary medicine. However, when misused as a recreational drug, it becomes hazardous. Happy Water is a mixture of drugs, including Ecstasy, Ketamine, methamphetamine, tramadol, diazepam, and caffeine. Its heavy use can lead to hallucinations, insomnia, numbness to pain, and memory loss of one's actions.

The new and increasingly varied forms of drugs are reaching not only young people and some adults but

also the immediate circles of school-aged children. As trends change, individuals need to exercise self-awareness and self-discipline when seeking enjoyment, so that the pursuit of pleasure does not lead to destruction, harm, or loss.

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SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE

Myanmar's Comprehensive Ban on E-Cigarettes for Public Health

By Dr Aung Tun

What Is an E-Cigarette?

Electronic cigarettes — commonly known as e-cigarettes, vapes, vapourizers, or Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) — are battery-powered devices that heat a liquid solution to produce an aerosol that is inhaled by the user. Unlike conventional cigarettes, which generate smoke through the combustion of tobacco leaf, e-cigarettes operate through an electrical heating mechanism that vapourizes a chemical liquid, commonly called e-liquid or e-juice. This fundamental distinction — vapourization rather than combustion — was the cornerstone of the industry's early marketing claim that e-cigarettes are 'safer' than traditional smoking. That claim, as the global scientific community has firmly established, is dangerously misleading.

E-cigarettes come in numerous forms: cigarlike devices that resemble conventional cigarettes, pen-style vapourizers, tank-based mods, and the increasingly ubiquitous pod systems and disposable single-use devices. Heated tobacco products (HTPs) such as IQOS, and electronic shisha or e-hookah devices fall within the broader category of emerging tobacco and nicotine products regulated under international frameworks.

Core Components

All e-cigarette devices share three essential components: a battery providing the power source; an atomizer (heating coil) that converts e-liquid to aerosol; and the e-liquid reservoir — a cartridge, tank, pod, or bottle containing the consumable solution. The e-liquid itself contains a mixture of propylene glycol and vegetable glycerin as the base carrier; nicotine in concentrations ranging from zero to over 50 milligrammes per millilitre in some products, flavouring agents — which may number in the thousands across products — and additional chemical additives.

Crucially, the e-liquid and the aerosol it generates are not inert. Heating these compounds produces new chemical species not present in the original liquid. At high temperatures, propylene glycol and glycerin decompose to form formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, and acrolein — substances classified as known or probable human carcinogens by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). The flavouring compound diacetyl, widely used in buttery and creamy flavour variants, is firmly linked to bronchiolitis obliterans — a severe, irreversible obliterative lung disease colloquially known as 'popcorn lung.' Heavy metals, including nickel, tin, and lead, have been detected in e-cigarette aerosols, leached from heating coil components.

Global and Myanmar Prevalence The Global Vaping Epidemic

The global growth of e-cigarette use has been extraordinary in both scale and speed. From a niche consumer product a decade ago, the global e-cigarette market had attracted an estimated 82 million users by 2021, up from 68 million in 2020 — a 20.6 per cent increase in a single year. The South-East Asia region alone accounted for approximately 14.3 million users in 2021. Market analysts project the global ENDS industry to exceed US\$55 billion in annual revenue by 2030, driven by aggressive expansion into low- and middle-income markets across Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The demographic profile of e-cigarette uptake is perhaps its most alarming feature. According to the World Health Organization's 2025 systematic review and meta-analysis on global youth e-cigarette prevalence, at least 15 million children aged 13 to 15 years currently use e-cigarettes worldwide. Children are, on average, nine times more likely to use e-cigarettes than adults in surveyed countries. Among youth aged 16 to 19 years, current usage rates range from 7.7 to 9.4 per cent across countries — figures that represent an unprecedented epidemic of nicotine addiction initiation among a generation that had never smoked conventional cigarettes.

The tobacco industry's strategy is explicit in its internal documents: recruit a new generation of nicotine-dependent consumers to replace adults who quit or die from smoking-related diseases. The instrument of this recruitment is the e-cigarette — packaged in child-friendly designs, available in thousands of sweet and fruity flavours, priced at pocket money levels in disposable form, and promoted through social media platforms where young people spend the majority of their leisure time.

Myanmar's Burden

In Myanmar, e-cigarette use has expanded rapidly against an already concerning backdrop of conventional tobacco use. National STEPS survey data recorded an adult smoking prevalence of approximately 26 per cent, and an estimated 56,841 people die annually in Myanmar from smoking-related diseases — a figure that will grow as the downstream health consequences of the emerging vaping epidemic materialize.

A 2020 study of tobacco smokers across six states and regions of Myanmar found that 11.6 per cent of respondents reported ever having used an e-cigarette. Use was significantly concentrated among males, students, youth aged 18 to 29 years, and residents of Mandalay Region — the demographic groups most targeted by the industry's marketing. Data from the 2016 Global Youth Tobacco Survey showed that smoking prevalence among students aged 13 to 15 in Myanmar had already risen from 6.8 per cent in 2011 to 8.3 per cent in 2016, before the explosive growth of affordable disposable vapes in subsequent years.

