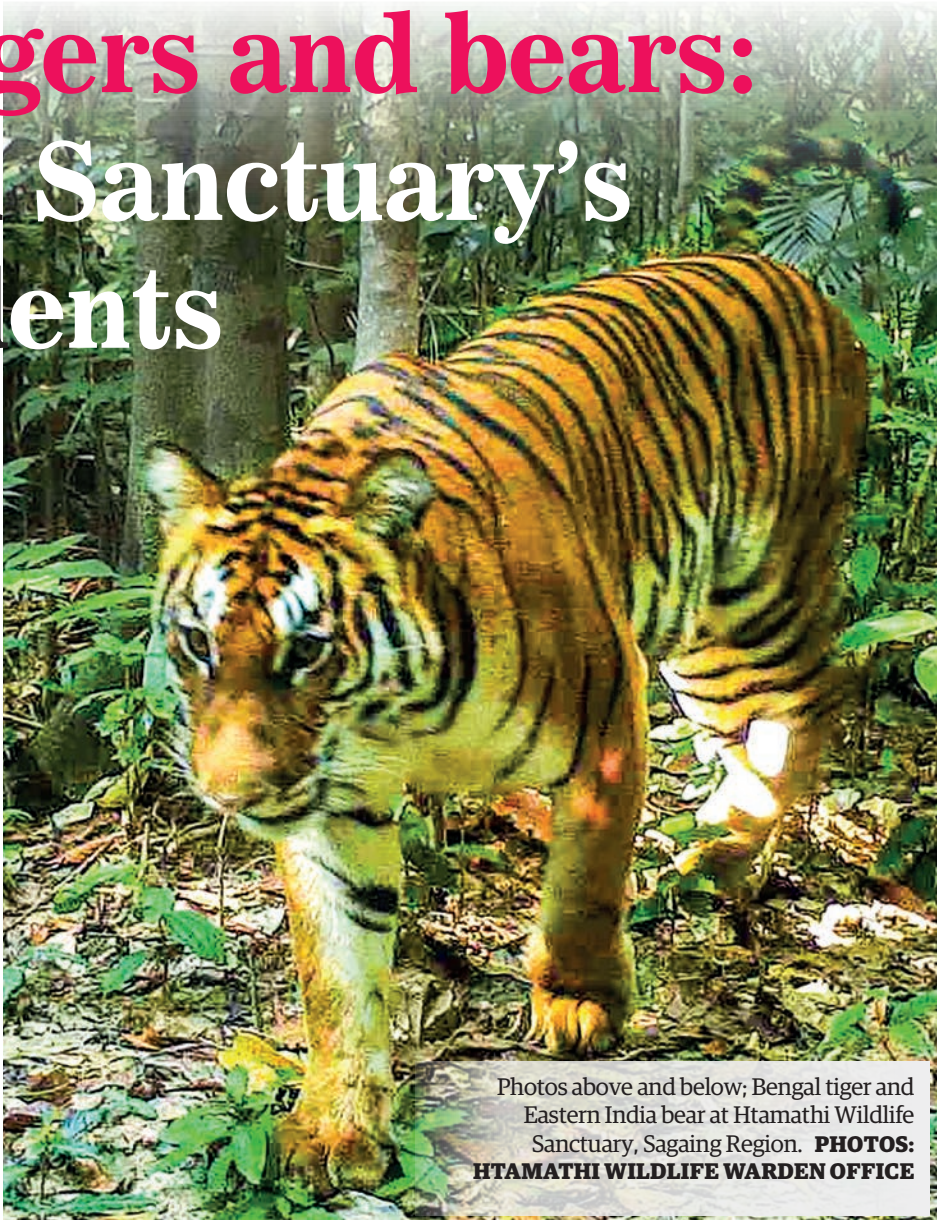


The **Global** **NEW LIGHT** of **MYANMAR**

Bengal tigers and bears: Htamathi Sanctuary's wild residents

Htamathi Wildlife Sanctuary was recognized as a wildlife sanctuary in May 1974, and the administrative office was established in Homa-lin Township on 1 September 1994 to operate wildlife conservation activities. It was recognized as an ASEAN heritage park on 8 October 2019.



Photos above and below; Bengal tiger and Eastern India bear at Htamathi Wildlife Sanctuary, Sagaing Region. **PHOTOS: HTAMATHI WILDLIFE WARDEN OFFICE**

THE world's rare endangered species Bengal tiger and two bear species are conserved in 53,456 acres wide Htamathi Wildlife Sanctuary, located in Khamti and Homalin townships in Khamti District, Sagaing Region.

The Forest Department installed 50 camera traps in the Nanyanyin area and Nanpheelin area in October 2016 by cooperating with the warden office of Htamathi Wildlife Sanctuary and Wildlife Conservation Security (WCS) to collect the Bengal tiger population. According to the 2023 camera records, there are about 20 Bengal tigers and two bear species in the sanctuary. The Bengal tiger is found in the Htamathi Wildlife Sanctuary and Sumatran tigers are seen in the Taninthayi Region. The population and food chain are collected with the help of WCS.

"Last year, we installed 24 camera traps in 12 places. This year, we installed 24 cameras. We did it in December, and we will take them off in the second week of February. Htamathi Wildlife Sanctuary boasts Bengal tiger, bear, mammals and birds, so, we protect the whole area. If we have strong public participation, it can ensure the sustainability of the sanctuary," said U Win Hlaing, warden

of the sanctuary.

Htamathi Wildlife Sanctuary has two bear species, the Sun bear and the Himalayan bear, bearing V and U shape on the chest. The survey was conducted for the first time in December 2016 and the second time in December 2017. The study on tiger and bear populations was suspended in late 2019-2020.

Six out of the world's eight species of bears are endangered with extinction, according to IUCN. The bear species are residing in Asia, Europe, North America and South America. The Himalayan



bear species residing in Asia and the Sun bear residing in Peninsular Malaysia and Eastern India are found in the Htamathi Wildlife Sanctuary.

According to fossil evidence found in China, tigers have existed for approximately two million years, and three tiger species are considered extinct. Although the tigers from 100 years are found in Asia, they face extinction due to 70 per cent of habitat loss. Therefore, the Bengal tigers are protected at the Htamathi Wildlife Sanctuary in Myanmar. — Thitsa (MNA)/KTZH

YRIC endorses three projects to create over 10,000 jobs in Jan

AT the recent meeting 1/2025 held on 28 January, the Yangon Region Investment Committee (YRIC) gave the green light to one domestic project made by Myanmar citizens and two foreign projects with an estimated capital of K800 million and US\$5.93 million, creating a total of 1,016 jobs for locals.

These three enterprises will execute the hotel services, sales, and ready-mixed concrete and garment manufacturing services on a cutting-making and packaging basis.

YRIC approved 60 projects in 2024, creating over 29,000 jobs.

The regional investment committee has been endorsing investment projects following rules and regulations under Myanmar Investment Law to spur investments and create more job opportunities. — ASH/KK

OPINION

Avoid inappropriate ways to work abroad

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MIC approves 14 new investment projects

BUSINESS

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53 container vessels to dock at Yangon Port in Feb

NATIONAL

Boosting Agriculture-Based Industries to Strengthen the State Economy and Increase Output

TO promote manufacturing and industries rooted in agriculture and livestock farming – the country’s primary economic sectors – supporting the development of the State economy and enhancing product output.

(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with members of the Bago Region government on 30 August 2024)



National Objectives for
78th Anniversary of Union Day 2025

- 1. To strive for the perpetual development of the Union through the Union spirit, patriotic values, a sublime state of mind and a genuine nationalist spirit.
- 2. To encourage collaborative efforts among all ethnic nationals to pursue dialogue for durable peace and to end armed conflicts.
- 3. To collectively advance cooperation amongst all national people, the government, and Tatmadaw to ensure stability and the rule of law.
- 4. To enhance collaborative efforts to ensure nationwide stability and tranquillity, enabling the successful conduct of multiparty general elections.
- 5. To promote balanced development across all regions and states, as well as enhance health, education and job opportunities for ethnic nationals.

