

# OTS army produces female officers in 11 intakes

It is essential to control subordinates fairly and justly, free from corruption, with bold and decisive decisions, accountability, and responsibility.



State Administration Council Chairman Defence Services Commander-in-Chief Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing reviews the graduating female cadet company at the 11<sup>th</sup> Intake passing out parade of the Female Graduate Cadet Course in Hmawby, Yangon Region, yesterday.

**S**ENIOR General Min Aung Hlaing underscored that as long as unity prevails within the military units, no one will be able to disband or disrupt them.

The passing out parade of the 11<sup>th</sup> Intake of Female Graduate Cadet Course took place at the Tatmadaw (Army) Officer Training School (Hmawby) in Yangon yesterday morning, with an address by Chairman of the State

Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing.

After taking the salute of the graduate cadet company, the Senior General inspected it. Then, the graduate cadet company marched past the Senior General.

**SEE PAGE 3**

## Salient points from the speech delivered by the Senior General at the passing out parade of the 11<sup>th</sup> Intake of OTS (Hmawby)

1. The foundation of achieving military victory lies in the discipline and obedience of every soldier.
2. Just as discipline serves as the backbone of the armed forces, obedience is also a hallmark of an exemplary soldier.
3. As the role of leaders is crucial in any organization, organizations must cultivate capable and reliable leaders while continuously striving to improve their qualities.
4. As long as unity prevails within the military units, no one can disband or disrupt them.

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Consider the reduction of conflicts between humans and wildlife

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Myanmar, China to advance energy cooperation

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New bridge holidays boost tourism and travel



# NATIONAL

## Youth Success: Discipline and Lawfulness as Foundations for Nation-Building

- Youths must adhere to discipline and laws to achieve success in their lives.
- By following the laws and regulations set by the government, they can become valuable, law-abiding citizens dedicated to serving the nation.

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

### Five National Objectives for 77<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence Day 2025

1. To address armed conflicts and differing perspectives lawfully, ensuring non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty
2. To safeguard the State with unity and strength of all citizens, guided by the spirit of the Union
3. To conduct a free, fair, and credible general election to establish a genuine, disciplined democratic system
4. To promote balanced development across all sectors of the Union through the collective strength of the entire people
5. To collectively advance politics, the economy, defence, national identity, and spirit with perseverance, diligence, and dedication, guided by the motto: “Keep Moving Forward to Achieve Our Goal”

#### Myanmar Gazette

### Head of Service Organization confirmed

THE State Administration Council has confirmed the appointment of U Aung Myo Oo, Director-General of the Department of Highways under the Ministry of Construction on the expiry of the one-year probationary period.

### 5 special civil appeal cases passed judgements; 1 special criminal appeal case, 3 special civil appeal cases heard

A special appeal tribunal consisting of Union Chief Justice U Tha Htay and Judges of the Supreme Court of the Union U Myo Tint, U Myo Maung, Daw Pyone Pyone Aye and Dr Ko Ko Naing was convened Monday morning at the Supreme Court of the Union and passed judgements five special civil appeal cases – Nos 59/2024 (Yan-

gon), 60/2024 (Yangon), 61/2024 (Yangon), 68/2024 (Yangon) and 72/2024 (Mon).

In addition, a total of four special cases – one special criminal appeal case No 14/2024 (Shan), and three special criminal civil appeal cases – Nos 70/2024 (Mandalay), 73/2024 (Mon), and 74/2024 (Sagaing) were heard. — MNA



The Myanmar military band performs at the Military Music Exchange 2024 in Vietnam on 14 December.

## Myanmar military band participates in Military Music Exchange 2024 in Vietnam

THE military band led by Brig-Gen Tin Zaw Latt left for Vietnam to participate in the Military Music Exchange 2024 on 14 December.

The opening ceremony of Military Music Exchange 2024 took place on 19 December evening at the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long in Hanoi, and General Nguyen Tan Cuong, Member of the Party Central Committee Member of the Central Military Commission, Chief of the General Staff of the Vietnam People’s Army, and Deputy Minister of National Defence, made an opening speech. The Myanmar military band attended the event with 11 bands from China, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia and Vietnam. Then, the Myanmar military band performed Aung Lan Wai Wai (army, navy, and air), Aung

Lan Hlwint Mae Doh Tatmadaw, Myanmar Pyi Thar and Hat Mai Khuc Quan Hanh songs at Imperial Citadel of Thang Long. Then, the band performed with other bands marching to the Lenin statue.

The Myanmar military band also jointly performed with five international military music troops and six military bands of Vietnam at the Vietnam Defence Expo 2024 at Gai Lam Airport in Long Bein District, Hanoi, on 20 December.

Moreover, the Myanmar military band also performed Aung Lan Wai Wai (army, navy, and air), Aung Lan Hlwint Mae Doh Tatmadaw, Myanmar Pyi Thar and The Ballad of Ho Chi Minh Hat Mai Khuc Quan Hanh together with other international military bands at four designated sites marching along the

Sword Lake area on the same evening.

The closing event of the Military Music Exchange 2024 was held at the Military History Museum on 22 December, and the Myanmar military band played Aung Lan Wai Wai (army, navy, and air), Aung Lan Hlwint Mae Doh Tatmadaw, A Song for Unity and Hat Mai Khuc Wuan Hanh together with other military bands.

Then, Lt-Gen Nguyen Van Nghia (Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Vietnam People’s Army and head of the Organization Committee of the Military Music Exchange) made a closing remark and concluded the event.

Brig-Gen Tin Zaw Latt-led military band arrived back in Myanmar yesterday afternoon. — MNA/KTZH



NATIONAL

IT should always be borne in mind that the culture of democracy suggests the realization of the aspirations of an individual or a group by avoiding antagonism and violence and by pursuing peaceful means.

(An excerpt from the speech delivered by Chairman of the State Administration Council, Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on the occasion to mark the Ninth Anniversary of the Signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) held on 15 October 2024.)



Bagan landscape. PHOTO BY KYAW MYO THIHA (IPRD)

OTS army produces female officers in 11 intakes



State Administration Council Chairman Defence Services Commander-in-Chief Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing meets outstanding graduate cadets of the 11<sup>th</sup> Intake of the Female Graduate Cadet Course yesterday.

FROM PAGE 1

The Senior General presented the Best Cadet Award to Cadet La Pyae Win.

The Senior General then delivered a speech. He said that female military servants of the Tatmadaw have to preserve the fine historical traditions of the Tatmadaw while striving to post more historical milestones for their endeavours.

The foundation of achieving military victory lies in the discipline and obedience of every soldier. Just as discipline serves as the backbone of the armed forces, obedience is also a hallmark of an exemplary soldier.

It is essential to control subordinates fairly and justly, free from corruption, with bold and decisive decisions, accountability, and responsibility.

The strength of the Tatmadaw fundamentally relies on unity and cohesion. Therefore, as long as unity prevails within the military units, no one will be able to disband or disrupt them.

As the role of leaders is crucial in any organization, organizations must cultivate capable and reliable leaders while continuously striving to improve their qualities.

About providing effective leadership, the graduate cadets were urged to continuously enhance their knowledge and skills in line with the advancements of the times, maintaining integrity, honesty, and a high standard of moral conduct.

Leaders at different levels have to build unity within military units. In doing so, responsibilities and commands must be assigned

equitably and fairly, guided by proper leadership and governance rooted in an understanding of human nature. This will establish a solid foundation for the organization.

Protecting the lives, homes, and property of the people, providing healthcare services, and assisting with rescue and support during natural disasters are practical acts of mobilization and engagement with the public.