WHO FCTC: The International Call for Action

The World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), which entered into force in 2005 and to which Myanmar acceded in 2004, remains the world's first international public health treaty and the cornerstone of global tobacco control. It's 182 Parties collectively represent over 90 per cent of the world's population, making it one of the most widely adopted treaties in United Nations history.

The 11th Conference of the Parties (COP11) to the WHO FCTC, held in Geneva, Switzerland from 16 to 22 November 2025, placed ENDS and emerging nicotine products at the centre of its deliberations. I attended COP11 as a WHO Guest Advisor. The consensus of COP11 was unambiguous: e-cigarettes represent a dangerous gateway that leads young people towards conventional cigarette use through nicotine addiction, and the protection of youth must be the paramount priority for all Member States.

Key COP11 Resolutions and Positions

- All Member States resolved to prioritize protective measures for youth against e-cigarettes and to establish strict regulations, treating the issue as an urgent public health emergency rather than a commercial regulatory matter.
- The Conference reaffirmed that e-cigarettes are not an approved smoking cessation therapy — the WHO does not recommend ENDS for cessation — and that framing them as harm reduction tools plays into the tobacco industry's strategy of delay and deception.
- Member States were called upon to implement the full range of FCTC provisions — particularly Articles 5.3 (protection from industry interference), 8 (protection from secondhand exposure), 11 (packaging and labelling), and 13 (advertising, promotion and sponsorship bans) — as applied to ENDS products.

- Countries that had not yet enacted ENDS-specific legislation were urged to do so without delay, citing the accelerating youth epidemic and the industry's deliberate targeting of unregulated markets.
- The Conference strongly emphasized that the tobacco and vaping industries must be excluded from all policy-making processes relating to tobacco and ENDS control, in line with Article 5.3.

The FCTC framework provides Myanmar — and all Parties — with both the legal mandate and the technical guidance to act decisively. Myanmar's Customs Order 8/2026 is a direct response to these international obligations and the conclusions of COP11.

Global Situation: How the World Has Responded

The international policy landscape on e-cigarettes is now clearly bifurcating into two camps: countries that have enacted comprehensive bans or severe restrictions, and those that have opted for regulatory frameworks. The trend among public health leaders — particularly in Asia — is decisively towards prohibition.

Comprehensive Prohibition Countries

More than 35 countries have enacted comprehensive bans on the sale, importation, and/or use of e-cigarettes. India's 2019 Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Ordinance — subsequently enacted as permanent legislation — banned production, manufacture, import, export, transport, sale, distribution, storage, and advertisement of all ENDS products, with penalties of up to 3 years imprisonment for repeat offences. Brazil's ANVISA has maintained a ban since 2009, one of the earliest in the world. Thailand's ban, enacted under the Customs Act in 2014, carries penalties of up to 10 years imprisonment. Singapore's prohibition under the Tobacco (Control of Advertisements and Sale) Act has been comprehensively enforced since 2016. Cambodia and Laos both prohibit ENDS, meaning every one of Myanmar's neighbouring countries to the east and south had acted years before Myanmar's 2026 order.

Strict Regulatory Frameworks

The European Union's Tobacco Products Directive (TPD) and its 2024 revisions represent the most detailed regulatory framework for ENDS globally, limiting nicotine concentrations to 20 milligrammes per millilitre, restricting tank volumes, mandating health warnings covering 30 per cent of packaging, and prohibiting characterizing flavors in many member states. The United Kingdom, following its post-Brexit regulatory divergence, has adopted a 'regulated authorization' approach while pursuing stricter youth protection measures, including a generational tobacco ban. Australia, after a period of prescription-only access, moved in 2024 toward a phased ban on commercial disposable vapes.

The Industry's Preferred Markets

Indonesia, the Philippines, and several Central Asian and African nations remain as relatively permissive markets where the tobacco industry has concentrated its promotional efforts. This deliberate targeting of unregulated markets is a well-documented industry strategy: when one market restricts access, the industry redirects resources toward the next available jurisdiction. Myanmar's 2026 ban removes the country from this category.

Country / Region	Regulatory Stance	Year Enacted	Key Feature
India	Comprehensive Ban	2019	Criminal penalties up to 3 years
Thailand	Comprehensive Ban	2014	Up to 10 years imprisonment
Singapore	Comprehensive Ban	2016	Strict enforcement, heavy fines
Cambodia	Comprehensive Ban	2014	Full prohibition
Laos	Comprehensive Ban	2015	All ENDS prohibited
Brazil	Comprehensive Ban	2009	World's earliest ban
European Union	Strict Regulation	2014/2024	20mg/mL nicotine cap, flavour bans
Australia	Phased Ban	2024	Disposable vapes banned
Myanmar	Comprehensive Ban	2026	MOH Order No. 8/2026

Myanmar's Position in Asia and the Essential Contents of the New Ban

Myanmar's Regulatory Journey

For years, Myanmar occupied an uncomfortable position in the Asian regulatory landscape: surrounded by neighbours with firm prohibitions, yet operating without ENDS-specific legislation. The 2006 Control of Smoking and Consumption of Tobacco Products Law and the 2021 revised Order 453/2001 on pictorial health warnings provided a robust conventional tobacco control framework. Under these instruments, the import, sale, distribution, possession, use, and purchase of e-cigarettes were declared legally banned effective 31 December 2024. However, enforcement gaps, undefined customs procedures, and the absence of a specific import prohibition order allowed the trade to continue largely unimpeded.

