

Manufacturing sector draws over 22% of domestic investments



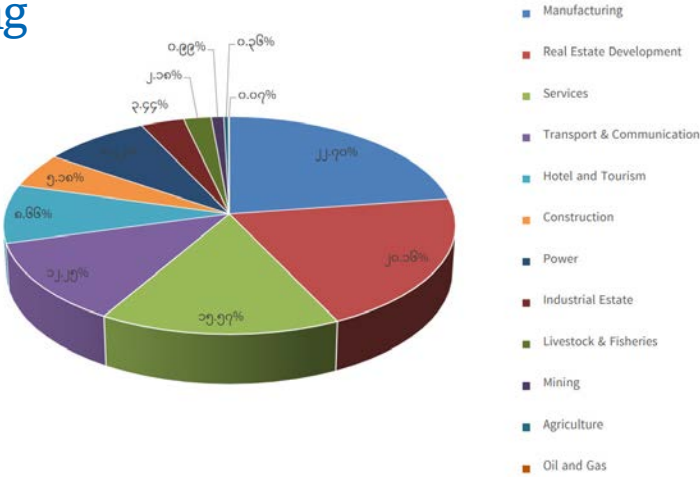
Female workers skilfully process garments at a CMP (cut, make, and pack) facility.

There are a total of 1,702 existing projects invested by Myanmar citizens, pumping in K25,081 billion into 12 sectors, DICA's statistics indicated.

THE manufacturing sector has drawn over 22 per cent of domestic investments as of 31 January 2025, followed by the real estate development sector with over 20 per cent and the services sector with over 15 per cent, according to statistics released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The transport and communications sector attracted over 12 per cent while the hotel and tourism sector received 8.6 per cent. The investments made by Myanmar citizens flowed into the construction, power, industrial estate, livestock and fisheries, mining, agriculture and oil and gas sectors respectively.

There are a total of 1,702 existing



Myanmar citizen investments of existing projects as of 31 January 2025 by Sector. **SOURCE: DICA**

projects invested by Myanmar citizens, pumping in K25,081 billion into 12 sectors, DICA's statistics indicated.

Myanmar Investment Commission ensures responsible businesses by assessing environmental and social impacts. The commission is working together with the relevant departments to screen the projects.

DICA is mandated to realize poten-

tial, facilitate public service and business, promote private sector development and boost domestic and foreign investment by creating a conducive investment climate to meet investment targets with potential businesses, support start-ups, participate in regional and international economic cooperation, enhance institutional frame, organization structure and employee performance. — KK

Boost productivity: Apply for MSME loans now

MSME Development Fund Management Body notified again on 17 February that Micro, Small and Medium Entrepreneurs (MSMEs) can apply for MSME loans at State-owned Myanmar Economic Bank (MEB) and Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank (MADB) and 16 private banks, to expand businesses, purchase equipment and raw materials.

The interest rates for MSME loans are set at three per cent for at least 30 per cent fixed capital, four per cent for 100 per cent working capital and five per cent for Credit Guarantee Insurance-CGI.

MSME entrepreneurs from Nay Pyi Taw, regions and states can apply for MSME loans through the respective MSME agencies.

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273 foreigners arrested for illegal entry into Myanmar

NATIONAL

Agro and Livestock Industries: Driving Regional and National Development

THE growth of agriculture and livestock-based industries plays a crucial role in regional and national development.

(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with Magway Region government and district-level departmental officials on 24 May 2024 to talk about regional development)

Myanmar Gazette

Appointment of Head of Service Organization confirmed

THE State Administration Council has confirmed the appointment of U Kyaw Thet, Director-General of the Department of Mining under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, after the one-year probationary period.

Gold Market Rate as of 17 February 2025

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K5,520,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.

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

A special appeal tribunal consisting of Chief Justice of the Union U Tha Htay and Judges of the Supreme Court of the Union: U Myo Tint, Daw Thin Thin Nwet, Daw Pyone Pyone Aye and Dr Ko Ko Naing was convened Monday morning at

the Supreme Court of the Union and passed judgements for six special civil appeal cases Nos 58/2024 (Yangon), 59/2024 (Yangon), 60/2024 (Yangon), 61/2024 (Yangon) 75/2024 (Yangon) and 77/2024 (Ayeyawady). In addition, a total of four

special appeal cases: one special criminal appeal case — No 15/2024 (Yangon) and three special civil appeal cases — Nos 79/2024 (Mandalay), 81/2024 (Magway) and 82/2024 (Mandalay) were heard. — MNA

Third-day Tatmadaw military band competition in Nay Pyi Taw



The third-day event of the 31st Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, and Air) Military Band Competition to hail the 80th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day underway yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

THE third day of the 31st Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, and Air) Military Band Competition, marking the 80th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day, took

place yesterday morning at the parade ground of Nay Pyi Taw Transit Centre.

In the competition, the Myanmar Police Force band com-

peted in Level A, while Level B featured band (2) from Central Command, band (2) from Triangle Region Command (2), and band (1) from Eastern-Central

Command.

The event was attended by Chairman of the Armed Forces Day Organizing Committee Vice-Adjutant-General Maj-

Gen Tun Myat Shwe, along with senior Tatmadaw and police officers, judges, contestants, and guests. — MNA/MKKS

Boost productivity: Apply for MSME loans now

FROM PAGE 1

The State put K170 billion in the MSME Development Fund and K150 billion will be disbursed for MSMEs. In line with the State Administration Council's economic objectives,

State-owned banks (Myanma Economic Bank and Myanma Agricultural Development Bank) and 15 private banks held a signing ceremony of participation agreement with participating financial institutions (PFI)

regarding loan disbursement on 3 October in MEB (head office) in Nay Pyi Taw, in which K150 billion loan will be disbursed at a cheaper interest rate through PFIs.

The managing director of

Myanma Economic Bank and PFI's representatives signed the participation agreements in the presence of the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the fund management task force.

The officials of the state

banks and representatives of the private banks elaborated on loan term regulation, loan proposals, documents and loan procedures and responded to the questions raised by the attendees during the signing event. — NN/KK

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)

MEB holds 2024-2025FY annual statement closing coord meeting



The 2024-2025 financial year annual statement closing coordination meeting of the Myanmar Economic Bank in progress yesterday, addressed by Deputy PM MoPF Union Minister U Win Shein.

THE 2024-2025 financial year annual statement closing coordination meeting of the Myanmar Economic Bank was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

It was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Union Minister

for Planning and Finance U Win Shein, deputy ministers, departmental heads of the ministry and Central Bank of Myanmar, managers of region and state Myanmar Economic Banks and district branches.

In his speech, the Union minister said the Myanmar Economic Bank is a reliable state-owned bank for the people and the managers should supervise to ensure the increase in deposits of people, to grant quality loans

using the deposits in line with the banking rules and procedures and to be systematic with loan usage. Moreover, they should make efforts to ensure loans are repaid within the designated period and reduce the outstanding

loan amount. The Internal Audit Department also should scrutinize all the branches regularly to supervise the banking services promptly and conduct an off-site scrutinizing system for the branches in remote areas aiming at preventing financial fraud and misuse in time.

He then urged all those concerned to conduct public awareness programmes about modern banking services for the people to be more familiar with the banks and actively participate in banking activities with trust.

Myanmar Economic Bank organizes the annual statement closing coordination meeting for every financial year. The bank will organize this year's ceremony jointly with the Central Bank of Myanmar including paper-reading sessions and discussions until 21 February. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar, China, Thailand discuss transfer of detained foreigners

THE Myanmar government investigated those who entered the country via land borders passing through some neighbouring countries including Thailand and committed on-line gambling, telecom fraud and destructive elements in the Myawady-Shwe Kokko and KK Park areas in Kayin State. During the operation, the government exposed 1,303 foreigners from 30 January to 17 February 2025, and the authorities managed to transfer them to their respective countries under the law.