Carrying out military organizational tasks is an essential duty undertaken for the benefit of the nation and its ethnic peoples. Therefore, all female military officers have to approach these responsibilities with great diligence and commitment.

Soldiers must conduct themselves following the 60 military codes of conduct, adhere to mil-

itary and civil laws, and comply with the laws of war, including the Geneva Conventions, which are internationally recognized and practised, as well as rules of engagement in conflict situations.

After taking the salute of the graduate cadet company, the Senior General left the parade ground.

Also present at the parade were Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Zeya Kyaw Htin Htein Win and his wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Zeya Kyaw Htin Sithu Tun Aung and his wife, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and their wives, Union ministers and their wives, the Yangon Region chief minister and his wife, the commander of Yangon Command

commander, officials and parents and relatives of the cadets.

After the parade, the Senior General met outstanding cadets namely Best Cadet Award winner cadet La Pyae Win, Excellent in Shooting Award winner cadet Aye Thida, Excellent in Training Award winner cadet Nanda Kyaw and Excellent in Physical Fitness Award winner cadet Ei Phyu Maung at the parlour of the school headquarters.

In his speech of honour, the Senior General stressed that the graduate cadets should not forget the gratitude of mentors and parents up from childhood to date. He urged those graduate cadets to be good Tatmadaw officers on whom the State and Tatmadaw can rely and serve the interests of the State and the people in their assigned areas. — MNA/TTA



# 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)*

## OTS Hmawby hosts graduation dinner for 11<sup>th</sup> Female Cadet Course



The Senior General warmly greets the outstanding graduate cadets at their honorary dinner yesterday.

STATE Administration Council Chairman Defence Services Commander-in-Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended the graduation dinner of the 11<sup>th</sup> Intake of Graduate Female Cadet Course of Tatmadaw (Army) Officer Training School (Hmawby) at the Pyidaungsu Hall of the school in Yangon yesterday evening.

The Senior General cordially greeted the graduate female officers. Then the Senior General and party had dinner together with graduate female officers and guests.

The Senior General and party presented the cash award to the military band of the school which played music.

They enjoyed the song entertainment of the Myawady Entertainment Troupe.

Also present at the dinner were Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Htein Win and his wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung and his wife, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and their wives, Union ministers and their wives, the Yangon Region chief minister and his wife, the commander of Yangon Command, officials and parents and relatives of cadets. — MNA/TTA

## OTS Hmawby holds 11<sup>th</sup> female cadet graduation

THE graduation ceremony for the 11<sup>th</sup> intake of female cadets of Tatmadaw (Army) Officer Training School (Hmawby) was held at the school's Myawady Hall yesterday.

It was attended by Military Appointment-General Lt-Gen Lin Aung, senior Tatmadaw officers, Commandant Brig-Gen

Toe Win and graduates.

Military Appointment-General Lt-Gen Lin Aung presented certificates to graduate cadets, delivered the convocation speech, and concluded the event.

The ceremony was to appoint female cadets who graduated from the school with the

rank of second lieutenant. The graduate female cadet training course was opened in 2014 to produce qualified staff officers for Tatmadaw. Female graduates who have completed the training must serve in the relevant (Army, Navy and Air) corps. — MNA/KTZH



A female graduate cadet receives her commissioning certificate.



NATIONAL

Yangon City opens second underpass

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inaugurated an underpass on U Wizara Road between the western archway of Shwedagon Pagoda and People's Park.



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing unveils the underpass signage on U Wizara Road between the western archway of Shwedagon Pagoda and People's Park in Dagon Township, Yangon Region.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday morning attended the ceremony to inaugurate an

underpass, which is the second facility of its kind in Myanmar, on U Wizara Road between the western archway of Shwedagon Pagoda and the People's Park in Dagon Township, Yangon

Region. Mayor U Bo Htay reported to the Senior General on the purpose of building the underpass with the efforts of Myanmar engineers and its advantages.



The Senior General and dignitaries tour the underpass yesterday.

The Senior General and party watched a video clip on the construction of the underpass and gave gifts to engineers who participated in the construction project.

The chief minister, the commander and dignitaries inaugurated the underpass whereas the Senior General pressed the button to unveil the entrance to the underpass.

The Senior General viewed the documentary photos on the construction of the underpass and visited there, leaving necessary guidance to officials.

Also present at the ceremony were Council Joint Secretary General Ye Win Oo, council members, Union ministers, the Yangon Region chief minister, senior Tatmadaw officers of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, the Yangon Command commander, the mayor, regional-level officials and guests.

Guided by the Senior General, the construction of an underpass started in October 2023 to emerge a modern infrastructure for ensuring traffic safety of people who visit the Shwedagon Pagoda and People's Square as the area is crowded with pilgrims and travellers to Shwedagon Pagoda. The main structure of the underpass is 11 feet high, 23 feet wide and 461 feet long with four entrances and exits for the use of some 14,000 people per hour. The underpass is facilitated with four escalators and two lifts for older persons and people with disabilities. Thanks to the underpass, people and pilgrims can travel there with traffic safely, and it can contribute to the reduction of traffic congestion on U Wizara Road to some extent. The already-opened underpass can benefit the people and become a development symbol of Yangon. — MNA/TTA

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# NATIONAL

## Joint Seminar on Customs Regulation between Myanmar and Eurasian Economic Commission held



The Joint Seminar on Customs Regulation between Myanmar and the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) in progress on 23 December, attended by Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw and Myanmar delegates via videoconferencing.

A Joint Seminar on Customs Regulation between Myanmar and the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) was held via videoconferencing at Office 1, Nay Pyi Taw, on the afternoon of 23 December 2024, to exchange experiences on trade facilitation, upgrade of customs regulations, and strengthening the regional economic stability and development between Myanmar and the Eurasian Economic Commission.

Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Dr Kan Zaw and the Member of the Board - Minister in charge of Integration

and Macroeconomics of the EEC Mr Eldar Alisherov delivered the opening remarks in the seminar. Dr Kan Zaw addressed that trade facilitation processes are being carried out in digital technology since the international trade processes have increased and upgraded in this age, the status of trade facilitation processes in Myanmar, and encouraged the participants to exchange experiences and best practices on customs regulations. Mr Eldar Alisherov gave remarks on the situation of single window mechanism development in the implementation of foreign economic ac-

tivity regulation of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the status of coordination among the members of EAEU, and the future work plan of EEC.

After that, Mr Grigor Ohanyan, Deputy Director of the Department of Customs Legislation and Law Enforcement Practice of the EEC explained the Customs Code of EAEU and Acts of EEC with the title "Unified Customs Regulation in the EAEU", and U Kyaw Linn Myaing, Assistant Director of the Customs Department of the Ministry of Planning and Finance presented the Myanmar Customs Laws, Duties and Tax-

es, Three pillars of Customs Duties, and Customs Procedures under title of "Customs Regulation System in Myanmar".

Then, Mr Grigor Ohanyan continued the discussion on the prospects of the development of a single window mechanism in the EAEU, and U Hein Htet Aung, Deputy Director of the Customs Department of the Ministry of Planning and Finance made the presentation on Myanmar Automated Cargo Clearance System (MACCS) and National Single Window System within the title of "Application of the Single Window mechanism in the system of

foreign economic activity regulations".

Moreover, Mr Vladimir Badeynov, Head of the Division for Integration of Information Systems of Customs Authorities of the Customs Infrastructure Department of the EEC exchanged information on the approach used in the EAEU, and U Si Thu Kyaw, Assistant Director of the Customs Department of the Ministry of Planning and Finance explained the ASEAN Single Window Live Operation, Myanmar National Single Window Routing Platform and exchange electronic messages under the title of "Exchange of Information on the Implementation of Interstate Electronic Information Exchange in the Customs Sector". After the presentations, the questions and answers session was followed.