Mottos for 78th Union Day 2025

- 1. When all ethnic national brethren stand in unity, hand in hand, the Union will firmly stand.
- 2. Drifting in one boat, on the same voyage we float; Bound together in communion, the heart of the Union.
- 3. United in heart and soul, Marching towards the Union’s goal.
- 4. Let’s build peace to achieve prosperity.
- 5. Strong in unity, Ethnic national brethren ensure the nation’s strength.



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>

‘Thitsa Lun
Hnaungyo’ film to
be shot in Pindaya

THE Myanmar film ‘Thitsa Lun Hnaungyo’ is set to be filmed in Pindaya, southern Shan State, in February, according to actor Kyaw Hsu.

The story was written by Johnny, with the screenplay adapted by Khit Shay Nyo. Director MAUI will take charge of the production under Cineverse Production.

“This is a love triangle film with a marriage theme. In this movie, I play the role of a doctor. I rarely take on roles in marriage-themed films. The last time I played a married character was in Tharaphu. This will be my second time. However, this is not an intense love triangle drama — it’s more of a calm and steady storyline. In this movie, I’m paired with Ma Myat Lay (Academy Award-winning actress Aye Myat Thu). The project has been in discussion for a while, and it’s only now that we’re able



to proceed with filming,” actor Kyaw Hsu shared.

The film will feature an ensemble cast including Kyaw Hsu, Daung Wei, Ye Htut Min Khaung, Zhan Htoo, Academy Award-winner Aye Myat Thu, Khin San Win, Thiri Myat Thwe, Myat Lei Lei Ko, Aung Khant Kyaw, Min Khant, Ye Yint Htun, Khee Sa Khin, Hay Yati Lin and Aye Shwe Yi Aung.

The film’s official commencement ceremony took place on 29 January at Botahtaung Pagoda. — ASH/KZL

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)

Rapid rollout of renewable energy projects planned

THE country has 28 hydropower plants, 27 gas-fired power plants and eight solar power plants with a total installed capacity of 6,371 MW, said Admiral Tin Aung San. Chairman of the Electric Power and Energy Development Commission State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister at the Prime Minister Office Admiral Tin Aung San delivered a speech at the Electric Power and Energy Development Commission’s meeting at the SAC Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Speaking on the occasion, the Admiral said 12 power plants of hydro and gas-fired stations are destroyed due to destructive actions and natural disasters, and the capacity of power gen-



SAC Member Deputy Prime Minister and Union Minister at the Prime Minister Office Admiral Tin Aung San chairs the meeting of the Electric Power and Energy Development Commission yesterday.

eration is low currently. Therefore, the electricity needs of the country are higher than before.

The power-generation projects possibly using renewable energy resources will be implemented

rapidly. He continued that there are ongoing solar power plant pro-

jects, four in Nay Pyi Taw, three in Mandalay Region, one in Bago Region and one in Shan State, with a total installed capacity of 530 MW. Moreover, the ongoing hybrid (gas engine and solar) projects are being carried out one in Mandalay Region and one in Magway Region, with a total installed capacity of 496 MW. Therefore, the solar and hybrid projects can generate 1,026 MW. He then urged the local and foreign investors in solar projects to report on their difficulties and delays in projects, and the ministries to find out the proper solutions.

The attendees reported on measures being taken for solar power projects, risks in the work process and plans. — MNA/KTZH

MSWRR Union Minister joins Arctic Safety Exercise

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Soe Win, who arrived in Arkhangelsk, Russia, to attend the Arctic Region Safety Exercise Programme 2025, participated in a commemorative ceremony at the Russian Patriots’ Memorial on the morning of 29 January. Also present at the event were Russia’s Deputy Minister for Civil Defence, Emergency Situations, and Disaster Management, the Mayor of Arkhangelsk and ministers, deputy ministers and officials from 25 countries including Belarus, China, Cambodia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam. During the event, the Union minister joined other attendees in observing a moment of silence and laid a

commemorative wreath. In the afternoon, the Union minister visited the northern Dvina Riverbank in Arkhangelsk, where a rescue drill was set to take place. He observed modern rescue equipment used for ice search-and-rescue operations and examined emergency shelters and medical facilities for victims. Union Minister Dr Soe Win then watched a simulated rescue operation involving an international cargo ship stranded in Arctic ice. The exercise demonstrated the use of drones, icebreaker vehicles, helicopters and ambulances in collaboration between Russia and its partner countries. Following the drill, the Union minister held a meeting with



Union Minister Dr Soe Win attends the Arctic Region Safety Exercise Programme 2025 in the Russian Federation on 29 January.

Russia’s Deputy Minister for Civil Defence, Emergency Situations and Disaster Management. During the discussion, the Russian side reaffirmed continued cooperation in disas-

ter management. He noted that Myanmar is the only Southeast Asian country with glaciers and that despite logistical challenges in providing emergency relief in such regions, the exercise

had been a valuable learning experience. He further stated Myanmar’s commitment to ongoing collaboration in disaster response initiatives. — MNA/KZL

NATIONAL

MIC approves 14 new investment projects



SAC Member Deputy Prime Minister MoTC Union Minister General Mya Tun Oo presides over the first meeting of the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC).

THE first meeting of the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) was held yesterday afternoon in Nay Pyi Taw. State Administration Council Member Deputy Prime Minister and Myanmar Investment Commission Chairperson General Mya Tun Oo and the commission members attended the meeting.

The meeting approved one new foreign investment from the capital increase of ongoing investment and 13 new local investment projects in industry, hotel, tourism and service sectors. The investment amount of these businesses is US\$3.684 million and K345,863.043 million, which can create 1,544 job opportunities.

These businesses included the automobile assembly industry,

agricultural equipment production, hotel service and international healthcare services.

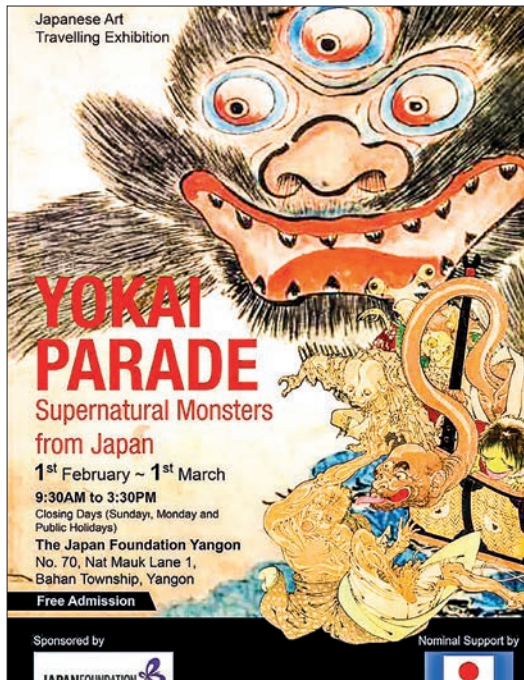
As of the end of December 2024, among the 53 foreign countries, Singapore, China, and Thailand are the leading countries with the largest foreign investments in the country. Of 12 sectors, the energy sector accounts for 28.32 per cent by drawing the most significant investments, followed by the oil and natural gas sector at 24.67 per cent and the manufacturing sector at 14.43 per cent.