Deputy Minister for Home

Affairs Maj-Gen Aung Kyaw Kyaw who is also a member of the Central Committee for the Supervision of Deportation and Transfer of Detained Foreigners for Illegal Entry into Myanmar, Chinese Assistant Minister for Public Security Mr Liu Zhong Yi and General Secretary General Trisak Indarusmi of Thai Ministry of Defence and relevant officials arrived in Myawady yesterday.

The three parties observed the detention of foreigners who illegally entered the Myawady-Shwe Kokko and KK Park areas, their data and compiling of

records.

The three representatives held a coordination meeting in Myawady and discussed the preventive system for telecom fraud between the three countries, the eradication of telecom fraud zones in Myawady and the transfer of those involved in telecom fraud to their respective countries.

The government is actively exposing telecom fraud and cracking down on online gambling by cooperating with international organizations including the neighbouring countries. — MNA/KTZH



The discussion between Myanmar, China and Thailand underway for expedite transfer of foreign entrants.

NATIONAL

Myanmar participates in 9th Global Business Summit in India



Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw attends the ninth Global Business Summit on 15-16 February in India.

THE Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Dr Kan Zaw attended the ninth Global Business Summit (GBS) on 15-16 February in New Delhi, India, at the invitation of the Times Group of India.

The GBS aims to provide solutions to key economic challenges and opportunities, explore sustainable economic growth and improve technologies and digitalization.

In the first-day meeting, the Union minister participated as a panellist in the "Global Cooperation in a Polarized World" discussion together with the Economic and Industrial min-

ister and the deputy minister of Albania and Sri Lanka.

The Union minister discussed the current global economic status, potential economic policies to be changed, investment promotion measures of Myanmar and invitation to investors to the country.

In the evening, the Union minister-led delegation attended the ceremony where Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi revealed the economic strategies of India, greeted the attendees and joined the dinner event.

The Myanmar delegation also attended the second-day session of the summit.

During the discussion, in-

ternational experts, well-known persons and world business leaders actively discussed the emergence of industry 5.0 agenda through the survival during the global economic crisis, global financial policy changes, energy security and future job opportunities.

The two-day summit was attended by the Indian Prime Minister, cabinet members, international representatives, policymakers, and industry pioneers, representatives from over 20 countries, totalling more than 2,000 participants.

The Myanmar delegation arrived back in Yangon yesterday afternoon. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar Tourism Bank, Nay Pyi Taw private schools sign MoU

MYANMAR Tourism Bank (MTB) announced that the MTB and Nay Pyi Taw Private Schools Association (NPSA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The bank said it was inked on 15 February at Excel Capital Hotel (Jade Room) in Dekkhinathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw.

For mutual benefits, the MTB is committed to providing financial facilities and lending services to the members of the NPSA to facilitate their future

success and their activities in a timely and efficient manner. At the same time, the NPSA intends to provide payroll services and open bank accounts for employees, in line with its objectives.

At the ceremony, MTB CEO U Win Lwin and NPSA Chair U Kaung Htet Aung signed the MoU, and MTB Executive Director Daw Theingi Lin and NPSA Secretary U Aung Khaing witnessed the signing. — MT/ZN



This image depicts the MTB and NPSA signing the MoU.

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Types of smog.

Meteorologist seeks Myanmar experts to name severe smog

METEOROLOGIST U Win Naing requested Myanmar literature experts to help invent a new Myanmar term for a type of intense air pollution, smog which is associated with air pollution.

Smog, a combination of smoke and fog, is a weather phenomenon

and was first coined as a type of intense air pollution in the 20th century.

Smog is identified containing ground-level ozone, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and carbon monoxide which are harmful to people with emphysema bronchitis and asthma, he said.

It is more dangerous if the smog occurs near crowded roads or factories and it is bigger than the smoke produced from crop burning, he said.

Foggy weather has happened from light to intense in some regions and states. — Htun Htun/ZS

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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.

People’s Military Service Training 10 begins across various commands

THE opening ceremonies for the People’s Military Service Training 10 were held at various military commands yesterday. Citizens who met the necessary qualifications attended training depots in their respective regions to participate in this course. The commandants of training depots gave opening speeches.

The Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, region and state

chief ministers, commanders, and relevant officials attended the events, greeted trainees and presented cash prizes and materials to them.

The People’s Military Service Law was enacted as every citizen is under a duty to safeguard Our Three Main National Causes: Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of national solidarity and Perpetuation of sovereignty. The People’s



The opening event of the People's Military Service Training 10 in progress yesterday.

Military Service Law was enacted on 10 February 2024 aiming to conduct military training courses. The first intake commenced

on 8 April 2024, and the tenth intake is now underway. Those who have completed the People’s Military Training are cur-

rently serving in various military units, fulfilling their responsibilities for national defence and security. — MNA/KTZH



This photo shows deck cadets receiving completion certificates for a basic training course on 3 February.

Youth eyeing seafaring careers warned of scams

YOUNG people are becoming more interested in seafaring, but there are many scams awaiting them, warned Captain Soe Min Aung, President of the Myanmar Seafarers Federation (MSF).

Currently, more people have moved from migrant jobs to seafaring and fallen victim to cheating according to the complaints received by the MSF, so young people need to be especially careful, he added.

“In the past, very few people knew about the sailors. But, recently some people chose to work as seafarers rather than going to work on land as migrant workers, thinking it might be easier to go abroad. As more and more migrant workers are changing jobs, they are seen as victims by scammers. There are many scam complaints to MSF,” he said.

For a seafarer to board a

ship, he must first comply with the procedures set by the State and the International Maritime Organization, and only after completing the training and required skills, he can apply for a seafarer’s passport and registration. Therefore, would-be-seafarers are advised to work within the rules and regulations, and if they have any questions or concerns, they can feel free to contact the MSF at any time, he said. — MT/ZN

Myanmar govt aids citizen repatriation from abroad

THE Myanmar government places great importance on the well-being of its citizens residing overseas and remains committed to ensuring their safe and timely return in times of difficulty, regardless of the circumstances. To facilitate this, the Myanmar Consulate-General and Embassy work closely with relevant embassies and ministries to coordinate the repatriation process.

As part of these efforts, the Myanmar Consulate-General in Oman collaborated with authorities in Oman to assist in the repatriation of Ma Ei Thanda Aung, a Myanmar national who faced difficulties while working in Oman. She departed in Mus-

cat in Oman at 9:05 am (local time) on 16 February on a Muscat-Bangkok-Yangon flight and arrived in Yangon at 12:15 am on 17 February (local time).

The Myanmar Consulate-General continues to assist Myanmar nationals in Oman who are experiencing hardships, ensuring their safe return home. The Myanmar government, through its consulates and embassies, remains dedicated to supporting its citizens abroad in times of need. Workers and their families have expressed their sincere gratitude to the government, the Myanmar Consulate-General, and the Myanmar Embassy for their assistance. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/MKKS



Ma Ei Thanda Aung. PHOTO: KANU

NATIONAL

Veteran scriptwriter receives medical aid



This photo depicts the donation through the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization (MMPO).

VETERAN scriptwriter U Chit Than Myint has received a donation of K100,000 from Dr Aung Moe through the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization (MMPO) for his medical treatment, according to MMPO Vice-Chair U Aye Kyu Lay.

U Chit Than Myint, aged 96, resides in Thanlyin Township, Yangon Region, and is currently undergoing medical treatment for age-related illnesses.

Speaking about the donation, U Aye Kyu Lay stated,

“Dr Aung Moe donated K100,000 through our organization to support U Chit Than Myint’s medical expenses. We delivered the donation to him. He fell while standing up after saying his prayers, injuring his back. Since then, he has been unable to sit or walk and is receiving treatment at home.”

In addition to the K100,000 from the MMPO, the Myanmar Scriptwriters’ Welfare Association has also contributed K50,000 to assist with his

treatment.