The seminar was attended by senior officials and the relevant officials with a total number of 25 from the Ministry of Planning and Finance, the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and the Ministry of Commerce.

Similar joint seminars on Finance and Digital Economy and Agro-Industrial Complex will be held in 2025 between Myanmar and the Eurasian Economic Commission. — MIFER



## People's Military Service Training Course 8 opens

TO prepare citizens for national defence and security duties, eligible citizens have arrived at various regional military commands across the country to participate in the People's Military Service Training Course 8. The opening ceremonies for this training course were held yesterday at each training depot, where the school commandants delivered speeches.

The ceremonies saw the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman, chief ministers from states and regions, commanders of military commands and other officials who met with the trainees, presenting them with awards while offering their encouragement and best wishes for the trainees.

As part of efforts to maintain national unity, prevent disintegration, and preserve stability, all citizens are responsible for upholding these duties. The People's Military Service Law, established on 10 February 2024, aims to train citizens to serve in national defence and security roles.

The first course of this training officially began on 8 April 2024, and graduates are currently serving in various military units, contributing to the nation's defence efforts.

Those attending the People's Military Service Training Course 8 expressed their dedication yesterday to fulfilling national defence and security responsibilities with honour. — MNA/KZL



The opening of the People's Military Service Training 8 in progress yesterday.



# The BRICS in 2024: An Expanding Alternative

## BRICS as Diversification of the World Order

THE acronym “BRIC”, coined by Goldman Sachs for its own marketing purposes, has evolved over twenty years into a community of the most influential non-Western states. The 2024 BRICS summit hosted by Russia in Kazan was an unqualified success for the Kremlin and a clear indication that Russia’s isolation only works from one side: the West.

The rest of the world sees no point in joining in the policy of pressuring Russia, whether they endorse Russian behaviour in particular cases or not.

But this is not the main significance of the summit. The BRICS (whose membership has grown from Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South

Africa to also include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates) is an unusual community that does not bear the hallmarks of a traditional international institution. So far, it is a rather amorphous club with a single unifying principle: creating a space for interaction that bypasses Western states and institutions. An overtly anti-Western policy will not prevail in the BRICS, as the overwhelming majority of states there are not interested in aggravating relations with the West. But they are eager to have different options for building political and economic ties, free of US and EU guidance and mechanisms.

This aspiration reflects objective changes on the world



stage. First, the redistribution of potential – demographic, economic, military, and to some extent, technological – is creating the conditions for a shift away from the Western-centric system of world order.

Non-Western countries have become much more confident in demanding change.

Second, the policies of the United States and the European Union, which insist on following their own visions and persecuting dissenters, are provoking rejection almost everywhere outside the Western community. This is not because of attitudes towards Russia, which

vary widely outside the West, but because of the principle itself. Ideologically and politically motivated restrictions are perceived by the majority of international actors as an obstacle to normal development.

In this respect, the Kazan forum may be seen as a milestone. BRICS has reached a new level, where a prestigious but rather amorphous club has now become a significant meeting place. It is necessary to be at the table because, firstly, important things are being discussed there and, secondly, a key global trend is taking shape. Namely, an alternative space to the one

organized around the institutions (and interests) of the West. In a sense, the main function of BRICS is its status as an anti-monopoly group, ensuring competition by restricting the monopolist, in this case on a global scale.

The fight against cartels is never easy, in any context. It’s a long process, but it has begun and it’s actually developing faster than might have been expected. The conditions have been in place for some time.

So, the main thing about BRICS, no matter how many problems and oddities arise in and around this community, is that it corresponds to the rationale for the development of the global system.

The further development of the BRICS will depend on many circumstances. Not all member states consider their participation in the bloc a priority. However, the general movement towards diversification of the world order and away from any one group’s domination will continue, and the BRICS will play an increasing role in this.

RT, Council of Councils



# YGN palm oil reference rate set at K7,280 this week

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil for the Yangon market for the week ending 30 December slightly increased to K7,280 per viss from K7,250 per viss last week ending 22 December.

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 weekly.

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 the Essential Goods and Services Law. The department is working with the Myanmar Oil Dealers’ Association and the cooking oil importing companies to offer affordable rates

of imported palm oil for consumers. 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 palm oil consumption 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



A vendor arranges cooking oil for sale at the market.



# Consider the reduction of conflicts between humans and wildlife

A new story posted by a daily newspaper on social media mentioned that a bull elephant which is on Musth attacked humans in Tanai of Kachin State on 9 December, leaving four women dead and seven others injured.

Another story stated that Hmawby and Taikkyi townships are preparing to build electric fences at agricultural farms and in villages of both townships to prevent the danger of elephant herds roaming in forest reserves close to the Bago Mountain range. In the areas, some 30 wild elephants wander jungle areas as well as rural areas.

Conflicts between humans and animals, especially wild elephants are based on the loss of habitats for wild animals. It depends

on the expansion of industrial and urban areas as well as agricultural farms, gradual deforestation, scarcity of feed-stuff and emission of human societies' smoke inappropriate for habitation of wildlife. Roaming of wild animals is to unintentionally search feedstuff in these areas beyond the jungles. Hence, humans need to consider how to provide feedstuff and habitat for wild animals.

As the population of the country is growing year by year, it is necessary to establish residences for the people. In this regard, the reclamation of agricultural farms and residential areas needs to implement a win-win initiative between human society and wild animals. Even if authorities expand residential areas including lands for industries, public areas and agriculture and livestock farms, wild animals have the right to possess sufficient habitats suitable for their nature. Currently, the government designates forest reserves, protected public forests, protected forests, natural areas, wildlife sanctuaries and so on across the nation to create a safe natural environment for wild animals. Moreover, relevant laws have been enacted to protect these wild animals to take action against those who commit illegal hunting, smuggling forest products, destroying forest areas and illegally settling. Especially, these forests must be reliable and appropriate habitats for wildlife. If so, flora and fauna diversities can be conserved in the country for a long time.

If wild animals have sufficient and safe habitats, conflicts between humans and wild animals will decline. A harmonious environment can improve the nature of wild animals as well as ecosystem of the human society. Consequently, agricultural and livestock farms will achieve success in supplying products to society. Hatching rare species of animals and protecting critically endangered species can improve the natural environment which will benefit living beings and non-living beings.

areas, wildlife sanctuaries and so on across the nation to create a safe natural environment for wild animals. Moreover, relevant laws have been enacted to protect these wild animals to take action against those who commit illegal hunting, smuggling forest products, destroying forest areas and illegally settling. Especially, these forests must be reliable and appropriate habitats for wildlife. If so, flora and fauna diversities can be conserved in the country for a long time.

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# Energetic Efforts of the Medical Teams for the 5<sup>th</sup> National Sports Festival

By Dr Than Lwin Tun

THE Fifth National Sports Festival is a grand celebration of strength, unity, and teamwork, bringing together athletes, officials, and spectators from all corners of the nation. While the spotlight often shines on the thrilling performances and achievements of the athletes, the success of such an event would not be possible without the unwavering support of key teams working tirelessly behind the scenes. Among these, the Medical Teams deserve special recognition for their energetic and dedicated efforts.

Throughout the festival, the Medical Teams play an essential role in ensuring the safety and well-being of everyone involved. From providing immediate first aid to addressing medical emergencies, their prompt and professional responses demonstrate their expertise and commitment.

Whether on the sidelines of intense competitions or stationed at various points across the event venues, the team's care and readiness are evident at every moment.

Beyond their technical skills, the Medical Teams' compassionate and calm conduct brought reassurance to athletes and spectators alike.