Despite these challenges, Myanmar's tobacco control achievements have earned international recognition. The Cigarette Pictorial Health Warning Global Status Report 2025, released in October 2025, ranked Myanmar 18th globally for requiring pictorial health warnings to cover at least 75 per cent of cigarette packaging — a world-leading standard. Myanmar is also the second country in the Asian region to be preparing for the implementation of plain packaging, placing it among global tobacco control leaders on conventional cigarette policy.

TO BE CONTINUED

NATIONAL



This photo features an MoU signing ceremony between MCEF and ARCCI.

MoU on ARCCI six-storey office signed

BY signing a memorandum of understanding, Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Federation (MCEF) and Ayeyawady Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ARCCI) agreed to build ARCCI's six-storey office. The signing ceremony was held on 22 February at Pathein Hotel. MCEF President U Shein Win gave greeting words, and ARCCI Chair U Nyi Nyi Tun congratulated on the MoU signing. Afterwards, the two chairpersons signed

the MoU. The contract on the construction of the six-storey building was signed at Pathein Hotel at 10 am. For the construction project, MCEF President U Shein Win donated K50 million, which was received by the regional chief minister, U Tin Maung Win. Under the guidance of the regional government, the ceremony of building bored piles for the six-storey office was held. — MT/ZS

Over 4,000 Myanmar women seafarers sail with cruise lines worldwide

OVER 4,000 Myanmar women seafarers have worked on cruise ships, according to the seafaring community. At present, women have been allowed to work on cruise ships, and there are around 4,000 Myanmar women seafarers working onboard. "Years ago, since passport applications had been granted for nearly all people, women also went seafaring. At the time, women worked as hotel staff on cruises by holding either a job passport or a visit passport. But the rule was changed later and restricted them to have seaman's passport for going seafaring. We've known that more than 1,000 women have held seamen passports, so far. But more than 3,000 women have already worked onboard with other types of passports, years

ago," said Myanmar Seafarers Federation President Captain Soe Min Aung. Lately, Myanmar women are interested in working as seafarer so he suggested that they should do preparations so that they can meet the requirements for seafaring jobs. He said some European ship owners have reportedly held discussions on employing women for officer positions on cargo ships. "The global seafaring community has also encouraged the women seafaring workforce to grow. For now, we know that no Myanmar women have been on cargo ships. But some European ship owners have launched discussions on promoting women's employment to cadet positions for cargo ships," he said. — MT/ZS



This image features a talk on Myanmar women seafarers serving on cruise ships.

Low-Pressure Area Condition

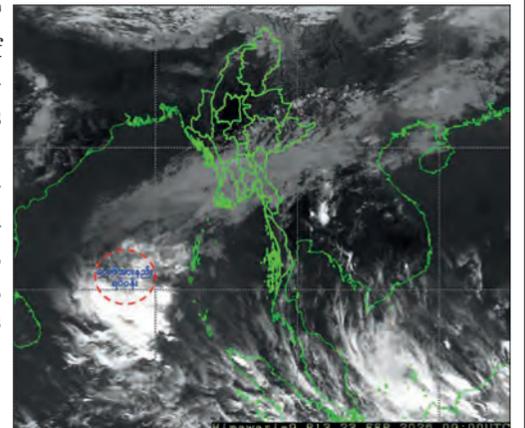
Issued at 4 pm MST on 23 February 2026

ACCORDING to the observations at 3:30 pm MST today, the low-pressure area over Southwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining Central Bay of Bengal still persists. It is likely to continue to move northeastwards during the next 24 hours and weaken gradually.

Due to the Low-Pressure Area, rain or thundershowers will be isolated to scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Bago, Magway, Ayeyawady, and Taninthayi Regions and Kayah, Kayin, Mon, Rakhine, and (southern and eastern) Shan States from this evening to 26 February 2026.

Advisory

Under the influence of Low-Pressure Area, people should be aware and take precautions to the natural disasters such as the untimely rainfall with strong wind, thunderstorms, lightning strike, lightning and hails. — DMH



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

Issued at 7 pm Monday, 23 February 2026

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at 5:30 pm MST today, the low-pressure area over southwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining Central Bay of Bengal now lies over South Bay of Bengal. It will likely continue to move northeastwards during the next 24 hours and weaken gradually. The weather is a few clouds over the South Andaman Sea and North Bay of Bengal and partly cloudy to cloudy over the North Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal. **FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF 24 February 2026:** Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Yangon, Bago, and Ayeyawady Regions and Kayah, Kayin, Mon, and Shan States and isolated in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Magway, Upper Sagaing, and Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, and Rakhine States. The degree of certainty is 80 per cent. The weather will be partly cloudy in Lower Sagaing Region and Chin State.

THE CONDITION OF CUMULONIMBUS CLOUD: The cumulonimbus clouds are developing in Taninthayi Region. In the area along the cumulonimbus clouds movement, the weather phenomena such as strong winds accompanied with rain, thunder, lightning and hail may occur and therefore it is recommended to be aware in advance of these phenomena.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about 4-6 feet off and along the Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR THE SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated to scattered rain or thundershowers in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Bago, Upper Sagaing, Ayeyawady, and Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Mon, and Shan States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 February 2026: Partly cloudy and likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. The degree of certainty is 60 per cent.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 February 2026: Isolated rain or thundershowers. The degree of certainty is 80 per cent.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 February 2026: Partly cloudy. — DMH

NATIONAL

People's Voice on the Myanmar-Korea Friendship (Dala) Bridge



Ma Mya Phu Ngon (Vendor).