U Chit Than Myint is a renowned scriptwriter and author of numerous scripts and short stories. In 1995, during the Myanmar Motion Pictures Diamond Jubilee, he served as the Chairman of the Myanmar Film History Compilation Committee. He also contributed to the publication of the books – History of Myanmar Cinema (Silver Jubilee) and History of Myanmar Cinema (Golden Jubilee). — ASH/MKKS

FDA warns of unregistered oxytocin drugs in market

FOOD and Drug Administration has warned of unregistered oxytocin tablets which have no guarantee of quality and how much it effects or harmful substances.

It has carried out regular checks on the pharmaceutical market and low-quality unregistered drugs are found selling in the market, so the public should be cautious and do not use them, FDA said in a statement on 17 February.

FDA has made public drug photos to help people to distinguish what is registered and what are unregistered and the statement stipulated four oxytocin brands which are unofficially imported and written in Pakistan, said the statement.

It said oxytocin USP is an officially registered drug featuring a Myanmar registration number and written in English. — MT/ZS



This image showcases FDA-registered drugs and unregistered drugs.

April Nat-Test applications now open

ACCEPTING of application forms for the Nat-Test scheduled on 6 April has been open now, the Nat-Test Centre in Yangon announced.

This is the test for N2, N3, N4 and N5 and the deadline is 14 March, it said.

Application forms can be downloaded at <http://yangon.nattest.jp/Yangon%20Nat-Test%20Forms%202022.pdf> Print and filled handwriting in printed form as the same as a simple template. A copy of the citizenship scrutiny card (CSC) and two 30-40 millimetres colour photos on a white background (size must be accurate and must be clear image) are required. The examination fee is K72000.

Enquiries about more information can be made at the office located at Anawrahta Housing, Hledan in Kamayut Township and the phone number is 09 789885510. — MT/ZS



This image discloses the requirements for Nat-Test.

Weather

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 17 February 2025)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 18 February 2025: Light rain are likely to be isolated in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is 60 per cnet. Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing Region and Kayin, Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated light rain in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Chin and northern Shan States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 18 February 2025: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 18 February 2025: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 18 February 2025: Generally fair weather. — DMH

COVID-19 report, 17 February 2025	NEW TESTS 2,543	NEW CASE NIL	CASUALTIES NIL
Myanmar National Centre for Diseases Control Department of Public Health			

Hinthada farmers profit from turmeric roots

THE farmers say that turmeric roots, which are used as a mosquito repellent, are a good sale item for them.

“It is good for the farmers. It is easy to deliver. We dig and sell them by ourselves without brokers. It is not bad. There is already a market for it, so it is good for the farmers and we can grow it on a small scale,” said a turmeric farmer in Hinthada Township.

They will start digging turmeric roots this month, and sell them directly to the Bayintnaung warehouses, without going through brokers.

“We will dig them by the end of this month. Our farmers in Hinthada do not sell turmeric roots to brokers. They sell it di-

rectly at the Bayintnaung market in Yangon. We boil and dry turmeric roots in the sun. It is used as a mosquito repellent,” he added.

Turmeric grows naturally in many parts of Myanmar. It is also cultivated commercially. The turmeric powder is used as a spice, and some use turmeric roots to make mosquito repellents. It grows during the rainy season, blooms in the months of Waso and Wakhaung, and harvested plants are sold as turmeric powder or roots. — Thit Taw/ZN

This photo captures turmeric roots before being delivered to the market.



A vendor arranges edible oil for sale in the market.

YGN palm oil wholesale rate falls below K7,000 per viss

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil set for the Yangon market declined to K6,985 per viss this week from 17 to 23 February, down from K7,075 per viss last week ending 16 February, according to the Supervisory Committee on Edible Oil Import and Distribution.

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

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

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 together with the Myanmar Oil Dealers’ Association and the cooking oil importing companies to offer affordable rates of imported palm oil for consumers.

The complaints for overcharging can be lodged over hotline 1535 of the call centre of the Consumers Affairs Department or sent to the Facebook page of the department and the region and state departments concerned.

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

DICA report: 1,500 companies fail to submit AR in Jan 2025

A total of 1,500 companies were struck off the register in January 2025 as they failed to file annual returns (AR) on the online registry system, MyCO, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The DICA notified those companies which failed to file their AR on the MyCO were struck off the register from the date of the directive, under 430 (F) of Myanmar Companies Law, according to the DICA’s notification.

A total of 19,000 companies also failed to submit the AR

in 2024. The registration and re-registration of companies on the MyCO website commenced on 1 August 2018 under the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

All registered companies need to submit AR on the MyCO registry system within two months of incorporation, and at least once every year (not later than one month after the anniversary of the incorporation), according to Section 97 of the law.

Under Section 266 (A) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public companies must submit annual returns and

financial statements (G-5) simultaneously. All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within 28 days of the financial year ending, under Section 53 (A-1) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

As per DICA’s report, thousands of companies were suspended for failing to submit AR forms before the due date. Newly established companies are required to submit ARs within two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns.

DICA has notified that any company which fails to submit its AR within 13 months will be notified of its suspension (I-9A). If it fails to submit the AR within 28 days of receiving the notice, the system will show the company’s status as suspended. Companies can restore their status only after shelling out a fine of K50,000 for the AR fee, K100,000 for restoration of the company on the Register, and K100,000 for late filing of documents, totalling K250,000. According to the DICA notice, if a company fails to restore its status within six months of suspension, the registrar will strike its name from the register. — NN/KK



The facade view of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

OPINION

Bridge the wealth gap to improve socioeconomic conditions

STATISTICS in 2024 showed that 3.6 billion people worldwide – accounting for 40 per cent of the global population – could be earning less than US\$6.85 per day, the poverty line set by the World Bank. According to these statistics, the number of people earning below this threshold has not changed significantly since 1990.

The significant challenge in the 21st-century economy of the world is the widening gap between the rich and the poor. This disparity severely impacts the political, economic, and social life of the people. Economists and scientists note that many countries

As such, authorities in Myanmar must create job opportunities in relevant industries to enable residents to earn an income for their families. Entrepreneurs have to extend their businesses to produce value-added products for the purpose of domestic consumption and exportation while sharing techniques with workers. This will gradually contribute to the improvement of socioeconomic conditions and reduce poverty, helping to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor.

of electricity, access to clean water, and the use of systematic septic facilities to enhance the socioeconomic conditions of the population. However, these individuals remain distant from opportunities to escape poverty due to the impacts of climate change and new threats arising from armed conflicts in different forms.

The fundamental cause of poverty is the stark wealth gap. Some governments attempt to bridge this divide by allocating state funds to assist the poor, increasing taxes on the wealthy, and providing direct and indirect financial aid. While these measures help, long-term solutions require significant investment in education and policies that expand employment opportunities. By focusing on these areas, countries can gradually reduce economic disparity and improve overall living conditions.

As such, authorities in Myanmar must create job opportunities in relevant industries to enable residents to earn an income for their families. Entrepreneurs have to extend their businesses to produce value-added products for the purpose of domestic consumption and exportation while sharing techniques with workers. This will gradually contribute to the improvement of socioeconomic conditions and reduce poverty, helping to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor.

Urgent Artic SOS

By Yin Nwe Ko

AS the world continues to warm, previously overlooked sources of greenhouse gas emissions become significant concerns for scientists and policymakers. One such source is the sediment at the bottom of Arctic lakes, where permafrost thaw is accelerating at far deeper levels than earlier anticipated. The consequences of this thaw could be profound, contributing large quantities of methane and carbon dioxide to the atmosphere and exacerbating the global climate crisis.