The Myanmar Investment Commission oversees and approves investment project proposals from locals and overseas, and provides services to the existing investors under the Myanmar Investment Law. — MNA/KTZH

Notice to Mariners: Geotechnical survey begins

1. The PTTEP International Limited, a joint venture of the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise in the oil exploring industry, will conduct the Geotechnical Site Investigation Survey (GTI) at Zawtika project in M-9 offshore block and Yadana project in M-5 and M-6 blocks with Survey Vessel and GEO Mariner vessel. The GTI will be conducted with these coordinates at Well Location Point M5-Exp C1 of M-5 and M-6 (Yadana) north latitude 15°07'45.2615", east longitude 94°10'10.5131", at Point M5-Exp C2 north latitude 15°02'50.3772", east longitude 94°06'0.4221", Point M6-Exp CA north latitude 15°22'58.0671", east longitude 95°13'59.3578", Point M6-Exp CF north latitude 16°17'6.1839", east longitude 95°09'29.2190", Point Yadana-Infill Wp2 north latitude 15°09'08.887", east longitude 94°46'50.887", Point Badamya-Infill WP4 north latitude 15°09'38.119", east longitude 94°43'02.108", Point Appraisal-C1 north latitude 15°09'23.5281", east longitude 94°09'48.4001", Point Appraisal-C2 north latitude 15°03'33.7316", east longitude 94°05'35.7351", M-9 (Zawtika) Wellhead Platform Location- Point WPH Zawtika-41 north latitude 14°27'18.58712", east longitude 95°34'56.27678", from 27 February to 30 April 2025.
2. Therefore, the Notice to Mariners has been released to avoid causing any delays during the GTI operation conducted with Survey Vessels and GEO Mariner vessel at Zawtika of M-9 and offshore blocks M-5 and M-6, the Yadana project, and large ships, cargo boats, fishing boats and motor boats should refrain from passing through or anchoring and setting up fishing gear within kilometres of the above-mentioned areas. — MNA/KTZH

'Yokai Parade: Japanese Ghosts' art exhibition debuts in Yangon



This image depicts a poster for the global touring Japanese Art Exhibition.

THE 'Yokai Parade: Supernatural Monsters from Japan' is a new touring Japanese art exhibition that will open at the Japan Foundation (Yangon) on 1 February.

The exhibition will showcase Japan's culture of imaginary ghosts called Yokai, which has been passed down through the ages via paper scrolls,

Nishiki-e colourful woodblock prints, and toys and films, said the foundation.

Japanese Yokai has been featured in many stories as supernatural characters who can terrify the audience. However, with advancing technologies and changing lifestyles, Yokai has gradually become more of a familiar and lovely thing than a scary one. In Japan, there is still a tradition of storytelling about ghosts called Kaidan during the summer, and Yokai can be seen in theatres and television shows across the country.

The exhibition highlights the popularity of Yokai and allows visitors to explore their magical world. It will be held from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm from 1 February to 1 March daily, except Sundays, Mondays and public holidays, at the Japan Foundation, 70 Natmauk Lane 1, Bahan, Yangon, with free admission.

Registration is open for the opening ceremony on the first day. During the opening ceremony, Kikawanaoko-san from the Miushima Mononoke Museum in Hiroshima Prefecture will give a special online lecture on Japanese ghost culture. Those interested in attending it can register for free at <https://forms.office.com/r/miQg8zrcNa> and the lecture is also available online from 10:30 to 11:45 am via the link at <https://zoom.us/j/96274279444?pwd=MVZawUWPov5r3D0S-3mXtax6vgLYCay.1>. — MT/ZN

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CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

(+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 255597511

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 251022355
marketing@gnlm.com.mm
subscription@gnlm.com.mm

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

NATIONAL

Tatmadaw medical ships offer healthcare in Dedaye



Photos showcase Tatmadaw medical ships offering healthcare in Dedaye, Ayeyawady Region.

TWO Tatmadaw vessels – Shwepuzun and riverine vessel Saku – are providing health-care services to residents along the Ayeyawady River. A mobile medical team, including specialists, doctors and nurses, accompanied the vessels and

arrived at Ward 1 of Dedaye Township, Ayeyawady Region, yesterday morning. Local Tatmadaw personnel and residents warmly welcomed the team. The medical team provided healthcare services to 446 residents from Dedaye and

nearby villages at Sutaungpyae Shwephonemyint Pagoda and Myohle prayer hall in Ward 1. The team treated 144 cases of general medical conditions, 11 surgical cases, 16 obstetric and gynaecological cases, 21 paediatric cases, 87 orthopaedic cases, 43 ear, nose, and throat cases, 91 ophthalmic cases and 33 dental cases. Four more patients underwent general surgery, two received eye surgery, 19 had X-ray scans, 39 were tested with ultrasound, 38 had ECG heart tests and 52 underwent laboratory tests. Three patients requiring further treatment were arranged to be transferred to the nearest Tatmadaw hospital and township general hospitals. — MNA/KZL

Counter-argument to false information

Malicious news media spread false reports on Yaypu Village attack

MALICIOUS media outlets have been circulating false reports claiming that security forces fired heavy weapons at Yaypu Village in Nyaungshwe Township, southern Shan State, destroying a house. According to a responsible security officer, security forces did not conduct any attacks in villages or residential areas where civilians live, as such locations are not military targets. Instead, terrorists have been using various pretexts to instil fear in communities that do not support them, including launching attacks with heavy weapons and drones. In this incident, heavy weapon shells fired by terror-



This screenshot reveals fabricated stories. ists exploded inside the village, destroying houses. Malicious news media are spreading false reports to cover up the actions of terrorists and mislead public perception of security forces. — MNA/KZL

Tatmadaw vessel delivers healthcare to Cocokyun residents

A Tatmadaw hospital ship ‘Thanlwin’ arrived in Cocokyun Township, Yangon Region, yesterday morning to deliver healthcare services to locals along the Taninthayi coastal region. Medical specialists, doctors and nurses joined the ship’s mobile medical team to offer treatment to residents of Cocokyun Township and nearby villages, as well as communities in Hainggyikyun, Ayeyawady Region. Upon arrival, the medical team was warmly welcomed by local Tatmadaw officers and residents. The mobile medical team set up operations at the Cocokyun Township People’s Hospital, where they provided healthcare services to 362 residents from Cocokyun and surrounding villages. The team treated 85 patients for general illnesses, 23 for surgical conditions, 26 for OG issues, 19 for paediatric care, 40 for orthopaedic conditions,

12 for ENT issues, 122 for eye diseases and 35 for dental and oral health. A total of 12 patients underwent general surgery, while six received eye surgeries. The team also conducted 12 X-ray scans, 35 ultrasound examinations, 35 ECG tests and 58 laboratory tests. Eight patients requiring further medical attention were arranged to receive treatment at the nearest Tatmadaw hospital. – MNA/KZL



Locals receiving medical treatments and medicines from the Tatmadaw hospital ship.

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.

NATIONAL

Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda Buddha Pujaniya Festival: 2 Feb-17 Apr

THE Buddha Pujaniya Festival is set to begin, and pilgrims can now visit the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda in Minbu (Sagu) Township, Magway Region. The preparations for accommodation and shops for pilgrims from across the country are almost complete, said U Aye Ko, chairman of the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda Board of Trustees.

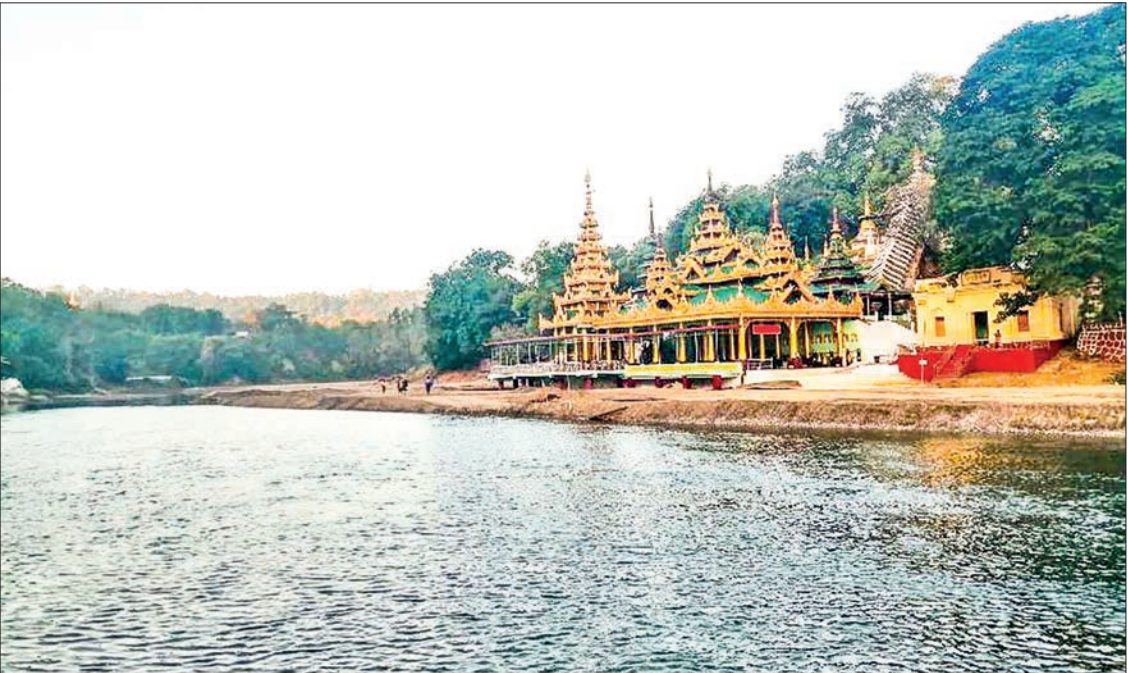
The Buddha Pujaniya Festival is traditionally held every year from the 5th waxing of Tabodwe to Myanmar New Year's Day. This year, it will take place for 75 days, from 2 February to 17 April.