U Myint Than (Boat driver).



U Ye Ko Ko (Driver, YBS 58).



Ma Su Hlaing Htwe (Vendor).



U Tun Aung (Jetty station supervisor).

THE Myanmar-Korea Friendship Bridge (Dala), the highest steel cable-stayed bridge in Myanmar, opened on 6 February. The bridge has already become a Yangon landmark, with thousands of people using it daily.

Below, we share the accounts of those who have travelled between Dala and Yangon by road and water since the bridge's opening, as well as those whose livelihoods depend on it.

Ma Mya Phu Ngon (vendor)

My name is Mya Phu Ngon. I live near the Dala-Twantay junction and work at a shop on Latha Road, near Yangon General Hospital. Before the bridge was completed and the YBS (Yangon Bus Service) began operating, I had to take an 'Oway' (three-wheeler) to the jetty, cross to Yangon by boat, and then walk to work. The return journey was the same. Now, I can take the YBS directly. Previously, a round-trip cost about K5,000, but now it is only

K1,000. In the past, I had to leave by 3 pm or 4 pm to ensure I could get home; now, I can stay in Yangon until the bus arrives at 5 pm or 6 pm.

U Myint Than (boat driver)

My name is U Myint Than. Previously, after deducting fuel costs and tolls, I would have about K30,000-K40,000 left. Now, that has been reduced by half. I am thinking about what future job opportunities might arise now that the bridge is open. I believe

factories will soon move here; if that happens, there will be new opportunities for us.

U Ye Ko Ko (driver, YBS 58)

My name is Ye Ko Ko, and I am a driver for YUPT. Our buses run from Botahtaung to the Dala-Twantay junction, starting at 6 am. Currently, they run every 30 minutes, depending on passenger numbers. We plan to increase the frequency to every 15 minutes as demand grows. Since most of our passengers are travelling to Twantay, and these buses currently stop at the Dala Bridge, passengers want the route extended further. We have submitted this proposal to the YBS company. If we adjust the route, we can better serve both Dala and Twantay residents.

The previous routes were never this crowded; there were few passengers after office hours. Now, the buses are busy at all times. In the evenings, especially, buses are full in both directions. It's wonderful to see – you can see young and old people alike enjoying trips across the bridge in groups.

Ma Su Hlaing Htwe (vendor)

I am Ma Su Hlaing Htwe. I work at the U Maung Khaing fruit shop near the Aye Myat Mon clothing shop on the Dala side of the bridge. Now that the bridge is open, more people are visiting Dala from Yangon, so sales of Twantay fruits are more brisk than before. Travel has become much easier and faster for us, and transport costs for our goods

have been significantly reduced. If you are visiting Dala from Yangon, please come and support us at the Aye Myat Mon garment shop and U Maung Khaing fruit shop!

U Tun Aung (Jetty station supervisor)

My name is U Tun Aung, and I am the supervisor at the jetty station. We manage two jetties: Kama Aung and Thanlyat. Since the bridge opened, passenger numbers have decreased. Before the opening, there were over 150 ferries; now, there are only about 60. Drivers used to earn about K50,000 a day, leaving them with K30,000-K40,000 after costs. Now, they take home about K20,000. We are still operating, though the fleet has shrunk. — ASH/MKKS

MRCS restores family links in Myawady via door-to-door message service

THE Restoring Family Links (RFL) Department of the Myanmar Red Cross Society has announced that Red Cross Messages (RCMs) were delivered directly to the homes of families in Myawady, Kayin State, to help reconnect relatives separated by various circumstances.

According to the RFL department, the Myanmar Red Cross Society facilitates communication through Red Cross messages for family members who have been separated or gone missing, provided the cases meet specific criteria.

Red Cross volunteers from the Myawady Township Branch in Kayin State personally delivered the messages sent by the RFL department to the respective families. Furthermore, the volunteers assisted the families in drafting replies to ensure that consistent contact is maintained between separated relatives.

The Restoring Family Links Department provides this tracing and reconnection service



Volunteers from the Myanmar Red Cross Society deliver family messages door-to-door to separated individuals in Myawady, Kayin State.

free of charge. Those seeking missing family members are encouraged to contact their local Township Red Cross Branch or the Myanmar Red Cross Society's RFL department directly. — ASH/KNN

Public Notice

THE Anti-Corruption Commission has established corruption prevention units within ministries to curb corruption effectively.

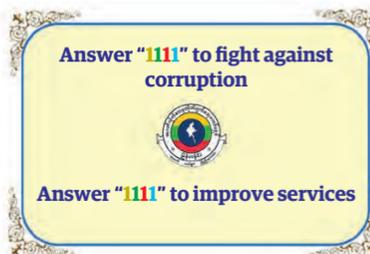
The ACC used SMS on mobile phones to ask the public who sought services at an office of the department of the relevant ministries via short code No "1111" for feedback, including the public feedback programme (PFP).