The Ancient Landscape of Arctic Permafrost

Arctic permafrost has been a defining feature of the Earth's northernmost regions for hundreds of thousands of years. This frozen soil layer, which remains below 0°C throughout the year, acts as a massive carbon sink, trapping plant material and greenhouse gases. The formation of permafrost and the development of thermokarst lakes are part of a dynamic landscape shaped by geological and climatic processes over millennia.

Thermokarst lakes are formed when ice-rich permafrost thaws, creating depressions that fill with meltwater. These lakes are ubiquitous across the Arctic and vary widely in size and age, some being several hundred years old. As global temperatures rise, the prevalence and expansion of thermokarst lakes are projected to increase, enhancing interactions between water bodies and the underlying permafrost.

Unveiling the Hidden Threat of Deep Permafrost

Recent studies have shifted attention to the deeper realms of Arctic permafrost, uncovering significant new threats. Traditional climate models predominantly account for the thawing within the top three metres of permafrost. However, deep permafrost layers – extending beyond this superficial depth – remain underexplored.

Nancy Freitas and her colleagues at the University of California, Berkeley, set out to bridge this knowledge gap. Their

research, focusing on Alaska's Goldstream Lake sediments, reveals that microbial activity is well underway in deeper, unfrozen sediment cores as far down as 20 meters below the lake bed. This finding is alarming, as it suggests ongoing greenhouse gas emissions from depths previously thought to be inert.

The team scrutinized sediment cores by exposing them to varying temperatures, ranging from 4°C to 20°C. They found a marked increase in greenhouse gas emissions, indicating that as permafrost warms, substantial quantities of carbon dioxide and methane — an incredibly potent greenhouse gas — will be released.

Current Environmental Trends and Impacts

The Arctic is warming at an unprecedented rate, with temperatures increasing more than twice the global average. This phenomenon, known as Arctic amplification, is driving widespread thawing of permafrost landscapes, including both surface and deeper layers. The thawing permafrost not only leads to the release of trapped greenhouse gases but also triggers ground subsidence, infrastructure damage, and changes in hydrology.

The formation and expansion of thermokarst lakes accelerate these processes. Water in thermokarst lakes transmits heat to the underlying permafrost, intensifying the thawing of deep sediments. This is particularly concerning in light of the high organic carbon content found in these deeper layers. Once thawed, microbial decomposition of ancient organic matter becomes a significant source of methane and carbon dioxide emissions.

Additionally, the impact of these emissions is not confined to the Arctic. The release of greenhouse gases from Arctic lakes contributes to the global atmospheric pool, influencing climate patterns worldwide. This adds to the already complex network of climate feedback mechanisms, making it more challenging to



PHOTO: NEW SCIENTIST MAGAZINE

predict and mitigate future climate change impacts.

Future Implications and the Need for Enhanced Research

The revelations from Freitas and her colleagues highlight the urgent necessity for further research into deep permafrost sediments. As current climate models largely overlook these deeper emissions, there is a risk of underestimating the Arctic's contribution to global greenhouse gas levels.

Addressing this gap is crucial for developing more accurate climate models and devising effective mitigation strategies. By better understanding the processes at play, scientists can improve predictions of future climatic shifts and implement measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from thawing permafrost.

One potential avenue of research is the quantification of methane emissions under varying environmental conditions. Given methane's higher potency as a greenhouse gas compared to carbon dioxide, understanding its production and release from deep permafrost is essential for global climate mitigation efforts.

Furthermore, the findings emphasize the interconnected nature of Earth's climatic systems. Emissions released in the Arctic do not remain localized;

they disperse into the global atmosphere, underscoring the need for international cooperation in addressing this pressing issue.

The thawing of deep permafrost beneath Arctic lakes presents a previously underestimated threat to global climate stability. As temperatures rise and permafrost continues to thaw at greater depths, significant quantities of methane and carbon dioxide are likely to be released, exacerbating the already critical challenge of climate change.

The Imperative for Immediate Measures

The alarming revelations about deep permafrost thaw beneath Arctic lakes underscore the need for a concerted and proactive approach from scientists, policymakers, and global leaders. To avert catastrophic consequences for our climate, it is imperative that we implement immediate and targeted measures.

Deepening Our Understanding

Researchers and scientists play a pivotal role in deepening our understanding of permafrost dynamics and their implications for climate change. It is crucial that scientific communities intensify efforts to study deep permafrost layers and assess the full extent of greenhouse gas emissions from these sources.

Enhanced funding for fieldwork, advanced modelling techniques, and collaborative international research initiatives are essential to uncovering the hidden facets of permafrost thaw. By expanding our knowledge base, we can develop more accurate predictive models and devise effective mitigation strategies.

Crafting Robust Policies

Policymakers must recognize the urgency of this issue and craft robust policies aimed at mitigating the release of greenhouse gases from thawing permafrost. This includes integrating findings from the latest scientific research into climate action plans and setting stringent emissions reduction targets. Additionally, investing in sustainable infrastructure and adaptive measures in Arctic regions can help minimize the impact of permafrost thaw on local communities and ecosystems. Policymakers should also advocate for international cooperation to address this global challenge, ensuring that efforts to combat climate change are both comprehensive and inclusive.

Driving Collective Action

Global leaders have a paramount responsibility to drive collective action against the permafrost thaw crisis. This entails fostering international collaboration and committing to ambitious

climate goals in forums such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). By aligning efforts and sharing resources, nations can strengthen their resilience to climate change and support vulnerable Arctic communities. Moreover, global leaders must prioritize funding for research and development, ensuring that innovative technologies and solutions are brought to the forefront of the fight against permafrost thaw.

Building Resilience

Local communities in Arctic regions are on the front lines of permafrost thaw impacts. It is vital that they are empowered with the knowledge and resources to adapt to changing conditions. Community-driven initiatives, supported by government and non-government organizations, can facilitate the development of sustainable practices and infrastructure. By actively participating in monitoring programs and leveraging traditional knowledge, local communities can play a crucial role in mitigating the adverse effects of permafrost thaw and safeguarding their unique environments.

A United Front

The challenge posed by deep permafrost thaw beneath Arctic lakes is formidable, but not insurmountable. Through the combined efforts of scientists, policymakers, global leaders, and local communities, we can mitigate the worst impacts and protect our planet for future generations. Immediate action is essential to address this pressing issue, and by working together, we can ensure a sustainable and resilient future in the face of climate change.

While the current findings shed light on these hidden emissions, they also call for further research to fully grasp the extent of this feedback mechanism. By enhancing our understanding of deep permafrost processes, we can develop more accurate predictive models and implement strategies to mitigate the impact on our planet's climate.

The journey to understanding and mitigating the effects of permafrost thaw is far from over, but with continued research and global cooperation, there is hope for managing this complex and formidable challenge.

Reference: New Scientist

First astronaut with a disability cleared for space station mission

This achievement is seen as a significant cultural shift in how people with disabilities are treated and demonstrates that space travel is possible for individuals with physical disabilities.

THE first-ever astronaut with a physical disability has been cleared for a mission onboard the International Space Station, the European Space Agency announced on Friday.

John McFall, a 43-year-old British surgeon and former Paralympian who lost a leg in a motorbike accident when he was 19, said he was "hugely proud" of clearing the hurdle.

Since announcing McFall as a member of its astronaut reserve in 2022, the European Space Agency (ESA) has been assessing the feasibility of someone with a prosthesis becoming a crew member on a space mission.

On Friday, the ESA announced that McFall had received medical clearance for a long-duration mission onboard the International Space Station (ISS).

McFall emphasised that he was "relatively passive" in the process, and just had to be medically healthy and carry out the required tasks.

"This is way bigger than me — this is a cultural shift," he told an online press conference.

There is no date yet for

when McFall will get his chance to become what the ESA has dubbed the first "parastronaut".

"Now he's an astronaut like everybody else who wants to fly to the space station, waiting for a mission assignment," the ESA's director of human and robotic exploration Daniel Neuenchwander said.