Their ability to handle high-pressure situations with efficiency and care reflected their deep sense of responsibility. This level of dedication not only safeguards the health of participants but also contributes to the smooth running of the festival, allowing athletes to focus on their performances without worry.

Medical Teams are a crucial part of the festival's success, expressing the spirit of service and teamwork that defines such national events. Their presence

underscores the importance of holistic support systems in fostering a safe and thriving environment for competition.

On behalf of all stakeholders, we express our heartfelt appreciation to the Medical Teams for their tireless work, professionalism, and commitment. Medical Teams' contributions are instrumental in making the Fifth National Sports Festival an echoing success. We recognize and celebrate your efforts, knowing that without your energetic and selfless service, this event would not have been possible.

Thank you for being the silent heroes of the festival. Medical Teams' dedication inspires us all and reminds us of the critical role that healthcare professionals play in every aspect of our lives, including the land of sports.



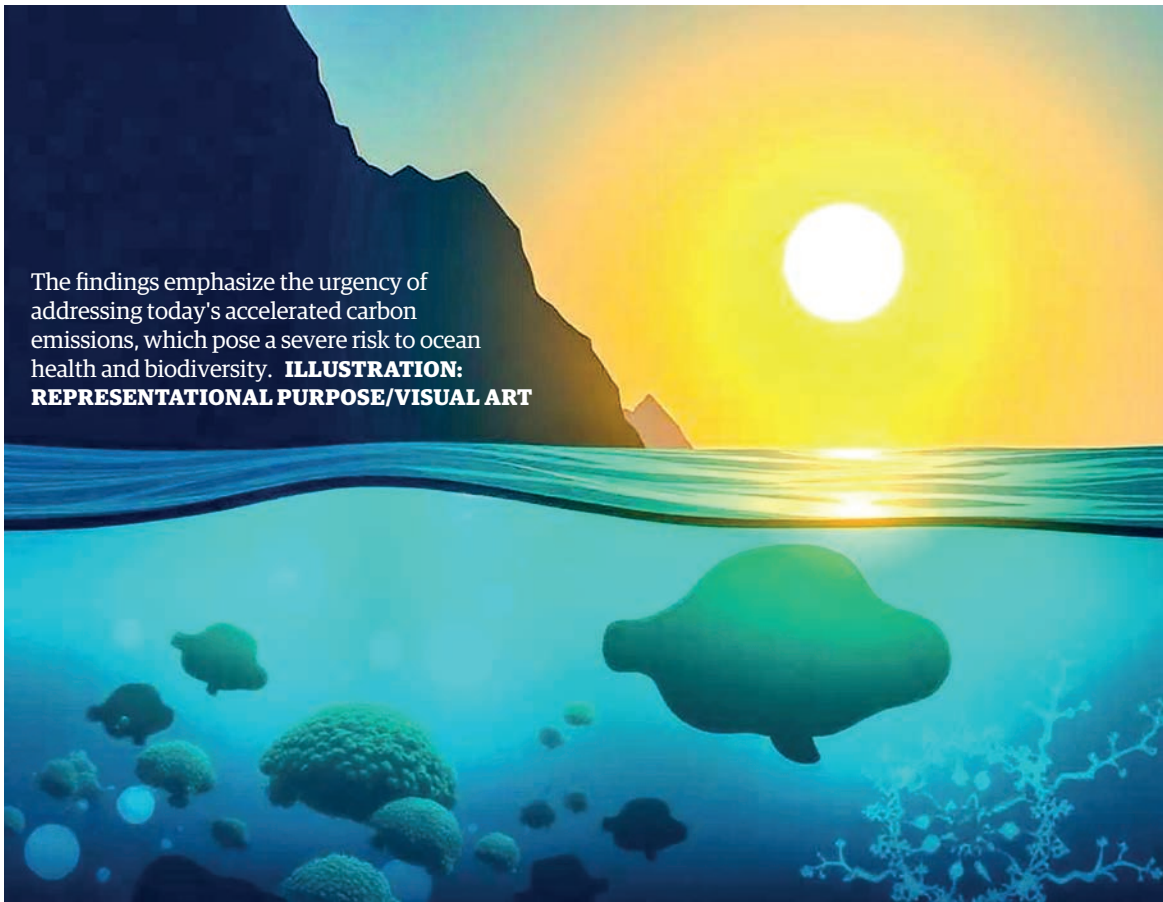
Care of the Medical Team.



One of the Medical Teams.



The Medical Team at Boxing Competition.



The findings emphasize the urgency of addressing today's accelerated carbon emissions, which pose a severe risk to ocean health and biodiversity. **ILLUSTRATION: REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE/VISUAL ART**

# Ancient climate crisis offers warning on modern ocean acidification: study

The research found that, like current trends, rising carbon dioxide levels during the Paleocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum (PETM) caused a significant decline in ocean pH, threatening marine ecosystems.

A collaborative study by Chinese and US scientists has revealed how a massive carbon release 56 million years ago impacted ocean chemistry, offering critical insights into the effects of modern climate change.

The study, recently published in the journal Nature Geoscience, was jointly conducted by researchers from Peking University, Pennsylvania State University, University of California, Riverside, and other institutes.

The team reconstructed the state of ocean acidification

during the Paleocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum (PETM), a climate event marked by a significant rise in global temperatures and a major disruption to ecosystems. The study found striking parallels between ocean acidification during the PETM and current trends caused by rising atmospheric carbon dioxide.

During the PETM, a surge in carbon emissions caused ocean pH to decline sharply, reducing the availability of carbonate ions needed by marine

organisms to form shells — a critical component of carbon storage in oceans.

Using paleoclimate data assimilation, which combines proxy records with Earth system model simulations, the researchers reconstructed changes in ocean carbonate chemistry. They estimated that atmospheric carbon dioxide levels rose from 890 parts per million (ppm) to 1,980 ppm during the PETM, accompanied by an average ocean pH decline of 0.46 units.

"These findings offer a clear warning for the future," said Li Mingsong, a professor at Peking University, adding that the decline in ocean pH during the PETM closely resembles modern projections under high-emissions scenarios.

Li noted that the current carbon emission rate is much faster than during the PETM, posing a severe threat to marine ecosystems and biodiversity.

"The PETM, which lasted about 200,000 years, provides a natural analog for what un-

checked carbon emissions could do today," Li said. "The accelerated emissions we face today present an even greater, long-term threat to marine life, particularly in vulnerable regions like the Arctic."

The findings underscore the enduring consequences of elevated carbon emissions and highlight the urgent need for climate action to protect ocean health and global biodiversity, according to the researchers.

SOURCE: Xinhua



# NATIONAL

## Myanmar, China to advance energy cooperation

UNION Minister for Energy U Ko Ko Lwin, accompanied by Deputy Minister U Thant Sin and officials, received President Mr Wang Qiang of the South-East Asia Crude Oil Pipeline and Gas Pipeline Company Limited at the Ministry yesterday evening.

During the meeting, the two parties discussed prompt initiation of feasibility studies for rapid implementation of the project to construct an LNG Terminal in Myanmar to produce natural gas and share between the two countries, upgrading the pipeline running to Kunming to transport gas to Chongqing and enhancement of bilateral cooperation in the energy sector, including the upgrading of oil refineries by processing the crude oil from the Myanmar-China crude oil pipeline. — MNA/KTZH



The discussion between Myanmar and China underway to enhance energy cooperation, attended by Union Minister U Ko Ko Lwin yesterday.