According to the PFP, the proper replies of the citizens via short code No "1111" will provide the quality of services of each department and the requirements for corruption prevention to be fixed.

Therefore, the public should reply to the questions of the ACC and corruption prevention units of the ministries via

SMS at short code "1111". Such doing is a supportive measure for PFP, and the people are urged to cooperate in the operations.

Anti-Corruption Commission



ECONOMY WORLD

S Korea's export grows 23.5% in 20 days of Feb



SOUTH Korea's export grew in double digits in the first 20 days of February due to soaring demand for locally-made semiconductors, customs office data showed Monday.

Outbound shipment jumped 23.5 per cent from a year earlier to US\$43.52 billion in the 1-20 February period, according to Korea Customs Service.

The daily average export spiked 47.3 per cent to \$3.35 billion in the 20 days.

This general view shows containers stacked up at a terminal in the southeastern port of Busan on 18 February 2026. **PHOTO: AFP**

Semiconductor exports more than doubled to \$15.12 billion, but automotive shipment dipped 26.6 per cent to \$2.65 billion.

Export for oil products, ships and mobile devices swelled in double digits, but shipment for auto parts and precision machinery declined in double figures.

Imports increased 11.7 per cent to \$38.57 billion in the first 20 days of February, sending the trade surplus to \$4.95 billion.

Import for chips, semiconductor equipment, natural gas, coal, cars and mobile devices logged a double-digit growth, but machinery imports reduced in single figures. — Xinhua

Sri Lanka pursues joint strategy to position Mattala airport as tourism gateway

SRI Lanka is rolling out a joint marketing and operations plan to attract airlines to Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport and position it as a tourism gateway, local media reported on Monday, quoting a senior tourism official.

Chairman of Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, Buddhika Hewawasam, said Mattala's main problem is the lack of scheduled flights, though charter operations continue in peak seasons. He said Sri Lanka

Tourism is working with Airport and Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) Ltd and industry stakeholders to promote the airport.

Hewawasam said Mattala can serve as a diversion airport for Bandaranaike International Airport and that recent steps by aviation authorities have improved confidence in its safety and operations.

He said officials also plan to market Mattala based on its access to southern and eastern tourist zones. — Xinhua

New Zealand retail sales up 0.9% in holiday quarter

NEW Zealand's retail sales rose 0.9 per cent in the December 2025 quarter from the previous three months, driven by holiday spending on discretionary items, Stats NZ reported Monday.

Seasonally adjusted retail volumes increased by 239 million NZ dollars (about US\$143 million), supported by strong activity in pharmaceutical and other store-based retailing, electrical and electronic goods, and hardware, building, and garden

supplies, according to the statistics department.

Twelve of 15 retail industries recorded gains in the December 2025 quarter, while motor vehicle and grocery sales weakened, it said.

Retail NZ Chief Executive Carolyn Young said the figures were a positive sign after years of struggle, with total core retail sales rising 4.5 per cent from a year earlier to 27 billion NZ dollars. — Xinhua

EU again delays hotly debated 'Made-in-Europe' plans

THE EU executive has again delayed presenting a fiercely contested plan to favour European companies over foreign rivals in key sectors, pushing it back to 4 March to give more time for talks, officials said Monday.

The proposal was expected Thursday but there has been strong pushback from some EU states and senior officials inside the European Commission over the plans.

The cabinet of EU industry chief Stephane Sejourne, who will present the proposal, said it hoped "this additional week of internal discussions will allow to make the proposal even more rock-solid".

This is the third time the presentation of the plans known as the "Industrial Accelerator Act" to facilitate "Made in Europe" production has been delayed.

It was initially expected in December, then it was postponed to January before it was again delayed to February.

The EU executive's plans would tell companies that if they want to access public money, a certain percentage of the components for their

goods like cars must be made in the 27-country bloc.

The new rules are expected to cover a limited number of strategic sectors, such as green technology, cars, chemicals and steel.

France has strongly defended the proposal, in a bid to protect its national electric car battery industry.

Germany has pushed back, with Chancellor Friedrich Merz saying this month it should be a "last resort".

Several countries including Sweden and the Netherlands — supporters of free

trade — have warned against veering into protectionism.

There have been tense debates inside the commission over whether the EU's partners, such as Japan, should be included and the latest draft seen by AFP included a reference to "trusted partners" to address such concerns.

EU chief Ursula von der Leyen has supported the plans, arguing they would help "strategic sectors" and support scaling-up European production capabilities. — AFP



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen (C) poses with attendees for a family picture during the European Industry Summit in Antwerp on 11 February 2026. **PHOTO: AFP**

Asian stocks rally after Trump's Supreme Court tariffs blow

ASIAN stocks rose while the dollar fell Monday after the US Supreme Court struck down a large part of President Donald Trump's tariffs policy that had sent shockwaves through the global economy last year.

The rally was led by tech firms, which have been at the forefront of regional gains this year as traders turn away from Wall Street to seek out cheaper investments amid concerns about extended valuations.

Trump's trade agenda was dealt a hefty blow Friday when the country's top court ruled that the International Emergency Economic Powers Act used by the White House to impose sweeping levies in April "does not authorize the presi-

dent to impose tariffs".