The ESA's announcement comes as diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives have come under attack from the new US administration of Donald Trump.

"We are now entering a world which is changing a bit from a DEI perspective from one of our partners of the International Space Station," Neuenchwander said.

"We will continue with our European values," he emphasised, adding that all ISS partners — which includes the United States — had given McFall medical clearance.

The next phase of the feasibility study will look at some of the hardware needed, including prosthetics, so that McFall can best overcome any additional challenges in space.

SOURCE: AFP



John McFall, right, running in the 2007 Paralympics. He has now been cleared to fly to the ISS. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

ARTICLE

NATIONAL



273 foreigners arrested for illegal entry into Myanmar

THE government is actively cracking down on online gambling and telecom fraud including destructive elements in border areas.

A total of 273 foreigners who illegally entered the Myawady-Shwe Kokko and KK Park areas were arrested yesterday. The three representatives from Myanmar, China and Thailand discussed in Myawady to transfer the detainees to their respective countries.

The combined teams collected the personal data and records, and a total of 1,303 foreigners who illegally entered the country were arrested between 30 January and 17 February 2025. — MNA/KTZH

This photo captures 273 foreign illegal immigrants on 17 February 2025.

K52M in stimulant tablets seized in PyinOoLwin, Loilem

DRUGS were seized in PyinOoLwin and Loilem townships, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

A combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force on 16 February stopped and searched a motorbike driven by Aung Naing Moe at 1:30 pm near Pongon village in PyinOoLwin Township and seized 400 stimulant tablets and 11,400 stimulant tablets from his house, at a total value of K23.6 million.

At 6:15 am on 14 February, the Myanmar Police Force stopped and searched a motorbike driven by Aung Latt near Hotint village in Loilem Township and seized 50,000 stimulant tablets valued at K25 million. In addition, at 3



Photos capture offenders alongside seized stimulant tablets.

pm on 15 February, the Myanmar Police Force stopped and searched a motorbike driven by Than Soe at the same place and seized 7,600 stimulant tablets valued at K3.8 million.

The offenders were prosecuted under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — MNA/MKKS

MSME loans available for application

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

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

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

MSME Development Fund Management Committee

Top websites and web portals to access Military Service Rules

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

Counter-argument to false information

False reports of drone attack in Gangaw circulated



This screenshot reveals fabricated stories.

UNVERIFIED reports from subversive media claim that security forces conducted an unprovoked drone attack on West Gangaw Village, west of Gangaw in Magway Region, resulting in civilian casualties and injuries.

According to a statement from a relevant security official, security forces do not target or attack villages where civilians reside without military justification. The official stated that only terrorist groups carry out attacks using heavy weapons and drones in areas where they lack local support, aiming to instil fear among the population.

Furthermore, pro-terrorist media outlets have been spreading misinformation on social media, using unrelated images to conceal terrorist activities and mislead the public about the actions of security forces. — MNA/MKKS

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanmar Alinn, the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit www.moi.gov.mm/mal, www.moi.gov.mm/km, www.moi.gov.mm/nlm and www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper.

News and Periodicals Enterprise

Chinese animated blockbuster “Ne Zha 2” finishes top five at N American box office on opening weekend

CHINESE animated blockbuster “Ne Zha 2” rounded out the top five at the North American box office on its opening weekend, making it the biggest opening weekend for any Chinese production in recent years.

Data from measurement firm Comscore showed on Sunday that the highly-anticipated film has generated an estimated three-day cume of US\$7.2 million in North America through Sunday.

The animated epic fantasy film’s North American pre-sale box office alone has exceeded the opening weekend box office record in North America for any Chinese-language film in the past 20 years.

Marvel’s “Captain America: Brave New World” debuted atop the North American box office this weekend with an estimated \$88.5 million in 4,105 theaters.

“Ne Zha 2” is being released by CMC Pictures in Mandarin with English subtitles in about 750 selected theatres in North



A moviegoer walks past film posters at a cinema in Jiaxing City, east China’s Zhejiang Province, 3 February 2025. PHOTO BY JIN PENG/XINHUA

American cities including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston, Chicago, New York, Boston, Atlanta, Toronto, Vancouver and a few other cities with a large overseas Chinese population, according to the company.

Paul Dergarabedian, a senior media analyst at Comscore, noted that “Ne Zha 2” is a “global box office juggernaut”.

“The widely reported global box office success and amazing reviews of this incredible and beautifully presented animat-

ed film has put it high on the must-see list for movie fans in the North American market and that was reflected in the solid numbers this weekend,” he told Xinhua.

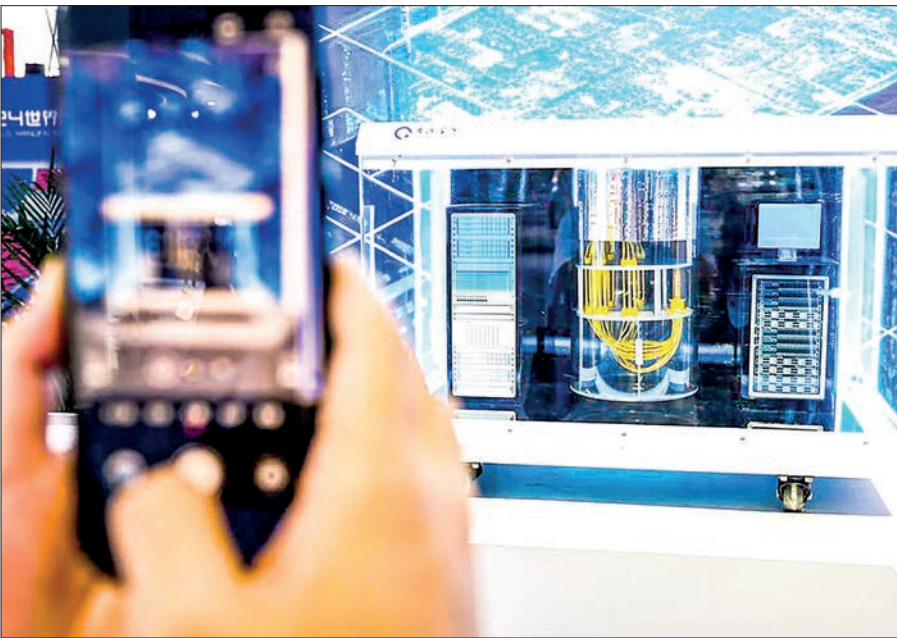
A lady, who gave her name as Emily Li, told Xinhua that she brought her two children to watch the movie.

“Kids love the story. They even watched the original Ne Zha film online in advance for the plot,” she added.

“Ne Zha 2” is a sequel to the 2019 animated blockbuster “Ne Zha”. Both films were inspired by China’s 16th-century classic novel “The Investiture of the Gods”.

The animated film has captivated Chinese audiences with its exquisite animation production, grand visual imagination and rich cultural expression. After opening on 29 January the film swiftly smashed box office records, becoming the highest-grossing film of all time in China. — Xinhua

Chinese superconducting quantum computer receives over 20 million global visits



A visitor takes photos of an Origin Wukong superconducting quantum computer model at the 2024 World Manufacturing Convention in Hefei, east China’s Anhui Province, 20 September, 2024. XINHUA

CHINA’S independently developed third-generation superconducting quantum computer, Origin Wukong, has received more than 20 million remote visits globally, passing an important milestone in the country’s quantum computing development, China Science and Technology Daily has reported.

According to the Anhui Quantum Computing Engineering Research Center, users from 139 countries or regions have accessed Origin Wukong remotely, with the United States, Russia, Japan and Canada showing the highest levels of user activity. Among these countries, the United States is leading in foreign user visits.

Origin Wukong has completed more than 339,000 quantum computing tasks since it went into operation on 6 January 2024, covering a wide range of industries, such as finance and biomedicine.