## Thakayta Crocodile Farm reopens with educational tours and conservation efforts



Photos show visitors observing crocodiles in the pond (left) and a demonstration of a baby crocodile (above). **PHOTO: ZWE MARN**

THERE are nine genera and 28 species of crocodiles worldwide, some of which are now extinct. Among the four species found in Myanmar, one, the saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*), is bred at the Thakayta Crocodile Farm in the Industrial Zone of Thakayta Township, Yangon. The farm is open to domestic and international tourists for educational tours daily.

The Thakayta Crocodile Farm was closed during the COVID-19 pandemic but reopened on 29 October 2024. Since then, both local and foreign tourists have been visiting the farm.

“Although the farm has only recently reopened, we’ve seen a steady stream of tourists, including some foreigners, to study. Our staff provides daily services, including showing visitors the crocodiles, feeding them as part of a charity initiative, and ensuring the safety of all visitors. We tend to see more tourists during holidays. For instance, a Russian tourist visited yesterday. We even have foreign tourists visiting when the farm is technically closed, so we’ve ensured everything is prepared for both domestic and international visitors during the tourist season. We welcome everyone to come and see the saltwater crocodiles, *Crocodylus porosus*, which are released into the natural water from hatching,” said Daw Myat Khine Mar, Deputy Director in charge of the Crocodile Farm and the Water Quality Inspection and Freshwater Research Branch.

The Thakayta Crocodile Farm is a popular destination for local and foreign tourists. Chinese visitors particularly regard crocodiles as a symbol of good luck. The entrance fee is

K5,000 for foreign visitor; K1,000 for Myanmar adult, and free for under-five children.

Saltwater is crucial for the survival of crocodiles, especially for raising them from eggs to hatchlings. The farm has several breeding tanks: Tank 1 houses crocodiles measuring one to three feet, Tank 2 holds crocodiles measuring four to six feet, and Tank 3 is home to crocodiles over seven feet long. A female crocodile typically lays between 20 and 70 eggs. By 2024, the farm had raised 631 crocodiles, including nine hatchlings, and currently houses 622 adult crocodiles. The farm’s largest saltwater crocodile ‘Ngamoeyek’ is on the endangered species list under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). — Thitsa (MNA)/TKO

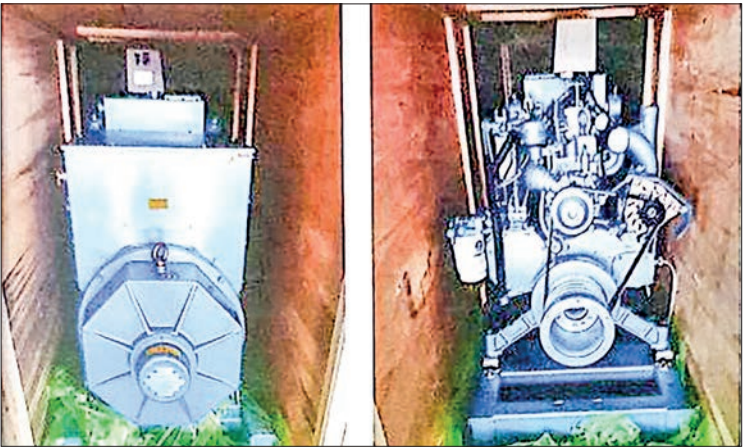
## 3-day illegal trade crackdown confiscates goods worth K274M

UNDER the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, efforts to combat the illicit trade are continued effectively by the law.

On 19 and 20 December, the combined teams impounded an unregistered motorbike worth K400,000 in Maubin Township, six unregistered motorbikes valued at K2.9 million in Hinthada, Myaungmya and Maubin Townships, industrial materials and consumer goods valued at K258.07 million without official documents from 11 containers at the Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint. The action was conducted under the Export-Import Law and Customs procedures.

On 22 December, 28.482 tonnes of illegal teak worth K12.71 million was impounded in Ottarathiri Township. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

The Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee reported 13 arrests on 19, 20 and 22 December, seizing illegal goods worth approximately K274 million. — MNA/MKKS



Confiscated illegal items at Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint.

### Gold Market Rate as of 23 December 2024

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with a density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K5,240,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.



New bridge holidays boost tourism and travel

THE new five-day bridge holidays recently declared can improve tourism and increase domestic and international travel, as hotels in popular tourist destinations are fully booked, said U Naung Naung Han, chairman of and increase domestic and international travel, as hotels in popular tourist destinations are the Myanmar Tourism Entrepreneurs Association.

These bridge holidays have made it more convenient for employees and private businesses to make local and outbound trips.

“The five-day long holiday has made it better for tourism. For employees and private businesses, it is good for four or five days long local and outbound trips. Some plan for outbound tours,” he said.

For coming long holidays,



This image depicts the sceneries of the Inlay Lake in southern Shan State.

hotels in popular destinations such as Mandalay, Bagan-NyaungU-Popa, Shan State – Kalaw, Taunggyi, Inlay – and PyinOoLwin, Kyaiktiyo, Hpa-an, Chaungtha, and Ngwehsaung are almost

fully booked, with only one or two rooms left.

“There are many tours to

various regions. As far as we know, almost every hotel in popular destinations is fully booked, including Shan State, Bagan, Chaungtha and Ngwehsaung. There are only one or two rooms left in many hotels, “ he said.

In addition to promoting existing cultural and pagoda festivals, new destinations should be developed and invested to attract tourists, he advised.

“There are some local promotions by tour management organizations in areas such as Pyay and Bago Region. Activities like flower festivals can attract public interest. Existing cultural and pagoda festivals in respective regions should be promoted. If new fairs are developed in coordination with the relevant local authorities, more tourists can visit,” he said. — MT/ZN

Counter-argument to false information

Prison staff accused of extorting money

KHIT Thit Media spread false information, claiming that, the staff of Hinthada prison beat the prisoners when they sold the betel quid containing drugs and asked for money from them.

Moreover, the social engagement between the prison officer and staff mentioned by Khit Thit Media was invalid, and the prison officer is now living with his wife peacefully.

The prison officer set strict

rules not to extort money from the prisoners and their family members, and the assistant supervisor 1 did not ask for money form the prisoners. He checked the new prisoners with the data and accepted them systematically.

Similarly, the prison gatekeeper also inspected the entrance to curb the drug arrival into the prison and also allowed one family member of prisoners to meet the prisoners once a

month for 20 minutes, and did not ask for money unlawfully.

The Hinthada prison officials also fed the prisoners with fixed food items, like meat dishes four times a week and cleaned the water tanks once a week. The Khit Thit Media intentionally spread false news, claiming that prisoners are suffering from unbearable itching for dirty water. All the news presented by Khit Thit Media is invalid. – Thitsa/KTZH



This picture captures visitors arriving the Mount Taungwine on a December weekend.

Mawlamyine’s Taungwine sees 2,000 weekend visitors, larger crowds expected during holidays

DURING the trekking season of Mount Taungwine located in Mawlamyine resumed in December, the arrival of walkers and pilgrims has reached even over 2,000 on weekends, according to the Sasananwe Foundation.

On 21 and 22 December, there were 1,200 and 2,000 walkers respectively and around 1,500 on some days. It is expected that the visitor arrival will be larger during coming long holidays, said residents.

“Taungwine is like Manda-

lay Hill. We can view our town, Mawlamyine from the top of Mount Taungwine so people enjoy visiting here. The trekking path is crowded from 5 am,” said a resident.

Recently, the weather has become cold at the foot of the mountain and walkers are advised to get dressed warmly. The three-month trekking and pilgrimage season, which is designated in December, January and February, started on 1 December, said the Sasananwe Foundation. — MT/ZS

False claims of injuries in Intine Village bombing dismissed

REPORTS claiming that security forces bombed Intine Village in Butalin Township, Sagaing Region, injuring two civilians, including an eight-year-old child, have been found false.