The furious president immediately vowed to impose a global tariff of 10 per cent under a separate authority, before raising it to 15 per cent on Saturday. However, the measures have numerous carve-outs and are only legally allowed to remain in place for 150 days.

The development fanned a fresh round of uncertainty, with calls growing for the government to repay cash taken under the scheme and analysts warning officials would likely pursue other ways of imposing his tolls.

"The first observation to make is that IEEPA tariffs may be dead, but Trump's trade regime isn't," wrote Rodrigo Catril at National Australia Bank. — AFP

Sony develops technology to trace origin of AI-made music

SONY Group Corp has developed technology to identify the original source of music generated by artificial intelligence in a bid to protect the rights of creators, amid growing concern about the unauthorized use of copyrighted works in AI training.

With the new technology, composers, songwriters and publishers will be able to demand compensation from AI developers for the unauthorized use of their works, according to Sony Group.

Sony's technology can extract data from an underlying AI model and compare generated music with its original sources, quantifying their contribution to facilitate the collection of revenues.



File photo taken on 25 November 2024 shows the company logo of Sony Group Corp in Minato Ward, Tokyo. PHOTO: KYODO

A spokesperson for the entertainment unit of the Japanese electronics group said, "We want to contribute to creating a system in which creators

are properly compensated."

Groupwide efforts to protect content have become increasingly prominent, with Sony Music En-

tertainment in the United States suing a company for copyright infringement in 2024 in connection with the use of AI to generate music. — Kyodo

Lao central bank lowers interest rate to support financial stability

THE Lao central bank will reduce its seven-day basic interest rate from 8.5 per cent to eight per cent in a move aimed at maintaining monetary stability in Laos.

The measure was approved at the first Monetary Policy Committee

meeting of 2026, which reviewed and assessed the performance of monetary policy instruments and discussed future policy directions, according to a report from the Bank of the Lao PDR (BOL) on Monday.

The meeting, held in the Lao capital Vientiane

on Friday, highlighted continued uncertainty in the global environment, which has contributed to volatility in fuel, energy, gold and food prices and is expected to slow global economic growth.

Domestically, the committee noted persis-

tent challenges, including a fragile economic base, strong demand for foreign currency to service external debt, exchange rate fluctuations, and credit growth that remains misaligned with structural economic objectives. — Xinhua



A trader works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) at the opening bell on 13 February 2026 in New York City. PHOTO: AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V SITC ZHI VOY.NO. (2604S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SITC ZHI VOY. NO. (2604S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-2-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V HAPPY TRADER VOY.NO. (SW2603)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V HAPPY TRADER VOY.NO. (SW2603)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-2-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT-5** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S WILHELMSSEN PORT SERVICES(S) PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V PRECIOUS CORAL VOY.NO. (124)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V PRECIOUS CORAL VOY.NO. (124)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-2-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301191/2301178**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S EASTERN CAR LINER LTD

ROLLING UPDATES

WORLD

Iran says to consider any US attack as “act of aggression”



An Iranian woman walks past a huge billboard carrying a poem interpretation in Persian ‘Human will defeat the evils’ erected in Valiasr Square, in Tehran on 22 February 2026. **PHOTO: AFP**

IRANIAN Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei on Monday warned that any attack by the United States against Iran, regardless of its scope and scale, will be considered an act of aggression and followed by consequences.

Baghaei made the remarks at a weekly press conference in Tehran. He said if the renewed indirect nuclear negotiations between Iran and the United States lead to a war, Iran’s armed forces will give an appropriate response and are vigilantly ready round the clock to defend the country.

He said that the Iranian Armed Forces remain vigilant and monitor developments alongside the diplomatic negotiations.

He noted that Iran is serious about pursuing a diplomatic path, adding that Iran is currently formulating its approach and hopes to hold a new round of talks with the US in the coming days.

Meanwhile, Baghaei said Iran is ready to hold continuous talks over several days or weeks, but conducting negotiations in intervals of ten days or two weeks is not Iran’s preferred approach.

The official IRNA news agency quoted the diplomat as saying, “We have no benefit in prolonging the negotiation process.”

Delegations from Iran and the United States held two rounds of indirect nuclear negotiations in Muscat, Oman’s capital, and Geneva earlier this month. A new round of talks is expected to be in Geneva on Thursday.

The renewed diplomatic process comes amid heightened tensions between Iran and the United States and a US military buildup in the West Asia region. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cambodia records 84% drop in malaria cases in 2025

CAMBODIA has reported an 84 per cent decrease in malaria cases in 2025, marking significant progress in the fight against the disease, a health official said on Monday.

Huy Rekol, director of the National Centre for Parasitology, Entomology and Malaria Control, said local malaria cases in Cambodia plummeted by 84 per cent, from 322 in 2024 to 52 in 2025.

“It’s wonderful to hear about the remarkable progress Cambodia has made in reducing malaria cases in 2025. It is truly impressive,” he told Xinhua, adding that Cambodia has reported zero fatalities since 2018 and no local *Plasmodium Falciparum* cases since January 2024.