The quantum computer is powered by Wukong, a 72-qubit indigenous superconducting quantum chip. It is one of the country’s most advanced programmable and deliverable superconducting quantum computers. Wukong’s name was inspired by the mythological Sun Wukong, the legendary Monkey King, who had the ability to transform into 72 different forms, symbolizing the computer’s powerful and versatile capabilities. — Xinhua

Laos to hold Digital Week to drive digital transformation

LAOS’ Ministry of Technology and Communications will host Lao Digital Week 2025 to drive digital transformation, promote the digital economy, and foster technological innovation.

The event is scheduled to take place from 2 to 6 April in the Lao capital Vientiane, under the theme of “Building Resilience and Sustainable Digital Infrastructure for Laos”, Lao Economic Daily reported on Monday. The event will provide a platform to showcase cutting-edge innovations from local and international startups, offering opportunities for digital products to compete in international contests. It will also contribute to the implementation of the Ninth Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan and national digital strategies.

Key activities will include a high-level forum on digital transformation, seminars on artificial intelligence, blockchain, and Industry 4.0, as well as various competitions. — Xinhua

ECONOMY WORLD

China unveils measures to bolster new-type energy storage manufacturing

CHINESE authorities unveiled several measures on Monday to promote the new-type energy storage manufacturing sector, as part of efforts to accelerate the development of emerging industries and the country's modern industrial system.

According to an action plan jointly issued by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology and seven other government organs, the new-type energy storage manufacturing industry refers to the sector that produces energy storage, information processing, safety control, and other products related to new energy storage methods.

By 2027, the sector is expected to demonstrate international competitive advantages across the entire manufacturing chain, with a greater number of leading enterprises, marked improvements in industrial innovation capabilities, and overall competitiveness while also achieving advancements in high-end, intel-



This photo taken on 26 November 2024 shows lithium battery products at the booth of Gotion at the second China International Supply Chain Expo (CISCE) in Beijing, capital of China. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

ligent, and green development, according to the plan.

According to the document, China will launch initiatives to boost technology innovation in the new-type energy storage sector. These initiatives will include

measures to speed up the upgrading of mature technologies such as lithium batteries and support disruptive technological innovations.

The country will also promote coordinated industrial

development. Efforts should be made to strengthen the monitoring and early warning of lithium battery production capacity, prevent reckless investment, and guard against the risk of disorderly development.

The document underlined the importance of supporting upstream and downstream enterprises in the new-type energy storage manufacturing sector to optimize their energy consumption structure, improve energy utilization efficiency, and expand the proportion of renewable energy in the manufacturing process.

Efforts will be made to promote the application of new-generation information technologies such as blockchain, big data, artificial intelligence, and 5G in the new-type energy storage manufacturing sector, according to the document.

To beef up international cooperation in the new-type energy storage sector, China will work to incorporate collaboration in the field into international cooperation mechanisms and frameworks such as the Belt and Road Initiative and BRICS and promote mutually beneficial cooperation on industrial and supply chains. — Xinhua

Sri Lanka eyes 5% growth, FTAs, digital economy in 2025 budget

SRI Lanka is set to expand its free trade agreement network and simplify its import duty structure to help small- and medium-sized enterprises access raw materials more easily, President Anura Kumara Dissanayake announced on Monday while presenting the 2025 budget.

This is the first budget of the National People's Power (NPP) government which was elected to power in 2024.

The president said they expect economic growth of over five per cent real GDP growth over the medium term.

The government expects exports of goods and services to reach an all-time high of about US\$19 billion in 2025 and the growth in non-debt creating inflows along with robust economic growth and a primary budget surplus of 2.3 per cent of GDP will ensure that Sri Lanka is well-placed

to meet the gradual increase in debt service payments from 2028 onwards, he said.

The government will formulate the national export development plan (2025-2029) to increase Sri Lanka's export of goods and services, and micro, small, and medium enterprises will be facilitated to tap new export markets, expand existing markets, or connect in the value chains of large-scale exporters and global value chains, he said.

With the view of removing limitations in access to high-quality, affordable raw materials, new tariff rates will be based on a national tariff policy to create a simple, transparent and predictable tariff framework, the president said.

Sri Lanka's network of free trade agreements (FTAs) with strategic partners, particularly with a view to greater

economic ties with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations will be expanded through the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and other agreements, the president said.

The government aims to grow Sri Lanka's digital economy to a level in excess of \$15 billion or 12 per cent of the national economy over the next five years and the government proposes to allocate three billion rupees (about \$10 million) to bolster the acceleration of digital economy development, he said.

The president said the 2025 budget targets a deficit of 6.7 per cent of GDP, slightly lower than the 6.8 per cent deficit recorded in 2024, adding that the health sector will receive a substantial boost, with a budget allocation of 604 billion rupees (around \$2.04 billion) for 2025. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Japan's economy grows annualized real 2.8% in Oct-Dec

JAPAN'S economy grew an annualized 2.8 per cent in the October-December period of 2024, marking the third straight quarter of expansion on robust corporate spending, but lackluster private consumption underscored the protracted effects of inflation, government data showed Monday.

In 2024, real gross domestic product, which is adjusted for inflation and shows the total value of goods and services produced in a country, grew 0.1 per cent, marking the fourth straight yearly gain.

But the pace of growth slowed sharply from 1.5 per cent in 2023, as Japanese households struggled to cope with the rising cost of living without substantial gains in real wages. — Kyodo

Charter capital of Vietnamese banks increases 15% in 2024

THE total charter capital of 28 banks in Vietnam hit 823.52 trillion Vietnamese dong (US\$33 billion) as of 31 December 2024, an increase of 15.23 per cent compared to the end of 2023, Vietnam News reported Monday.

Of the 28 banks, 16 had a charter capital of more than \$1 billion, one more than in 2023, according to the banks' financial reports.

Up to 20 out of the 28 commercial banks increased their charter capital in 2024. NCB and Techcombank recorded the strongest growth in charter capital compared to 2023, at 110 per cent and 100 per cent, respectively. — Xinhua

Sri Lanka budget banks on car taxes to boost coffers

SRI Lanka is banking on vehicle import taxes to boost revenue and revive the island nation's battered economy, leftist President Anura Kumara Dis-sanayake's maiden budget showed on Monday.

Vehicle imports were banned in 2020 to save foreign exchange but the move deprived authorities of a lucrative revenue stream, as cars were taxed at about 300 per cent.

Dissanayake said the ban's end would bolster state revenue to meet the tax target of 15 per cent



A man watches a live broadcast of Sri Lanka's President, Anura Kumara Dis-sanayake, presenting the 2025 budget to parliament on a mobile phone at a market in Colombo on 17 February 2025. PHOTO: AFP

of GDP, which the country must achieve under the terms of an International Monetary Fund bailout agreement.

"For the year 2025, the bulk of revenue gains is expected to be delivered by the liberalization of motor vehicle imports," the president told parliament.

"This process is being carefully monitored to ensure that the import of vehicles does not result in undue negative impacts on external sector stability."

The budget also doubled the entrance fee of

the island's two casinos to \$100 and raised the turnover tax on gaming establishments to 18 per cent, up from 15 per cent.

The IMF wants Sri Lanka to double its income from taxation compared to the 7.3 per cent of GDP it took in 2022, when the country defaulted on its \$46 billion foreign debt.

That year saw the island run out of foreign exchange to finance the import of food, fuel and other essentials, prompting months of street protests led to the toppling of then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa. — AFP

Baghdad hopes to resume Kurdish oil exports within week: minister

IRAQ'S oil minister said Monday that crude exports from the autonomous Kurdistan region to Turkey should resume within a week, ending two years of wrangling.

Oil exports have been a major point of tension between Baghdad and Arbil, with a major pipeline through Turkey shut since 2023 over legal disputes and technical issues.