According to officials, no such incident occurred. Security forces clarified that any action is based on thorough investigation and technological assessments, particularly when reports suggest insur-

gents hide in villages. They stated that terrorists often use drones and heavy weapons to threaten non-supportive communities.

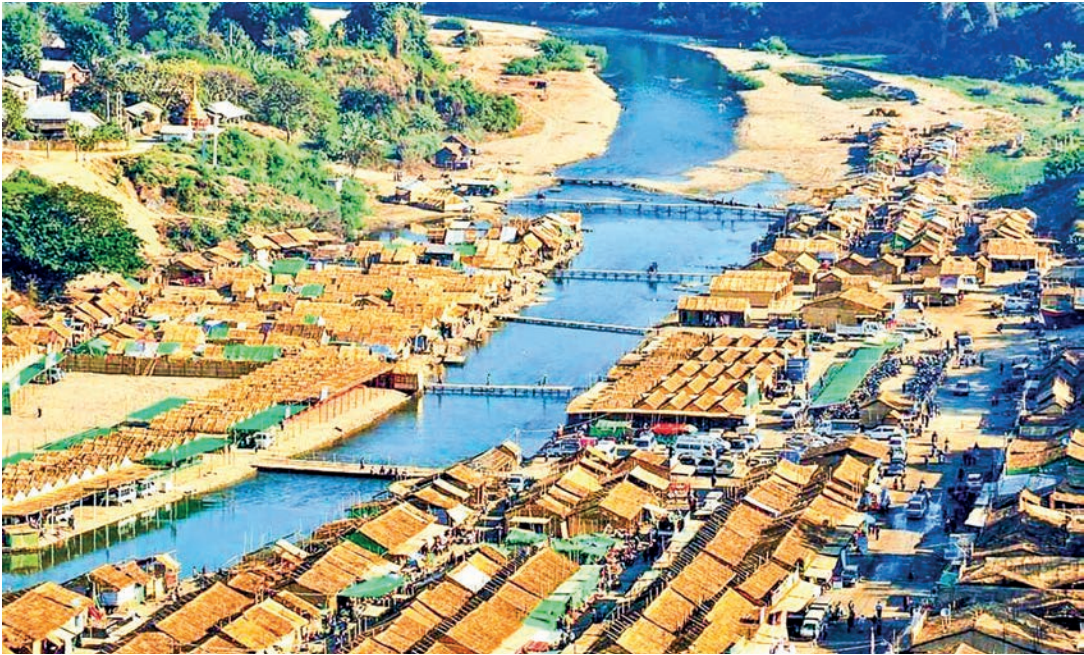
The false news, reportedly spread by malicious media, aims to distort public perception of security forces while covering up terrorists activities. Authorities confirmed the information was fabricated and lacked any basis. — MNA/KZL



This screenshot validates false claims



# NATIONAL



This photo showcases an aerial view of the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival.

## Mann Shwesettaw to host Buddha Pujaniya from 2 Feb

ACCORDING to a source close to the pagoda’s board of trustees, the Buddha Pujaniya Festival at the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda will take place from 2 February to 17 April, lasting 75 days.

Around 1,000 lodging huts and 500 food stalls are typically

set up annually for the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival. The festival sees its largest crowds on Saturdays, Sundays, the full moon day of Taboung, and during the Thingyan festival. Approximately 800 huts and 400 food stalls will be constructed to accommodate domestic

pilgrims this year. Pilgrims will be allowed to stay overnight during the festival.

Additionally, the Shwesettaw Mann Creek Recreation Camp, which includes an elephant museum, will be open alongside the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda Festival. — ASH/MKKS

## Kayin State prepares for second Kayin New Year celebration in 2024

PREPARATIONS are in progress in Hpa-an, Kayin State, for the Kayin New Year celebration, scheduled for 30 December 2024, which coincides with the first waxing of Pyatho.

The first waxing day of Pyatho in the Myanmar lunar calendar marks the Kayin New Year. This year, 11 January also fell on the first waxing day of Pyatho, making the upcoming celebration the second Kayin New Year in 2024.

“According to the Myanmar calendar, this rare occurrence happens every four or five years. During the last New Year, a large

frog drum and a buffalo horn sculpture were crafted in the field of Taungkalay. This year, preparations are underway to create a large Kayin national flag,” shared a resident of Taungkalay village in Hpa-an Township.

At the upcoming Kayin New Year festival, food will be served to attendees of the unveiling ceremony for the ‘Kayin National Flag.’ Additionally, sports competitions and traditional Don Yein dance contests will take place across Kayin State on Monday, 30 December, to celebrate Kayin New Year 2764. — ASH/TKO

This image captures the Kayin New Year Celebration in 2023.



## Academy Award receptionist finalists to be announced on 25 Dec

THE second round of selection for the 2024 Myanmar Academy Awards receptionists concluded on 22 December, narrowing down 90 candidates from the preliminary stage. The finalists for the final round will be announced on 25 December.

The initial interviews for the receptionist positions were held on 15 December, where 90 participants were shortlisted from over 280 applicants.

“The second round has been completed, and we will announce the finalists on 25 December. Each year, the selection process

faces its challenges, but the judges remain impartial, awarding points based on merit. Selecting only around 20 finalists from over 200 candidates is a difficult task,” said Vice-Chair U Aye Kyu Lay of the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization.

The judging panel for the selection includes renowned Academy Award winners such as Yan Aung, Ye Aung, Soe Myat Thu Zar, May Than Nu, and other senior artists. The 2024 Myanmar Academy Awards event is set to occur in February 2025. — ASH/TRKM



This photo shows the second-round preliminary interviews for the selection of receptionists.

## 16-horse-drawn carriage of King Bayintnaung at Kanbawzathadi Palace recreated



This image reveals the structure of a 16-horse-drawn carriage of King Bayintnaung.

THE Bago Region government stated that a 16-horse-drawn carriage of King Bayintnaung was reconstructed by preserving historical significance in

its original size to be placed at Kanbawzathadi Palace.

The carriage is being built splendidly in Maekon village in Bago Region by preserving

cultural heritage artefacts, authenticity and integrity of that historical carriage used by the renowned Myanmar King Bayintnaung who established the Second Myanmar Empire in Hanthawady Capital in AD 1566.

The carriage from shaft tip to tail board is 28 feet and five inches long. The coach’s body is 13 feet and seven inches long, six feet and nine inches wide and 19 feet and two inches high. Inside the coach, it expands five feet and eight inches from foot-rest to ceiling, the length is five feet and seven inches and the width is four feet and six inches. The wheel is four feet and two inches in diameter. — ASH/KK

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



# Japan to order Google to stop violating antitrust law

JAPAN'S competition watchdog plans to order US IT giant Google to halt violations of the country's antitrust law, sources familiar with the matter said Sunday.

The watchdog suspects that Google has unfairly pressured smartphone manufacturers to pre-install its search app, the sources added.

The Japan Fair Trade Commission determined that Google, which holds a dominant share of the on-line search market, has unfairly hindered competition, according to the sources.

The watchdog has already notified the company of possible disciplinary measures and will decide on them after hearing its response, they said.

Google allegedly requires smartphone manufacturers using its Android operating system to pre-install Google apps, including the Chrome browser, as a condition for offering the Google Play Store, the sources said. — Kyodo



File photo taken in October 2023 shows the Japan Fair Trade Commission in Tokyo. PHOTO: KYODO

# Global stock markets edge higher as US inflation eases rate fears

GLOBAL stock markets mostly edged higher on Monday as traders welcomed below-forecast US inflation data that raised hopes about the health of the world's biggest economy. A holiday-thinned week got off to a healthy start after last week's sell-off sparked by the US central bank signalling fewer interest rate cuts than had been expected for 2025.