Rekol said this achievement could be attributed to improvement in surveillance response, increased awareness among citizens, and availability of adequate equipment, such as malaria testing devices, insecticide-treated mosquito nets, and anti-malarial drugs. — Xinhua

Cuban FM accuses US of trying to create ‘humanitarian catastrophe’

CUBAN Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez on Monday accused the United States of trying to trigger a “humanitarian catastrophe” in his country with an oil blockade he called an “aggressive escalation”.

US President Donald Trump cut off key supplies of Venezuelan oil to Cuba after ousting Venezuela’s president Nicolas Maduro, and has threatened sanctions on states that sell oil to Havana.

The United States “now imposes an energy blockade and intends to create a humanitarian catastrophe, using as a pretext the absurd assertion that Cuba constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to its national security,” Rodriguez told the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

Cuba, under a US trade embargo since 1962, has for years battled extended power cuts and shortages of fuel, medicine and food, even before the Caribbean country of 9.6 million people lost its main oil supplier last month.

“These are criminal and illegal actions, constituting a ruthless collective punishment of the Cuban people,” said Rodriguez. — AFP



A subway station is seen in snow in New York, the United States, on 22 February 2026. New York City (NYC) Mayor Zohran Mamdani on Sunday declared a state of emergency and issued a travel ban as a winter storm hit the region, causing hundreds of flight cancellations. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

New York orders citywide travel ban as major storm hits US

NEW York ordered drivers off the road and shut down schools on Monday, while residents hunkered down for a massive snowstorm hitting the United States northeast.

The National Weather Service (NWS) said in a post on X that “heavy snow is still falling” at 5:28 am local time (1028 GMT) on Monday adding that a

the total snowfall stands at 14.9 inches.

According to the city’s emergency services, between nine and 11 inches of snow covered Manhattan and Brooklyn and “all non-essential vehicles are prohibited from operating on NYC Streets, Highways, and Bridges”.

Tens of millions of Americans from the US

capital, Washington, to the northern state of Maine have prepared for up to two feet (60 centimetres) of snow forecast in some areas.

Snow and “freezing fog” with lows of 29F (-2C) were recorded in New York just before 6 am local time (1100 GMT), NWS said on its website. — AFP

SPORTS

Over 7,000 runners compete in 2026 Yoma Yangon International Marathon

ACCORDING to the organizers, more than 7,000 runners participated in the 2026 Yoma Yangon International Marathon, organized by the Yoma Group. After a five-year hiatus, it returned on the morning of 22 February at the National Indoor Stadium 1, Thuwunna, Yangon.

The event featured three categories with different routes starting from the stadium – 5 kilometres (Fun Run): round trip of Waizayanta, Thanthuma, and Upper Pazundaung roads; 10-kilometre (Challenge Run): Waizayanta, Thanthuma, Upper Pazundaung, Set Yone, Banyar Dala, Kyaikkasan, Pin Shwe Nyaung, and Lay Daunt Kan back to Waizayanta roads; 21 kilometre (Half Marathon): Waizayanta, Thanthuma, Upper Pazundaung, Lower Pazundaung, Maha Bandoola, Sandaku, Strand, Shwedagon Pagoda, U Wizara (U Htaung Bo), Kan Yeik Thar, Banyar Dala, Kyaik-



Runners participating in the 2026 Yoma Yangon International Marathon.

kasan, Pin Shwe Nyaung, and Lay Daunt Kan, returning via Waizayanta.

An award ceremony was held to honour the top 10 male and female finishers – the half-marathon: 1st to 3rd – K3,000,000, K2,000,000, K1,500,000 and 4th to 10th K500,000 each; 10-kilometre Challenge: 1st to 3rd – K1,500,000, K1,000,000, K500,000 and 4th to 10th – K200,000 each.

All participants who finished within the designated time were awarded finisher medals. It is Myanmar's largest running event, bringing together athletes, sponsors, volunteers, and the general public.

The event aims to encourage public awareness of physical health, attract interest from international athletes, and support charitable initiatives. The marathon was held eight times between 2013 and 2020, and the 2026 event marks its ninth edition. — MT/ZN

Liverpool boss Slot encouraged by Mac Allister's return to form

LIVERPOOL manager Arne Slot believes Alexis Mac Allister is regaining his best form following the attacking midfielder's last-gasp winning goal at Nottingham Forest.

Mac Allister struck deep in added time at the City Ground on Sunday to secure a 1-0 win for the Premier League champions.

The Argentina international sealed victory by pouncing on a loose ball from close range just minutes after he had a goal ruled out by VAR.

"I think what he needed is what he showed in the last six, seven or eight games - a run of games where he's getting back to his usual level that he showed so many times last season," said Slot.

"And he had that level also in the first half of the season but it went a bit with ups and downs, as the team went in terms of performances with ups and downs.

"But I see much more consistency recently – not only in Macca's performance but in the team performance and many individual performances.

"But I think it's always nice for a player to score, especially if it's in extra time of extra time." — AFP

Milan-Cortina hailed as 'new kind' of Winter Olympics at closing ceremony

INTERNATIONAL Olympic Committee president Kirsty Coventry lauded Milan-Cortina 2026 as a "new kind of Winter Games" as she declared them closed on Sunday.

These Olympics used mainly existing venues for 16 days of medal-filled action spread for hundreds of kilometres across the Italian Alps.