"This year, the Buddha Pujaniya Festival will be held from 2 February to 17 April with large

crowds expected. More than 600 guesthouses and 800 shops are being built for pilgrims from all over the country. Almost all of them are now complete, so visitors are welcome. Security measures have been arranged to ensure a peaceful and safe experience," said U Aye Ko.

The rental rates for this year are K110,000 per day for a VIP room (with a bathroom and toilet), K80,000-K60,000 for a standard room by the shore, and K40,000 for a standard room on land. — ASH/MKKS

This photo shows a general view of the Mann Shwesettaw Pagoda.



Surplus production drives strawberry prices down



This photo shows freshly harvested strawberries awaiting transport.

THE day temperature helps strawberry production stronger, leading the price to fall continuously.

"Price is falling continuously. Strawberries grow more when the temperature gets high. So the production is large. But the production is low when it rains," said Ma Sandi Taya, a fruit trader from Taunggyi Township.

Many people like strawberry which is one of the most-consumed fruits. Strawberry trade has been fine since the beginning of the harvest season and orders have mount-

ed since December, said traders and added that, the production has been larger in this month.

"Strawberry will be available throughout the dry season. Some of the plantations were destroyed in the storm, and that is why this year's harvest season was quite late. Its harvest season begins around October and November but this year, commercial production started available in December. The trade is fine. We transport loads of tonnes daily. Yangon and Tachilek are major destinations," she said. — Thit Taw/ZS

Boost in medicinal single-clove garlic sales

MEDICINAL single-clove garlic has been selling well, according to onion and garlic farmers in Heho Township.

At present, the old garlic supply is still available and new garlic will be harvested in March. Among different kinds of garlic, medicinal single-clove garlic is mainly used for making medicines and has high consumption, making the trade strong, said farmers.

"Garlic is grown in November and the harvest sea-

son begins in March. Garlic can't be sold as soon as it is harvested because it requires to be dried first. These are old garlic. Single-clove garlic price is pretty good now, compared to other kinds of garlic. It is used in making medicines so the trade is good," said a farmer.

Yangon is the major destination for single-clove kind of garlic grown in Heho.

"Rather than other kinds of garlic, single-clove garlic is

more consumed, the price is higher and the sale is better too. Yangon is the major market for us. New garlic price will be cheap compared to old garlic," said a trader from Heho.

This month, big-size garlic from Taunggyi has received orders, mainly from Yangon. In September 2024, medicinal single-clove garlic from Taunggyi received many orders from Pyay and it is now being transported to Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw as well. — Thit Taw/ZS

Cement imports kick off at Kawthoung border

TO meet domestic cement demand, imports have been allowed through sea trade and the Kawthoung border checkpoint, with cement imports via both routes set to be permitted starting from the last week of January.

Myanmar primarily imports cement for domestic construction through sea trade from China, Thailand, and Malaysia. With the onset of the dry season and increased construction activity across the country, cement imports

via border trade have been allowed to meet rising demand and support domestic production.

With an annual cement demand exceeding 10 million tonnes and domestic production under eight million tonnes, Myanmar faces a daily demand of over 500,000 bags. Although there are 19 cement factories in the country – 16 private and three State-owned – there is still a need for a full-capacity operation to meet the demand. — ASH/TH



This photo shows the Kawthoung border checkpoint.

53 container vessels to dock at Yangon Port in Feb

A total of 53 container vessels are slated to arrive in the Yangon Port in February 2025, the Myanmar Port Authority announced.

Ten container vessels run by SITC Shipping Line, eight by Cosco Shipping Line, six by Samudera Shipping Line, five by Maersk A/S Line, four each by MSC Line and CMA CGM Line, three each by Ti2 Container Line, ONE Line and RCL Line, two each by BLPL Shipping Line, Ocean Salute Shipping Line and Evergreen Line, and one by Land and Sea are scheduled to enter the Yangon Port next month.

Myanmar Port Authority has arranged maritime trade channels to handle increasing imports to meet domestic demand, bolster exports, and improve port capacity for significant arrival of ships. Myanmar Port Authority notified that it will inform exporters and importers of ship arrival schedules promptly upon extend-



An overseas-bound container vessel docking at Yangon Port for export-import operations.

ed schedule. A total of 62 container vessels arrived at Yangon Port in January 2025.

Yangon Port handled 629 and

633 container vessels in in 2023 and 2024 respectively. Thanks to the draft extension, the interna-

tional ocean liners can access

the inner port for now, according to the Myanmar Port Authority's statement on 22 June 2022.

After the new navigation

channel (Kings Bank Channel) accessing the inner Yangon River had been found, the draft extension work was accelerated. After that, the port can now handle larger ships. The container vessel MV SITC Zhaoming (185.99 metres LOA, 35.25 metres Beam, 29,232 GRT and 2,698 TEUs) of Hong-Kong based SITC Shipping Line docked at Asia World Port Terminal for the first time on 22 June, which is the largest ship that AWPT Port handled.

From May 2021, the arrival of the ships at terminals in Yangon has increased again. Three new container vessels by Maersk Line Myanmar (SeaLand Maersk) started to run to fulfil the seaborne trade requirements in 2021. Earlier, the larger ships had draft problems preventing sailing on the Yangon River. With the draft being extended up to 10 meters, the larger ocean liners can enter the Thilawa Port. — NN/KK

CBM to inject \$20M into fuel oil sector



Bowsers lining up for oil distribution.

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) announced on 30 January that it has planned to sell US\$20 million to the fuel oil sector.

CBM injected \$20 million on 24 January, 800,000 yuan on 21 January, 1.91 million baht on 20 January, \$150,000 and 1.14 million yuan on 17 January, one million baht on 16 January, over \$25.35 million and 369,000 yuan on 15 January and over \$1,600 and 556,000 baht on 14 January into the financial market.

CBM announced on 13 January to sell \$25 million to fuel oil importers soon after selling 600,000 yuan on that day.

CBM injected \$3.9 million on 11 January, 714,000 yuan on 10 January, \$2.2 million on 9 January, \$256,000 on 8 January again after sales of over \$2.15 million on 7 January, \$25 million and 2.8 million baht on 6 January, 510,000 yuan on 3 January, \$25 million, over 670,000 yuan and 2.45 million baht on 2 January into the financial market.

CBM pumped \$144 million, 321 million baht and over 12 million yuan in December 2024, over \$59 million, over 280 million baht and 8.78 million yuan in November and over \$91 million, over 610 million baht and 9.8 million yuan in October into

the financial market.

CBM aims to curb the instability in the foreign exchange market and the currency devaluation. According to CBM's notification on 15 March, it has been collaborating with law enforcement agencies to combat and prosecute those who attempt to manipulate the currency market under the existing laws. CBM allowed authorized dealers (private banks) to operate online foreign exchange trading freely as per the market rate depending on supply and demand, starting from 5 December 2023. — NN/KK

Industry Ministry invites vehicle disposal tenders

NO 1 Steel Mill (Myingyan) of the Ministry of Industry called for companies or organizations to submit an open tender for dismantling, scrapping and disposing of 537 vehicles confiscated and entrusted by the Ministry of Planning and Finance and other ministries and organizations.