Asian markets followed a strong lead from Wall Street, which rebounded on Friday on the inflation data, with Tokyo and Hong Kong in the green. Shanghai was the sole decliner.

European markets struggled for direction, with London edging up and Paris and Frankfurt remaining flat.

Sharp losses last week were pared back after US inflation data for November came in lower than expected, providing some optimism that policymakers were winning the battle against prices and would have room to keep cutting rates. Still, there remains some trepidation among investors as Donald Trump prepares to return to the White House, pledging to cut taxes, slash regulations and impose tariffs on imports, which some economists warn could reignite inflation. — AFP

# Honda, Nissan aim to merge under holding company in 2026

HONDA Motor Co and Nissan Motor Co said Monday they have agreed to begin talks on merging under a holding company in 2026, which would create the world's third-largest automaker group to compete with US and Chinese electric vehicle manufacturers.

Honda and Nissan, Japan's second — and third-largest automakers by volume, respectively, aim to conclude negotiations in June 2025, while Mitsubishi Motors Corp, Nissan's partner, will decide by the end of next month whether to join the merger, the automakers said. Each company would continue operating under its own brand within the holding company, which would be listed in August 2026. Honda would appoint



(L to R) Makoto Uchida, President and CEO of Nissan motor corporation, Toshihiro Mibe, President and Representative Executive Officer of Honda, and Takao Kato, President and CEO of Mitsubishi Motors stand for a photo call after a joint press conference in Tokyo on 23 December 2024. PHOTO: AFP

the president and a majority of the board members at the new company, they said.

Struggling Nissan will push ahead with its restructuring measures before the two automakers conclude their merger talks, the companies said.

Speaking at a press conference, Honda President Toshihiro Mibe said the merger aims to split hefty development costs and reduce production costs by sharing components. — Kyodo

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We, Shanghai Yuelian Chemical Industry Co.,Ltd, would like to change the Distributor of the following products, from Myanmar Gold Medal Crop Science Co.,Ltd to Agro Hero Crop Science Co.,Ltd. If any object or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, Yangon, from here to next (2) weeks.

No	Trade Name	Active Ingredient Name	Registration Type	Registration Number
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M.V SITC YUANMING VOY.NO. (2416S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SITC YUANMING VOY.NO. (2416S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23-12-2024 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

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Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (V.139N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 24-12-2024 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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# ROLLING UPDATES: WORLD

## Floods, landslides hit Indonesia ahead of year-end holidays



Volunteers carry food aid on a boat as they move through floodwaters after a tidal flood at Muara Angke in Jakarta on 15 December 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

FLOODS and landslides have been hitting several regions in the Southeast Asian archipelago in the past week, as millions of travellers began to hit the road and flock to popular tourist sites for the Christmas and New Year holidays.

More than 55,000 residents living in the region of Barru in the Indonesian province of South Sulawesi have been affected by floods reaching a depth of up to 1.2 metres and landslides in several areas since last week. The country's

National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) also reported that one has been killed in the disaster in the region.

"The flood-affected areas include several villages in seven sub-districts," said Abdul Muhari, BNPB spokesperson,

on Monday, adding that some major roads were closed in landslides, hampering accessibility for those affected residents.

The regional authorities, Muhari said, have conducted emergency response efforts, including providing temporary shelters for those in need.

Meanwhile, in Jakarta, more than 10,000 residents living near the northern coastline have been affected by tidal floods since Friday. The floodwaters reached a depth of up to one metre in some areas, causing traffic and train service disruptions.

The city administration and the central government have been developing more than 20 kilometres of sea dike in the city's northern area in the past few years to prevent coastal flooding.

The tidal flooding has reportedly also hit Banyuwangi in the province of East Java since Sunday, inundating 1,200 homes.

Floods triggered by heavy

rains also hit the country's popular holiday island of Bali, where a number of major roads have been inundated. Some tourists were reportedly evacuated using rescue boats. Local authorities were also forced to carry out suction with water pumps and regulate traffic flow to manage the situation.

Torrential rains continued to hit some regions despite the country's Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency (BMKG) along with relevant stakeholders having carried out weather modification efforts to reduce rain intensity over the past two weeks.

The BMKG has warned that most of Indonesia is entering the rainy season, with rainfall intensity expected to increase by 20 per cent due to a weak La Nina, which typically brings wetter conditions.

The rainy season is projected to peak in late December for most of Sumatra and southern Java, while central and northern Java will likely see the peak in January. — Xinhua

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### New York police arrest man for setting subway rider on fire

POLICE in New York City apprehended a man on Sunday for setting a female subway rider on fire.

The man walked towards the victim and set her on fire at around 7:30 am (1230 GMT) as an F train arrived at the last stop of Coney Island-Stillwell Avenue station, according to New York City Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch in a press conference.

The victim was pronounced dead after the flames were put out. The suspect remained at the scene and sat on a bench outside the train as the victim burned, said Tisch. The arrest was made with tips from other subway riders later Sunday. — Xinhua

#### Panamanian scholars depict Trump's allegation about Panama Canal as "ridiculous"

PANAMANIAN scholars depicted as "ridiculous" US President-elect Donald Trump's threat on Saturday to take back the Panama Canal.

Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform that the Panama Canal plays a "critical role" in the US economy and national security. He demanded Panama reduce fees on the canal or return it to US control.

"It is ridiculous," said Jones Cooper, a professor at the University of Panama. Panama is the rightful owner of the canal, and the United States has no legal basis to reclaim it, he added, noting that the United States profited significantly during its occupation, while Panama gained little in return. — Xinhua

## Netanyahu threatens to "act with force" against Yemen's Houthis

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Sunday that Israel would "act with force" against the Houthi group in Yemen, a day after the group launched a missile towards the Tel Aviv area.

"Just as we acted with force against Iran's (other) allies, we will act against the Houthis," Netanyahu said in a video statement.

He emphasized that Israel was not acting alone, noting that the United States and other nations share the same view with Israel that the Houthis are posing "a threat not only to international shipping but to the global order".

"Hence, we will act with strength, determination, and ingenuity," Netanyahu added. "Even if it takes time, the outcome will be the same as with other terrorist groups."



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks during a press conference in Jerusalem on 9 December 2024. **PHOTO: MAYA ALLERUZZO / POOL / AFP**

A Houthi missile hit a playground and a building in Tel Aviv overnight between Friday and Saturday, injuring 14 people and causing building damage, according to the latest update from Israel's Magen David Adom rescue

service.

The Houthi attack followed a series of Israeli airstrikes on Thursday, which targeted Yemen's capital Sanaa as well as the ports of Hodeidah, As-Salif, and Ras Issa. — Xinhua



SPORTS

MFF Futsal League-1 competition to start on 29 Dec



The previous MFF Futsal League-1 competition is in action. PHOTO:MFF

THE 2024-2025 MFF Futsal League-1 competition will begin on 29 December at the Thuwunna Futsal Ground in Yangon.

The upcoming season of the MFF Futsal League 1 will follow a round-robin format with 10 teams competing. These teams include the current champions VUC, MIU, Futsal Chitthu, MH Dream Team, Generations, YCDC Marga, Winner Soccer, M2K, YRG, and SGF. The first matches on 29 December will feature MIU versus YRG, Futsal Chitthu versus MH Dream Team, VUC versus SGF, Generations versus YCDC Marga, and Winner Soccer versus M2K.

The competition will occur on Sundays and Thursdays, with the first round scheduled from 29 December 2024 to 2 February 2025. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL



Myanmar club Shan United competes in the ASEAN Club Championship. PHOTO:MFF

Shan United set to host two ASEAN Club Championship matches

THE 2024-2025 ASEAN Club Championship group-stage matches will continue in January, with Myanmar club Shan United hosting two games at home.