"You delivered a new kind Winter Games and set a new standard for the future," Coventry told her Italian hosts at the closing ceremony in the Verona Arena, an ancient Roman amphitheatre.

After Coventry spoke, the two cauldrons in Milan and in Cortina d'Ampezzo, the chic mountain resort that

hosted the women's alpine skiing, were extinguished to formally signal the end of the Olympics.

Earlier, the Olympic flag was handed over to the leaders of the two regions that will host the next Winter Olympics in the French Alps in 2030.

Fittingly, Norwegian cross-country skier Johannes Klæbo was awarded one of the six gold medals he won at the Games during the closing ceremony.

Klæbo made history by winning all six races in which he was entered – and his 11 career golds are a Winter Olympics record.

Gu gets gold

In the final events, Chinese freestyle skier Eileen Gu won the gold that

had eluded her at these Games, while the USA beat Canada in an overtime thriller to win the men's ice hockey title for the first time for 46 years.

Gu had won two silver medals in Italy, but her favoured halfpipe event always looked the likeliest to deliver the third gold of her career.

The 22-year-old delivered a stunning performance, soaring high above the lip of the halfpipe and executing her tricks with precision.

She edged out her China teammate Li Fanghui, while Britain's Zoe Atkin took bronze.

In doing so, Gu became the most decorated freestyle skier in the history of the Winter Games. — AFP



This photo taken on 22 February 2026 shows the closing ceremony of the Milan-Cortina 2026 Olympic Winter Games at Verona Olympic Arena in Verona, Italy. PHOTO: XINHUA





Vietnam proposes national database centre to combat fake news

VIETNAM'S Ministry of Public Security has proposed establishing a national database centre for the prevention and control of fake news and false information, local newspaper Tuoi Tre (Youth) reported Monday.

The draft decree defines fake news as completely fabricated information, while false information refers to content that is partially untrue.

The centre is expected to receive reports, complaints and denunciations related to fake and false information, publicly announce and warn of verified cases, and provide guidance and clarification to the public. The proposed centre will be tasked with coordinating data sharing and the labelling of fake or false information among ministries, agencies and local authorities to ensure nationwide consistency.

The ministry has proposed applying the maximum fines stipulated under the Law on Handling Administrative Violations, with penalties of up to 100 million Vietnamese dong (about US\$3,850) for individuals and 200 million Vietnamese dong (about \$7,700) for organizations violating regulations on fake and false information. — Xinhua

India replaces British architect statue with independence hero



A man walks past Kartavya Path near India's presidential palace (Rashtrapati Bhavan) in New Delhi on 14 October 2025. PHOTO: AFP

India unveiled a bust of an independence-era nationalist icon at the presidential palace on Monday, replacing a monument to British architect Edwin Lutyens in a symbolic break from its colonial past.

Lutyens was the chief architect of New Delhi, the area that houses India's power centre, and still often referred to as Lutyens' Delhi.

His bust was replaced with that of Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, known as Rajaji, a towering statesman, jurist and writer who served as Governor General from 1948 to 1950, bridging the transition from British rule to the modern Indian republic.

“This initiative is part of series of steps being taken towards shedding the vestiges of colonial mindset and embracing, with pride,

the richness of India's culture,” said President Droupadi Murmu in a statement.

Hindu nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi has long sought to eliminate remnants of India's colonial past by reshaping several key British-era relics with his own mega projects.

In 2023 he inaugurated a grand new hexagonal national parliament, replacing a colonial-era building, also designed by Lutyens along with his British colleague, Herbert Baker.

Modi said the move to replace Lutyens' bust was part of initiatives to achieve “freedom from the mindset of slavery”. “Statues of British administrators were allowed to remain... but those of the nation's greatest sons were denied space,” he said in a radio

broadcast on Saturday. “Today, the country is leaving that colonial mindset behind.”

In 2022, Modi's government erected a statue of an independence hero venerated for taking up arms against colonial rule—but controversial for his collaboration with Nazi Germany's war machinery.

The statue of Subhas Chandra Bose was placed in a canopy near the India Gate war memorial in New Delhi on a long empty plinth that had once housed a statue of British monarch King George V.

The canopy, too, had been designed by Lutyens. Lutyens' great-grandson, British biologist Matt Ridley, said he was “sad to read that the bust of Lutyens (my great grandfather) is to be removed from the presidential palace he designed in Delhi”. — AFP



In this video grab released by Russian Presidential Press and Information Office, Russian President Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting with Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces Valery Gerasimov and the commanders of the groups of forces taking part in the special military operation at the headquarters of the combined forces, in Russia. PHOTO: SPUTNIK

Russia's advanced military equipment will always be in good hands – Putin

RUSSIA will increase the pace of developing advanced systems for its army, and this equipment will always be in good hands, Russian President Vladimir Putin said.

In a video address, the head of state congratulated Russians on Defender of the Fatherland Day. The president emphasized

that Russia would continue to enhance the potential and combat readiness of its Armed Forces.

Russia will continue to strengthen its army and navy, taking into account the evolving international situation, drawing on the experience of the Air Defence Forces, and relying on the

strength of domestic industry and science, Putin said.

“The development of the nuclear triad, which guarantees Russia's security and enables us to effectively ensure strategic deterrence and balance of power in the world, remains our unconditional priority,” he added. — SPUTNIK