The tender form is available at the No 1 Heavy Industries Enterprise from 30 January 2025 and the tender submission deadline is 15 February 2025. Individuals can enquire about details through the No 1 Heavy Industries Enterprise at 067 3405451 and 067 3405349. — NN/KK

Gold Market Rate as of 30 January 2025

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K5,440,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.

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

Avoid inappropriate ways to work abroad

THE relevant ministries of Myanmar are working in accordance with regulations to facilitate overseas employment opportunities for Myanmar citizens. To have smooth access to jobs abroad, these ministries conduct skill training courses, aiming to secure better job opportunities abroad.

For those who wish to work abroad, certain individuals assist in meeting the requirements. However, some people, instead of using the official channels approved by the respective foreign governments, choose to go through illegal means. By doing so, they

Illegal activities are escalating, with a rise in undocumented labourers and the widespread use of counterfeit Myanmar passports and documents. This exploitation for personal profit particularly impacts young women, who are often trafficked as part of the illegal labour trade. The government must prioritize the well-being of its citizens. However, for individuals seeking legal employment abroad, the process is often difficult, forcing many to consider complicated alternative routes.

This outcome is nearly inevitable.

Those who plan to go abroad often set ambitious goals and intentions. However, when they are influenced by illusions or distractions, everything ultimately falls apart. Deceivers are individuals who manipulate others, driven solely by their personal gain, regardless of who gets harmed or left behind.

Reports about the arrest of illegal workers, the seizure of illegal goods, and the capture of narcotics are essential news for the country. The responsibility of upholding the law and ensuring justice within the framework of legal rights is crucial. As authorities are currently working diligently to arrest offenders, actions contribute to national security and the protection of citizens' rights. Additionally, citizens who provide information to assist in these arrests are fulfilling their duty as responsible members of the nation.

Illegal activities are escalating, with a rise in undocumented labourers and the widespread use of counterfeit Myanmar passports and documents. This exploitation for personal profit particularly impacts young women, who are often trafficked as part of the illegal labour trade. The government must prioritize the well-being of its citizens. However, for individuals seeking legal employment abroad, the process is often difficult, forcing many to consider complicated alternative routes.



The Maha Kumbh Mela | A global village of the timeless and the emergent

Dr Kavita Gupta, Founder, Dus Dishaa

THIS ‘Global Village’ draws attention from a wide spectrum of humanity. It is a living testament to Hinduism’s timeless beliefs and practices while also being a sandbox for newer and emergent facets. It enables the three eternal concurrent processes of Evolution, Equilibrium, and Involution.

This year brings millions of people to the *Maha Kumbh Mela* at Prayagraj. The *Mela* (fair) offers a comprehensive view of Hindu beliefs and practices, providing visual and experiential insights. There is a pervasive feeling of equanimity, where distinctions of all types dissolve, fostering a sense of interconnectedness. The *Mela* connects to nature-worshipping, honouring the *Panch Tatvas* – (the five elements of life: Earth, Water, Air, Fire and Space). It recalls a time of ritual observance and intellectual inquiry into natural forces and their astrological significance, emphasising the harmonious balance of these elements.

The *Triveni Sangam* delta at Prayagraj, the confluence of River Ganga, Yamuna and the mythical Saraswati, draws a wide spectrum of humanity, from the

Yogis from the Himalayas to devout pilgrims to curious travelers and tourists, diverse people from different walks of life, each with their own objective. This 45-day festival is hosted by an ecosystem of administrators, ground support, volunteers, business people and entrepreneurs. Such a scale also amasses attention from educators, researchers and innovators with a multi-disciplinary lens.

All triune things converge in this land where the three rivers meet, including the compelling combination of three cycles embedded in the sacred trilogy of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh.

Brahma represents Evolution (Anabolism), Vishnu represents Equilibrium (Metabolism), and Shiva represents Involution (Ca-

tabolism). The *Kumbh Mela* is a rich example of all three processes: the celebration of the past, the reflection on the present, and the preparation for the future.

The *Mela* finds its roots in the famous legend of Hindu mythology - *Samudra Manthan* or the Churning of the Ocean) by *Devtas* (Gods) and *Asuras* (Demons). From the churning emerged various gifts, *Kumbh of Amrit* (a pot of nectar) for immortality, being one of them. The *Kumbh Mela* is a commemoration held every four years in each of the four cities, Haridwar, Nasik, Ujjain and Prayag, on a rotational basis.

Beyond its immense religious significance, the *Kumbh Mela* is also culturally and spiritually significant. The sheer num-

ber of devotees and pilgrims in an ephemeral city creates a rare and unique experience, attracting hordes of visitors to gain insights into the mystique of the *Mela*. Historically, many foreign travellers have written detailed accounts of their visits, getting the *Kumbh Mela* widespread global recognition. Hieun Tsang’s *Chronicles and Journals of Fanny Parkes* (Wanderings of a Pilgrim) have enamoured the global audience across ages.

The scale of the *Mela* has always been immense and is only growing with each decade. The estimated number of visitors this year is likely to cross 400 million through the *Mela* duration. Ten thousand hectares of *Mela* area have been declared a temporary district with 10 zones and 25 sec-

tors. Setting up a temporary city of this scale is a massive administrative challenge, mainly when the location for the same is on the floodplains of the Ganges that receded very reluctantly this year, leaving a very small time frame for making all arrangements.

Despite the limited time, various government departments and agencies have worked round the clock to provide infrastructure and ready amenities before the first *snan* (holy dip) date. Massive budget allocations and various department personnel have been deployed to manage security, traffic, health, sanitation and other arrangements. The Uttar Pradesh Government has also made a substantial technological push with its Digi Kumbh initiative. AI-powered CCTV sys-

tems, using facial and vehicle number plate recognition, have been designed to provide surveillance and monitor crowd movement, traffic flow and parking management. Further, underwater drones with advanced imaging capabilities have also been deployed to provide round-the-clock aquatic surveillance. An AI-powered chatbot has also been launched to support over 11 languages and enable easy navigation.

In independent India, the *Kumbh Mela* has been hosted since 1954. Each government has put in its best efforts to make it a smooth and memorable experience for the pilgrims. Such efforts in successful set-up and operations have gained attention from across the world and attracted

various forms of research efforts beyond just an anthropological perspective.

Leading global and Indian academic establishments such as Harvard University, London School of Economics (LSE), IIM Bangalore and MIT have conducted various comprehensive studies to learn from the scale of operations and draw insights from such a mega event. Through a multi-disciplinary lens, these studies focus on ephemerality and infrastructure, public management, socio-cultural and logistical complexities, AI and technology. The mammoth scale of the pilgrimage, particularly on the main bathing days, when millions take a dip in the holy waters garners wide-scale astonishment.

Such a concentrated flow of massive footfall has also meant immense potential for brand visibility and marketing opportunities for businesses. Alongside large brands, thriving local enterprises are tapping into every opportunity to serve all segments of the massive crowds. The guests visiting for a few days can choose from a variety of options available – luxury tents, budget tents, hotels, guest houses, homestays.

Logistics providers, from taxi drivers to boatmen, are all geared up to provide services to the visitors while small vendors are ready to lend themselves to cater to the essential needs of *puja* (prayers) items and rituals, for the devotees coming for a day.

Hindu astronomy, astrology, built heritage, ecology, and local food, each layer has a rich presence in the *Kumbh Mela*. From pilgrims, devotees, and travellers to market gurus, academicians and research enthusiasts, there’s something meaningful and compelling for everyone to witness and partake in the *Maha Kumbh Mela*!



Kavita is an avid traveler who collects stories from everyone and everywhere, completely enamoured by the rich tapestry of Indian history and culture. She explores her wanderlust and brings in unique perspectives! Through *Dus Dishaa* she brings alive local charms in this global village through immersive, specially curated experiences. In her regular days, she is a management professor with over 20 years of experience.