Shan United will face Malaysia's Terengganu FC on 8 January and Thailand's BG Pathum United on 22 January, both at home. Shan United is scheduled to play a total of five group-stage matches, with two at home and three away. In August and September, they played two away matches, losing to Vietnam's Thanh Hóa FC 3-1 and Indonesia's Makassar FC 4-3. The upcoming home matches will be held at the Thuwunna Youth Training Centre in Yangon.

The competition is divided into two groups of six teams each. After two matches, Group A sees Indonesia's Makassar FC, Thailand's BG Pathum United, and Vietnam's Thanh Hóa FC tied at four points each, Cambodia's Preah Khan Reach Svay Rieng at three points, and Malaysia's Terengganu FC at one point. Shan United has yet to earn a point after two losses.

In Group B, Vietnam's Hanoi FC and Malaysia's Kuala Lumpur City FC lead with six points each. Thailand's Buriram United and Indonesia's Borneo FC follow with three points each, while the Philippines' Kaya FC and Singapore's Lion City Sailors remain without points after two matches.

The group stage is set to conclude in the first week of February. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Atalanta fight back to take top spot in Serie A, Roma hit five

ATALANTA surged back to the top of the Serie A standings with a Charles De Ketelaere-inspired 3-2 win at home to Empoli on Sunday, while inconsistent Roma thrashed Parma 5-0.

De Ketelaere was twice on target for Atalanta in the topsy-turvy encounter — his second goal proving to be the winner with just four minutes left on the clock.

Ademola Lookman was also on the scoresheet to ensure Gian Piero Gasperini's side won their 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive match in the league and leapfrogged Napoli back into top spot for the Christmas period.

"It's been a wonderful year, we're sorry it's ending, let's hope that 2025 will be just as good," Gasperini told DAZN.

"It won't be easy, but beyond the results I'm very happy with the spirit that there is in this team."

The reigning Europa League champions restored their two-point buffer over Napoli, who had moved a point ahead of them following their 2-1 win at Genoa on Saturday.

Lorenzo Colombo gave 11<sup>th</sup>-placed Empoli the lead at the Gewiss Stadium on 13 minutes.

Things got worse for Atalanta when Mateo Retegui, the top scorer in the league, was forced off with a muscular injury in the 21<sup>st</sup> minute — casting a doubt over his availability for coming matches.

But De Ketelaere hit back to level for the Bergamo-based outfit four minutes after the half-hour.

Recently crowned African player of the year, Lookman got his 12<sup>th</sup> goal of the season in all competitions to put Atalanta in front in first-half added time.

Sebastiano Esposito pegged back Atalanta on 57 minutes, converting from the penalty spot.

As the game crept towards a disappointing draw that



Roma's defender 12 Saud Abdulhamid scores his team's second goal during the UEFA Europa League football match between AS Roma and Sporting Braga at the Olympic stadium in Rome, on 12 December 2024. PHOTO:AFP

would have still sent Atalanta back top on goal difference, Belgian midfielder De Ketelaere popped up with his fifth league goal this term in the 86th minute.

The 23-year-old showed skill and composure to glide along the edge of the box until a chance presented itself, and he then fired off a disguised left-footed shot which flashed past the goalkeeper.

"Today we suffered a bit, but always after goals we reacted and tried to win," said De Ketelaere.

"It's December and it's not even over yet, we are happy where we are but every game is difficult and we continue."

**'Real Roma'**

Roma bounced back from last weekend's surprise 2-0 loss at Como, which had left Claudio Ranieri's side within two points of the drop zone, to thump Parma in the Italian capital.

Paulo Dybala hit a brace, with goals also coming from Alexis Saelemaekers, Leandro Paredes and Artem Dovbyk as Roma moved to 10<sup>th</sup> place.

"The most important thing was the points. We had to show that the team seen against Como was not the real Roma, we had to do more," Saelemaekers told DAZN. — AFP





# WORLD

## China's 5G subscriptions surpass 1 billion amid strong uptake

CHINA'S 5G mobile phone subscriptions reached 1.002 billion by the end of November, a milestone in the world's leading telecom market, data from the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) showed Monday.

This figure represents 56 per cent of all mobile phone subscriptions in the country, marking an increase of 9.4 percentage points compared to the end of the previous year. The rapid growth in 5G subscriptions has been supported by massive infrastructure development. MIIT figures show China had deployed about 4.2 million 5G base stations by the end of last month. Earlier this year, industry calculations indicated that China's 5G base stations — the relay point between mobile phones and the larger internet — accounted for more than 60 per cent of the global total, highlighting the country's leading position in 5G deployment worldwide.

China has 29 5G stations per 10,000 people, marking the early completion of a development goal set for the 14<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan period (2021-2025), said Zhang Yunming, vice minister of MIIT, earlier this month.

Zhang said 5G networks now provide comprehensive coverage across China, including key areas such as government service centres, cultural and tourism sites, and major transport routes. The



People visit the exhibition booth of China Telecom during the 2024 World Intelligent Connected Vehicles Conference in Beijing, capital of China, 17 October 2024. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

ministry is also expanding 5G coverage in rural and remote areas. The MIIT and 11 other government departments have jointly issued an upgraded plan for large-scale 5G applications, targeting widespread implementation by end-2027.

This second "Set Sail" action plan since 2021 emphasizes strengthening 5G applications, particularly in consumer-oriented sectors. It sets 2027 targets, including 38 5G base stations per 10,000 people, a 5G personal user penetration rate exceeding 85 per cent, and 5G net-

work access traffic accounting for over 75 per cent of the total traffic.

China's 5G-led mobile ecosystem created about eight million jobs in 2023, according to a Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA) report. Another industry report estimates that in the five years since 5G's commercial launch in China in 2019, it has directly driven a total economic output of about 5.6 trillion yuan (about US\$767 billion) and indirectly boosted output by around 14 trillion yuan. — Xinhua

## US withdrawal from WHO would be "catastrophic": expert

DONALD Trump's transition team is pushing to pull the United States out of the World Health Organization (WHO) on the first day of the new administration, according to experts who warn of the "catastrophic" impact it would have on global health, the Financial Times (FT) reported on Sunday.

Members of Trump's team told the experts of their intention to announce a withdrawal from the global health body on the president-elect's 20 January inauguration, the FT said, noting that the departure would remove the WHO's biggest source of funds, damaging its ability to respond to public health crises such as the coronavirus pandemic.

US's plan to withdraw "on day one" would be "catastrophic" for global health, the FT quoted Lawrence Gostin, professor of global health at Georgetown Law, as saying.

Gostin said there would be "very lean years for the WHO where it will struggle to respond to health emergencies and will have to reduce its scientific staff considerably". — Xinhua

## Putin and Fico discuss Ukraine, bilateral ties, and gas in Moscow

SLOVAK Prime Minister Robert Fico said that he had discussed with Russian President Vladimir Putin the situation in Ukraine and the possibilities for resolving the conflict, as well as relations between Russia and Slovakia.

"In a long conversation, Vladimir Putin and I exchanged views on the military situation in Ukraine and the possibilities for a early peaceful end to the war and on relations between Slovakia and Russia, which I intend to standardize," Fico said

on Facebook.

According to Fico, this will also be helped by events related to the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II and the victory over fascism, "where the decisive role was played by Russians, Belarusians, Ukrainians and other peoples of the former USSR".

The prime minister also noted that President Putin had confirmed Russia's readiness to continue supplying gas to the West. — SPUTNIK



Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico during their meeting at the Moscow Kremlin, 25 August 2016. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**