"We have agreed" with the autonomous region to receive at least 300,000 barrels per day "to export through the Turkish port

of Ceyhan," Oil Minister Hayan Abdel Ghani told journalists.

A delegation from Baghdad would head to Arbil on Tuesday to "set up a mechanism to receive and export the oil," Abdel Ghani said.

Exports were expected to resume "within a week", he added.

Oil exports were previously independently sold by the Kurdistan region, without the approval or oversight of the central administration in Baghdad, through the port of Ceyhan.

But the region's oil exports have been at a standstill since March 2023 when the arbitration tribunal of the International Chamber of Commerce in Paris ruled oil exports by the regional government illegal.

In its judgement in a case first lodged in 2014, the tribunal ruled that the federal government had the exclusive right to market all Iraqi oil, halting the region's independent exports by pipeline via Turkey.

The federal and regional governments have been haggling ever since

over the production and transport costs payable to the region and its commercial partners.

But in a recent budget amendment, Baghdad agreed to form an independent body to set the cost payments and to pay \$16 a barrel in the meantime.

The Association of the Petroleum Industry of Kurdistan, which represents international oil firms operating in the region, put losses to all parties since the export pipeline closed at \$20 billion. — AFP

Thailand's economic growth quickens to 3.2% in Q4 2024

THAILAND'S economy expanded 3.2 per cent in the final quarter of 2024 from a year earlier, driven by public investment, exports and private consumption, official data showed on Monday.

The country's gross domestic product (GDP) in the October-December period accelerated from a three per cent growth in the previous quarter, marking the strongest increase since the third quarter of 2022, according

to data from the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC).

On a quarterly basis, the GDP grew a seasonally adjusted 0.4 per cent in the fourth quarter of last year, dropping sharply from a 1.2 per cent rise in the previous three months, registering the fourth straight period of growth but the slowest pace in the sequence, the NESDC said in a statement. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SITC WENDE VOY.NO. (2503N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SITC WENDE VOY.NO. (2503N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **17-2-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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.
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V BANGKOK VOY.NO. (204N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BANGKOK VOY.NO. (204N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **18-2-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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.
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V JIN HAI HUA VOY.NO. (105427)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V JIN HAI HUA VOY.NO. (105427)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **19-2-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **TMIT-2** 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.
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CHUN AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS CO LTD

ROLLING UPDATES
WORLD

IDEX 2025 defence exhibition opens in Abu Dhabi, with new Russian weapons expected

ONE of the largest international weapons exhibitions, IDEX 2025, will open on Monday in Abu Dhabi, with Russian manufacturers planning to present “top-end equipment” there, including a number of foreign premiers.

IDEX will be held for the 17th time in 2025. The NAVDEX naval exhibition will be held in parallel for the eighth time. According to the organizers, 1,565 companies from 65 countries will be represented here this year, 41 national pavilions will be organized on the sidelines of the exhibition.

Rostec’s High-Precision Systems, Kalashnikov, Uralvagonzavod and Shvabe will present almost 200 samples of “top military equipment”, Bekkhan Ozdoyev, industrial director of Rostec’s arms, ammunition and special chemicals cluster, told Sputnik.

Rosoboronexport will traditionally act as the organizer of the unified Russian exposition.



Also, the joint Russian stand will showcase the Kornet anti-tank system with a remote control, the Krona-E air defence system, new loitering munitions Kub-2-1E and Kub-2-2E, the Berezhek combat module, and the RPL-7 light machine gun with a belt drive. PHOTO: SPUTNIK

Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov arrived in the UAE to participate in the exhibition, his office reported earlier. It is planned that

he will hold a number of bilateral negotiations here as part of his working trip.

Also, the joint Russian stand will showcase the Kornet an-

ti-tank system with a remote control, the Krona-E air defence system, new loitering munitions Kub-2-1E and Kub-2-2E, the Berezhek combat module, and

the RPL-7 light machine gun with a belt drive. For the first time, new versions of the AK-12 and AK-15 assault rifles will be shown — shortened and compact versions.

The UTS-800 training aircraft and the Forpost-RE combat drone will be presented abroad for the first time at IDEX 2025, Ekaterina Zgirovskaya, a spokeswoman for the Ural Plant of Civil Aviation (UZGA), told Sputnik.

Almaz-Antey Aerospace Defence Concern will showcase the export anti-aircraft missile systems S-300V4 “Antey-4000” and S-350E “Vityaz”, as well as the Viking system, the Komar turret mount for the automated launch of Igla missiles to protect ships and Ataka missiles against ground and surface targets. The concern’s stand will also feature an autonomous combat module of the Tor-M2KM anti-aircraft missile system and various radar systems. — SPUTNIK

AU urges immediate ceasefire in Sudan as humanitarian crisis continues to worsen



Displaced Sudanese, who fled the Zamzam camp, gather near the town of Tawila in North Darfur on 14 February 2025. PHOTO: AFP

THE African Union (AU) on Sunday called on the warring parties in Sudan to enforce an immediate ceasefire and initiate a political transition as the conflict-induced humanitarian crisis continues to worsen.

“Sudan is a full-blown war with the worst humanitarian crisis in Africa, even in the world. We use this opportunity to call

on the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), and their various allies to stop the bloodshed,” Bankole Adeoye, AU commissioner for political affairs, peace and security, told the media Sunday on the sidelines of the 38th AU Summit at its headquarters in Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital.

Adeoye said the worsening humanitarian crisis in Sudan is a cause of serious concern to the 55-member pan-African bloc ever since the conflict erupted in mid-April 2023 between the SAF and the paramilitary RSF.

“We condemn all forms of violations, (including) grave violations against women and children, in Sudan,” Adeoye said.

According to recent estimates by international organizations, the conflict in Sudan has killed more than 28,700 people and displaced over 14 million.

Adeoye noted that despite Sudan remaining suspended from the AU, what is happening in Sudan continues to attract “active attention” among the AU Commission, its Peace and Security Council, as well as all peace-loving actors across Africa and beyond. — Xinhua

News in brief

Romania faces coldest week of winter with heavy snow, freezing temperatures

ROMANIA is experiencing its coldest week of the winter, with heavy snowfall and temperatures dropping as low as minus 20 degrees Celsius, according to meteorologists.

The extreme cold is expected to persist until 24 and 25 February. In the south and southeast, including the capital Bucharest, snow accumulation could reach up to 20 centimetres, while strong winds will make travel difficult. Authorities have issued a yellow weather warning for Calarasi, Constanta, Giurgiu, Ialomita, Ilfov (including Bucharest), and Teleorman.

Elena Mateescu, director general of Romania’s National Meteorological Administration, said Monday that snow will continue in these areas through Tuesday morning. Winds of up to 45 kilometres per hour will cause drifting snow, further complicating conditions. — Xinhua

Avalanche kills 3 in W Afghanistan

THREE persons have lost their lives due to an avalanche in western Afghanistan’s Ghor province, provincial police spokesman Abdul Rahman Badri said Monday.

The natural disaster took place in Anqarchaq village of Pasawand district on Sunday, killing three passersby who were going to the southern Helmand province, the official added.

Police personnel have discovered the bodies of the trio and handed them over to their families, the official said. Similar incidents have claimed the lives of at least five persons in the northern Badakhshan and Faryab provinces over the past couple of weeks. — Xinhua

SPORTS



Myanmar Women's Team wins debut at Four Nations Football Tourney

THE first day of the Four-Nation Invitational Football Tournament hosted by Nepal took place on 17 February. Myanmar won over the opponent Lebanon in its debut.

Myanmar team secured three points in winning the first group match with a 3-1 victory over Lebanon by scoring winning goals in the second half.

Players of Myanmar women's team penetrating Lebanon's side. **PHOTO: ANFA**

The lineup of the Myanmar team comprising goalkeeper Myo Mya Mya Nyein together with May Thet Mon Myint, Yu Yu Naing, Zune Yu Ya Oo, Phyu Phyu Win, Naw Htet Htet Wai, Khin Mo Mo Tun, Yupa Khaing, Sanda Lin and Lin Myintmo led by Captain Win Theingi Tun showed brilliant skills and talent.