New strain of bird flu confirmed in US

CALIFORNIA authorities have culled 119,000 ducks at a Merced County farm after detecting H5N9 bird flu, a

strain confirmed for the first time in US poultry; international health officials report.

A new strain of bird flu has

been confirmed at a duck farm in California, the first time the variant has been discovered in poultry in the United States, an

international agency said.

A report by the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), which AFP saw on Tuesday, said “highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N9” had been confirmed in a commercial duck premise in Merced County, California.

“This is the first confirmed case of HPAI H5N9 in poultry in the United States,” said Paris-based WOAH, which monitors animal diseases worldwide.

It said the outbreak, whose origin was unknown, was confirmed on 13 January and all 119,000 poultry at the farm in question had been culled.

The H5N1 strain of bird flu, which is widespread among animals in the United States, was also registered at the farm.

US animal health officials were conducting “comprehensive

epidemiological investigations” and had increased surveillance in response to the outbreak, the WOAH said.

The emergence of the new strain of bird flu in the United States comes at a time when President Donald Trump has decided to withdraw the country from the World Health Organization (WHO).

The US is the largest donor to the United Nations health agency, which coordinates the worldwide response to health emergencies.

Health experts have been sounding the alarm about the potential pandemic threat to humans posed by bird flu, which has been showing signs of mutating as it spreads among cows and infects people in the United States.

They have for months been urging US authorities to increase surveillance and share more in-

formation about its bird flu outbreak.

If the US and the WHO no longer cooperate and share critical data, tracking the spread of viruses internationally will be more difficult.

The US withdrawal is “a concern for global health”, the WHO said last week.

key highlights:

- A new strain of bird flu, H5N9, has been detected at a duck farm in Merced County, California.
- This marks the first confirmed case of H5N9 in US poultry.
- All 119,000 ducks at the farm were culled to contain the outbreak, confirmed on 13 January.
- Health experts are concerned about the potential for the bird flu to mutate and become transmissible between humans.
- Increased surveillance efforts have been initiated in response to the outbreak.
- The H5N9 strain was found alongside the more prevalent H5N1 strain.
- The US's ongoing withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO) may hinder global efforts to track and manage such outbreaks.

Sixty-seven people in the United States have contracted bird flu, one of whom died in early January, the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said this week.

These cases were caused by direct exposure to a sick animal and the WHO has stressed that, to date, no human-to-human trans-

mission has been reported.

But scientists have raised fears that if a person becomes infected with both bird flu and seasonal flu, the bird flu virus could mutate into a strain that is contagious between humans and potentially trigger a human pandemic.

SOURCE: AFP



This is the first confirmed case of H5N9 in poultry in the US. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

NATIONAL

Some K180 mln donated to 457 kidney patients in 2024



Kidney patients at the Pynmana Sangha Hospital Kidney Department.

ACCORDING to the Pynmana Sangha Hospital’s kidney department, it donated over K178.9 million to 457 kidney patients in 2024.

The department is providing free dialysis to the neediest patients based on available funding, Medical Superintendent Dr Than Min Htut wrote on his social media page.

Thanks to the donors across the country, donations

of K15,427,500 were made for 40 patients in November 2024, K15,070,000 for 39 patients in December and a total of K178,957,000 was made for 457 patients in 2024.

“The frequency of dialysis varies depending on the severity of the disease. Some patients receive it eight times a month, while others need it just six times. The cost per treatment is K70,000, so K420,000 per

month for six-time patients and K560,000 per month for eight-time patients. Such a big number of donations is due to the generosity and dedication of all well-wishers from different locations,” he said.

In January 2025, the hospital was able to donate K15,855,000 for 41 patients, and donors are also contributing money to maintaining dialysis machines, he added. — MT/ZN

Boom in second-hand winter wear sales

THE weather is colder this winter, leading second-hand winter clothes such as coat, sweater, and jacket sales to increase.

Customers are of all ages and young women mostly choose thin sweaters and long jeans while men choose long trousers and outerwear, said a thrift shop owner.

“The weather in Yangon has been cold this month so men and women come to shop for sweaters and long trousers. They enjoy thrifting because thrifts can be available cheaply

as much as they can find,” said a thrift shop owner.

Second-hand clothes can be available in several thousands of kyats so she buys, said a woman.

“Used clothes are economical and we can use them well after washing and ironing,” she said.

The number of customers has elevated in January, some are from other regions and states and some buy for reselling, said second-hand clothes shops. — MT/ZS



Images show second-hand sweaters, coats and jackets.

Meteorologist suggests wearing masks outside amidst rising air pollution

AS air pollution may continue rising due to temperature drops in the upper atmosphere from late February to early March, meteorologist U Win Naing has advised that it is best to wear a mask when going out.

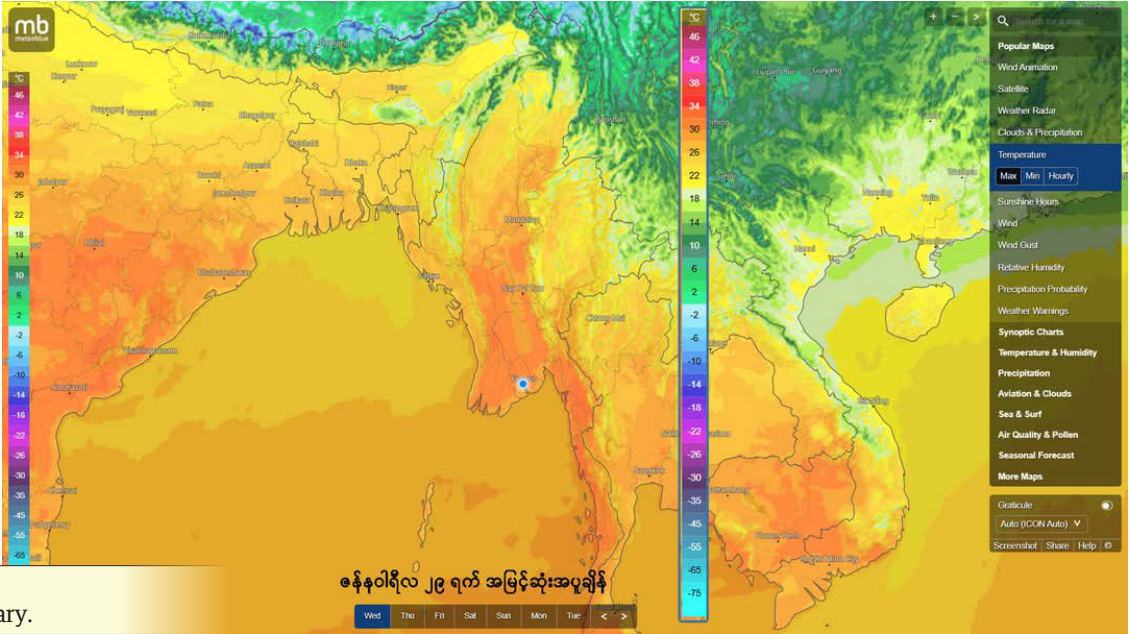
He posted on his social media page, which provides real-time weather conditions, on 29 January. He also warned that people with underlying respiratory conditions may experience shortness of breath or difficulty in breathing in the early mornings.

Daytime temperatures may rise with less clouds and nights may get colder on 31 January

and early February, he added.

Other predictions include untimely scattered rain in Kachin State including Myitkyina, PutaO, Phakant, Moegaung, Machanbaw, Chipwe, Tanai, Khaunglanphu, Kanpaiti and northern Shan State — Kutkai, Lashio and Muse — from 27 to 30 January, with 30 to 90 per cent possibility for 5 millimetres (0.2 inch) within 24 hours and more than 30 millimetres (1.2 inches) on 30 January, while rains are not likely in the rest regions and states, he said. — MT/ZN

Weather forecast image showing maximum temperature on 29 January.



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

One of Japan’s “Doctor Yellow” track-testing shinkansen retires



The “Doctor Yellow” T4 edition track-testing bullet train for Japan’s high-speed shinkansen lines makes its final run in Obu, Aichi Prefecture, central Japan, on 29 January 2025. PHOTO: KYODO

Japan bids farewell to the iconic “Doctor Yellow” train, used for fault detection on the shinkansen lines.

RAIL fans bid farewell to one of Japan’s iconic “Doctor Yellow” bullet trains, used to diagnose faults on the country’s high-speed shinkansen lines, as it made its final run Wednesday after about 24 years in service. As the JR Central-owned T4 edition of “Doctor Yellow” arrived at Tokyo Station around 6 pm, children erupted in cheers while others took photos of the yellow train, which people felt lucky to spot over the years due to its elusiveness. “It was cool. Thank you for fixing the railways all this time,” said six-year-old So Fukushima,

who came from Kawasaki, Kanagawa Prefecture, near Tokyo. Two “Doctor Yellow” trains, the T4 and T5 editions, have travelled without passengers along the Tokaido and Sanyo shinkansen lines, spanning Tokyo to Hakata Station in Fukuoka. The T4, which debuted in 2001, will have no successor, with passenger-carrying N700S bullet trains slated to be outfitted with testing and observation equipment. The T5, which belongs to JR West and debuted in 2005, is set to retire after 2027. — Kyodo

BRIEF: LIFESTYLE

New York police seek joyriders who ‘stole’ subway train

DETECTIVES in New York released video on Wednesday of a group suspected of stealing a parked subway train and taking it on a joyride. The grainy black-and-white footage shows several apparently young people moving through a parked, empty metro train. Police say the six suspects managed to board and operate the train that was parked in a siding in Queens, getting into the driver’s cab and moving it a short distance. The joyriders then posted video of their crime on social media, it was reported. The theft was uncovered on Saturday night and there were no injuries, police said, calling the incident “reckless endangerment”. “New York City Transit is working with the NYPD on their investigation of this incident,” transit authority spokesman Eugene Resnick said. — AFP

Births in Japan set to fall below 700,000 for 1st time in 2024

THE number of births in Japan in 2024 is set to fall below 700,000 for the first time after government data showed Friday that the figure for the first 11 months of the year dropped 5.1 per cent to 661,577. The figure underscores a trend in Japan where more people are choosing not to marry or delaying marriage, partly due to concerns about child-rearing amid rising living costs. The lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are also thought to have had an impact. The preliminary data released by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare for births from January to November includes foreigners. However, the full-year figure is expected to exclude babies born to foreign nationals. — Kyodo

Nepal’s social media bill proposes stringent measures to control spread of fake news

NEPAL has drafted a social media bill with stringent provisions which includes measures to control spread of fake news and deep fakes. The social media bill, which was tabled in the National Assembly to regulate the use and operation of social media, proposes severe penalties for individuals involved in spreading misleading or false information through fake IDs or pages on social media. Under the Section 27 of the proposed law, individuals are prohibited to create or use anonymous or fake profiles on social media- fake IDs, pages, or groups to post or share false information. “Anyone found guilty of engaging in such actions could face up to three months in prison, a fine of up to 50,000 (Nepali) rupees, or both penalties,” according to the subsection 2 of the bill. Apart from it, the bill also prohibits spread of harmful

or deceptive information that could disrupt national sovereignty, territorial integrity, or national interests. Violations under subsection 3 of the bill carry stricter penalties, including imprisonment of up to five years and fines of up to 1.5 million Nepali rupees. Furthermore, the bill proposes harsh measures against

individuals who hold public office or state benefits, to be subjected to 50 per cent more penalties than commoners. In addition to it, additional penalties would be served to those who engage children or minors in such activities. Anyone found guilty of such acts could face an additional one-year prison term. — ANI



Nepal’s proposed social media bill introduces harsh penalties for spreading fake news, deep fakes, and harmful content online, including fines, imprisonment, and increased penalties for public figures. ILLUSTRATION: PIXABAY

ECONOMY
WORLD

Japan limits visa slots for Filipinos as
tourist numbers surge



Authorities have introduced a daily cap on the number of hikers climbing Mount Fuji. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ AFP /FILE

A new visa centre system aims to improve efficiency, but concerns remain.

JAPAN’S embassy to the Philippines has recently tightened tourist visa slots for Filipino travellers amid a surge in visitors driven by the weak yen.

The embassy is now urging Filipinos to submit their tourist visa applications up to two months in advance — more than double the previous recommendation — but the sudden change could dampen the travel boom to Japan.

Filipino tourists typically apply for Japan visas through an authorized agency, with at least five in operation. A travel agency official in Manila said the embassy has indicated it is cutting the

daily cap on visa applications by about 50 per cent.

The change has overwhelmed agency branches, with long lines forming before opening hours and all slots often filled by morning. Some agencies have suspended applications or switched to an appointment-only system.

The embassy is set to transition to a “visa center system” later this year, outsourcing processing to a designated agency. While the change is expected to improve efficiency, industry stakeholders worry about the impact of consolidating services under one firm. — Kyodo

Climate adaptation to cost
France 1% of GDP by 2030

ADAPTING to climate change could lead to a “temporary and moderate economic slowdown” and cost France nearly one per cent of its GDP by 2030, according to a report by the French Directorate General of the Treasury.

The report, based on studies conducted by experts

at the directorate, analyzed the economic impacts associated with the transition to carbon neutrality under various scenarios.

France aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 50 per cent by 2030 compared to 1990 levels, alongside a significant reduction in re-



France’s transition to carbon neutrality may slow economic growth, costing nearly one per cent of GDP by 2030. Higher carbon taxes and production costs could impact businesses and consumer purchasing power. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

liance on fossil fuels during the same period.

Nathalie George, Head of Macroeconomic Policy and European Affairs at the directorate, explained, “A coordinated and orderly transition towards carbon neutrality will entail moderate and temporary economic costs.”

The report highlights a dual economic impact of increased carbon taxes and costs associated with greenhouse gas emissions, whether through taxation, subsidies, or legislation. On the demand side, consumers may face higher prices, reducing purchasing power, while on the supply side, businesses could encounter challenges due to rising production costs.

This dual effect is projected to result in an economic contraction costing France approximately 0.9 per cent of its GDP by 2030, compared to a scenario without additional emission reduction measures. — ANI

Kazakhstan to produce
shale oil for first time in 2025



Shale oil can help boost oil output, diversify energy sources, and increase revenue. Kazakhstan has increased its oil production. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ KAZENERGY.

KAZAKHSTAN will produce shale oil for the first time later this year, officials said Tuesday, hoping to boost the Central Asian state’s flagging economy.

The country has been hit by a decline in oil prices since 2022 and faces high inflation and a weakening currency.

“The first production of shale oil in Kazakhstan is expected this year,” Prime Minister Olzhas Bektenov told a government meeting.

President Kassym-Jomart

Tokayev said Kazakhstan needed to exploit “technologically complex oil deposits” as well as the vast “reserves of shale oil”.

Kazakhstan is a major energy producer, with the oil and gas industry accounting for around 20 per cent of the national economy.

It has agreed to limit oil production as part of an agreement with the OPEC+ group of energy exporters, but regularly exceeds its quota. — AFP

Tesla posts Q4 results with revenue increase, net income decline

TESLA reported lower than expected profits Wednesday but confirmed key 2025 benchmarks, saying it will return to sales volume growth and move forward with fully autonomous driving. The results — the first since the return of Tesla CEO Elon Musk’s ally Donald Trump to the White House — capped a mixed year for Tesla in which Musk’s big bet on US electoral politics was countered by profit pressures as Tesla’s streak of annual car volume growth came to an end.

The electric car company reported fourth-quarter profits of \$2.3 billion, down 71 per cent from the year-ago quarter, where profits were boosted by a one-time tax benefit.