As both teams could not utilize their opportunities, the first half of the match ended in a draw. Although Captain Win Theingi Tun scored an opening goal for Myanmar in 57 minutes,

Iskandar of Lebanon equalized it three minutes later. In the remaining minutes, Myanmar women beefed up their tempo. So, Shwe Yi Tun scored one more goal for Myanmar in 72 minutes and San Thaw Thaw netted another goal in 75 minutes. After the match, Phyu Phyu Win of Myanmar won the woman of the match award.

The four-team round-robin format is being initiated. Myanmar will play against Kirgizstan in the second match on 20 February. — Ko Nyi Lay/TTA

Judo: Two-time world champ Maruyama, great rival of Abe, retires

TWO-TIME judo world champion Joshiro Maruyama, a longtime rival of back-to-back Olympic gold medalist Hifumi Abe, announced his retirement Monday.

The pair fought an epic one-off elimination bout in December 2020 to decide who would represent Japan in the men's 66-kilogramme division at the Tokyo Games, with Abe prevailing after 24 gruelling minutes to take his place on the Olympic team alongside sister Uta.

Maruyama was crowned world champion in 2019 and 2021 and finished runner up at the worlds in 2022 and 2023. He missed out on selection for the 2024 Paris Olympics after Abe sealed Japan's 66-kg berth on the way to his second straight gold.

"I started judo at the age of 3 and trained every day with the goal of winning at an Olympic Games," the 31-year-



Joshiro Maruyama. **PHOTO: KYODO**

old Maruyama said in a statement through his corporate sponsor:

"That goal didn't come true, but I was able to fight through even the toughest times thanks to everyone's support."

The Miyazaki Prefecture native was 4-7 in his 11 head-to-head meetings with Abe. — Kyodo

Liverpool made to dig deep in Premier League

LIVERPOOL retained their seven-point lead at the top of the Premier League but were made to work hard for a 2-1 win over Wolverhampton Wanderers on Sunday.

Arne Slot was allowed to be in the Liverpool dugout after his red card at Goodison Park on Wednesday night, and saw his side took a 2-0 lead in the first half, as Luis Diaz chested in a scrappy goal from close range in the 15th minute.

Mohamed Salah doubled Liver-

pool's lead from the penalty spot as Diaz was caught by Wolves goalkeeper Jose Sa in the 37th minute and it looked to be game over.

However, after VAR ruled out a second Liverpool penalty, Matheus Cunha curled in a lovely 67th-minute goal for the visitors, who pushed hard for an equalizer in the last 25 minutes.

The cheers around Anfield at the final whistle showed just how far Wolves pushed the league leaders. — Xinhua

Bayern Munich leans into pragmatism ahead of Champions League clash with Celtic



Bayern Munich's German midfielder (42) Jamal Musiala (3rdL) and teammates attend a training session on the eve of the UEFA Champions League Knockout round play-off second Leg match against Celtic on 17 February 2025 in Munich. **PHOTO: AFP**

AHEAD of Tuesday's UEFA Champions League playoff second leg against Celtic, Bayern Munich's Thomas Müller took on the role of a defence attorney.

The Bavarians faced widespread criticism for their ultra-defensive approach in a goalless draw against Bayer Leverkusen, but Muller defended the team's performance as a masterclass in box defending.

"Call it what you want-masterly or not-it's eight points, and on Tuesday, we have the chance to advance to the next round of the Champions League," Muller said. "Honestly, we don't care about the rest."

While Leverkusen's attacking onslaught included several shots against the bar, Bayern coach Vincent Kompany kept a broader perspective.

Hard work and pragmatism are essential in football, according to Kompany, who appeared to see the match as an important test ahead of Bayern's Champions League campaign. A win over Celtic could set up battles with powerhouses such as Leverkusen or Atletico Madrid in the last 16.

Kompany praised his squad's mentality, saying they executed his tactical plan effectively. "We learn from games like this. The team did what was required-blocking crosses, intercepting passes, and shutting down shots," he said. — Xinhua



Palestinian, French presidents reaffirm support for two-state solution over phone

PALESTINIAN President Mahmoud Abbas and his French counterpart, Emmanuel Macron, held a phone conversation on Sunday, during which the two sides reaffirmed their support for the two-state solution.

Abbas reiterated his absolute rejection of any attempts to annex land and displace Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, which “violate international legitimacy resolutions and international law,” and “undermine the two-state solution and opportunities for peace, security and stability in the region,” the official Palestinian news agency WAFA reported.

The two also discussed the latest developments in Palestinian territories, highlighted the urgent need for humanitarian aid, and stressed the importance of upholding the Gaza ceasefire agreement, ensuring the Palestinian Authority assume responsibility in Gaza, advancing implementing the two-state solution based on international legitimacy, and rebuilding Gaza with Palestinians remaining on their land, among others, WAFA reported.

Abbas briefed Macron on the ongoing preparations for the upcoming Emergency Arab Summit on the Palestinian issue, hosted by Egypt, WAFA reported.

“I reiterated my satisfaction at seeing the first phase of the ceasefire being respected,” Macron wrote on social media platform X following the phone conversation.

He said France is working with regional and global partners towards “a clear objective: defining a credible roadmap for the implementation of the two-state solution — the only way to ensure peace and security for all in the region.” — Xinhua

Xi urges healthy, high-quality development of private sector



Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, also Chinese president and chairman of the Central Military Commission, talks with representatives of private entrepreneurs in Beijing, capital of China, 17 February 2025. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, on Monday urged efforts to promote the healthy and high-quality development of the country’s private sector.

Xi, also Chinese president and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks when attending a symposium on private enterprises, where he delivered an important speech after listening to representatives of private entrepreneurs.

The private sector enjoys broad prospects and great potential on the new journey in the new era. It is a prime time for private enterprises and entrepreneurs to give full play to their capabilities, Xi said.

He urged reaching a consensus and

firming up confidence to promote the healthy and high-quality development of the private sector.

Li Qiang, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Chinese premier, and Ding Xuexiang, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Chinese vice-premier, also attended the symposium.

Wang Huning, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, presided over the symposium.

Huawei’s Ren Zhengfei, BYD’s Wang

Chuanfu, New Hope’s Liu Yonghao, Will Semiconductor’s Yu Renrong, Unitree Robotics’ Wang Xingxing, and Xiaomi’s Lei Jun put forward their opinions and advice on the development of the private sector.

Xi said the Party and the country are committed to unwaveringly consolidating and developing the public sector and unwaveringly encouraging, supporting and guiding the development of the non-public sector.

The Party and the country ensure that economic entities under all forms of ownership have equal access to factors of production in accordance with the law, compete in the market on an equal footing, and are protected by the law as equals, he said. — Xinhua



Elon Musk speaks as US President Donald Trump looks on in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, DC, on 11 February 2025. **PHOTO: AFP**

Musk’s DOGE seeks access to US tax system: reports

ELON Musk’s Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) has sparked alarm by seeking access to a system with the US tax office that has detailed financial data about millions of Americans, US media reported.

Spearheaded by Musk, the world’s richest man, US President Donald Trump has embarked on a campaign to slash public spending deemed wasteful or contrary to his policies.

The Washington Post and others reported that the latest request is for DOGE officials to have broad access to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) systems,

property and datasets.

This includes the Integrated Data Retrieval System (IDRS), access to which is usually extremely limited and which offers “instantaneous visual access to certain taxpayer accounts”, according to the IRS.

As of Sunday evening, the request had not been granted, the reports said.

But it has sparked alarm within the government and among privacy experts who say granting Musk access to private taxpayer data could be extraordinarily dangerous, according to ABC News. — AFP