Revenues rose two per cent to \$25.7 billion, also missing analyst estimates, but reflecting a more than

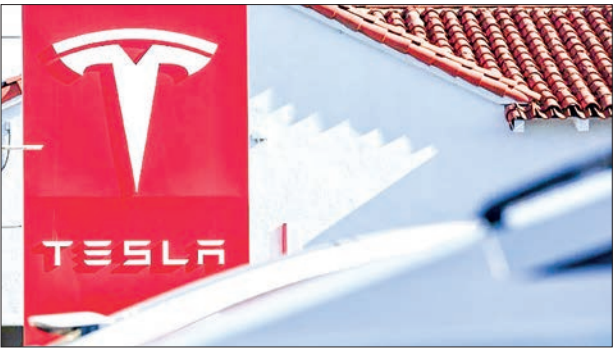
doubling of sales in energy generation and storage.

Musk has sought to temper expectations about Tesla’s near-term financial growth, while employing superlatives in touting Tesla’s autonomous driving and robotic ventures, saying they could make Tesla “the most valuable company in the world by far,” worth more than the “next five companies combined”.

Musk, who spent some \$270 million or more to help Trump win the White House, largely steered clear of political subjects during the 65-minute conference call.

The company has been confronted by intensifying EV competition in leading markets, including China and the United States, where General Motors and Ford have introduced more models.

— AFP



Tesla reported lower than expected profits Wednesday but confirmed key 2025 benchmarks. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Japan to require farmer action if key food supplies drop by 20%

Japan will implement a policy requiring farmers to submit production increase plans if domestic supplies of key items, like rice, drop by 20 per cent or more, due to crises like abnormal weather or war.

JAPAN is set to implement a policy enabling the government to instruct farmers to submit production increase plans if domestic supplies of rice and other key items drop by 20 per cent or more and cause a surge in prices, a draft of the document showed Tuesday.

The measure for mitigating crises was presented by the farm ministry at a committee meeting of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party amid global instability in food production caused by factors such as abnormal weather and the Ukraine war.

The policy, which specifies the implementation of a food supply



In addition to rice, the 12 items designated in a government ordinance to be subject to the law include dairy products, livestock products, soybeans, wheat and sugar. PHOTO: KYODO

emergency measures law passed last June, is set to be approved by the Cabinet in line with the enactment of the new law on 1 April.

As failing to comply with instructions for planning or reporting will result in penalties, the law’s effective implementation will require the understanding of farmers on specific operational measures. — Kyodo

Spain jobless rate falls to lowest level since 2008 crisis

SPANISH unemployment fell last year to its lowest level since the 2008 global financial crisis as the tourism-driven service sector performed strongly, official data showed on Tuesday.

The jobless rate in the European Union’s fourth-largest economy at the end of 2024 was 10.61 per cent, down from 11.76 per cent the previous year, the National Statistics Institute said.

A buoyant economy added 468,100 jobs in the last 12 months to reach a total of 21.8 million, the highest level ever registered.

A dynamic service sector slashed unemployment by 100,000 during 2024, a year in which the world’s second most-visited country received a record 94 million tourists.

The key sector represents around 13 per cent of an economy which is clocking growth rates far outstripping its EU peers, providing vital political capital for the minority left-wing government.

“Fewer women out of work, less temporary work and more quality employment,” Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez celebrated on X. — AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V WISDOM VOY.NO. (006N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V WISDOM VOY.NO. (006N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **30-1-2025** 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 K. NAVIGATE CO., LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY.NO. (0UVBQS1NC)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY.NO. (0UVBQS1NC)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **30-1-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/ 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 CMA-CGM SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V HENG LI V.105386

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V HENG LI VOY.NO. (V.105386)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **30-1-2025** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT-3** 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: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CHUN AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS CO LTD

ROLLING UPDATES
WORLD

Trump to sign orders
on education, including
critical race theory



The orders will seek to eliminate funding for public schools that incorporate what he considers divisive content. Hibbing High School in Hibbing, Minnesota. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE/ WIKIMEDIA COMMONS**

PRESIDENT Donald Trump will sign executive orders on two flashpoint topics in US education amplified by the country’s culture wars — critical race theory and school choice, his spokeswoman said Wednesday.

Critical race theory, initially referring to an approach that looks at US history through the lens of racism, has become an ill-defined catchall that sometimes includes topics such as

white privilege or bias, depending on who is using the term.

State-level bans against it have led to what critics say is a chilling affect around teaching anything race related, but many Republicans maintain it is a needlessly divisive topic that makes white students feel guilty.

School choice meanwhile refers to a US movement that seeks to use tax credits and vouchers to allow parents to

opt out of the public school system in favor of privately managed schools for their children. It is favoured by Republicans.

Speaking to Fox News, White House spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt said Trump “will sign executive orders addressing school choice” as well as “ending funding for public schools that support critical race theory and other divisive measures in their curriculums.” — AFP

BRIEF: WORLD

Plane with 64 aboard collides with military
chopper near Washington

A passenger plane with 64 aboard crashed Wednesday night into a river after colliding with a military helicopter in midair near a busy airport just outside of Washington, authorities said, with fatalities expected despite an ongoing search-and-rescue operation in the frigid water.

The accident occurred when American Airlines flight 5342 from Wichita, Kansas, was approaching Reagan national airport around 9 pm, according to the Federal Aviation Administration.

“We are going to recover our fellow citizens,” District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser told reporters at the airport early Thursday, without saying how many bodies have been recovered.

CBS News, citing a police official at the scene, said at least 18 bodies had been removed from the Potomac River.

Kansas Senator Roger Marshall, who spoke with the mayor, said, “When one person dies it’s a tragedy, but when many, many, many people die it’s an unbearable sorrow.” — Kyodo

Five skiers killed in French Alps avalanches
on off-Piste routes

Five skiers died in two separate avalanches in the French Alps, local media reported on Wednesday.

In the Savoie region of the French Alps, four Norwegian skiers lost their lives in the Val-Cenis area, French newspaper Le Dauphine Libere and broadcaster TF1 reported, citing the local prefecture.

The group of seven skiers was on an off-piste tour when a massive avalanche struck, sweeping away four of them. Three bodies were recovered at the scene, while a woman, who had been airlifted to a hospital in Grenoble, was later pronounced dead.

Meanwhile, a Swiss skier died in a separate avalanche near Val-lorcine, north of the Mont Blanc massif. She was reportedly travelling with her father and brother when the avalanche hit, the newspaper Le Figaro reported, citing the public prosecutor. The father of the 30-year-old was unharmed, her brother was taken to hospital for examination. The prefecture of Haute-Savoie has issued a warning about the heightened risk of avalanches. On Tuesday, a 55-year-old British skier was also caught in an avalanche in the Mont Blanc region and died. — ANI

Israel to sever ties with UN
Palestinian refugee agency

ISRAEL said on Wednesday it would sever all ties with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) starting on Thursday, accusing the agency of employing Hamas operatives and enabling “terror activity” in Gaza.

“UNRWA is riddled with Hamas,” Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Oren Marmorstein said on social media platform X. “Beginning Jan. 30, Israel will cease all engage-

ment with UNRWA in accordance with Israeli law,” he wrote.

Marmorstein reiterated Israel’s commitment to humanitarian aid reaching Gaza but said assistance would be channeled through “alternative organizations,” including other UN agencies, international NGOs, and foreign governments.

An Israeli law passed in October 2024 mandates an end to UNRWA’s operation on Israeli land -- including East Jerusalem, which Israel an-

nexed in a move not recognized internationally — and contact with Israeli authorities from Thursday. It also bars Israeli officials from any contact with UNRWA. The move has drawn condemnation from international leaders and aid groups.

UNRWA, which provides vital healthcare, education, and emergency services to millions of Palestinians, denied the allegations and said it has received no formal evidence from Israel to substantiate the claims. — Xinhua



Palestinians demonstrate in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip calling for continued international support to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), 30 January 2024. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

SPORTS

New-look Champions League produces jeopardy, but giants survive

EUROPEAN football body UEFA hailed the "more dynamic" new format of the Champions League as a huge success after the first phase concluded on Wednesday while all of the continent's biggest clubs survived to reach the knockout stage.

"It's nice to have a bit more jeopardy," Real Madrid's English superstar Jude Bellingham told UEFA.com after the reigning champions rounded out the league phase with a 3-0 win against Brest in France.

He was not referring to that particular game, one of 18 played simultaneously on the eighth and last matchday, a frenzied night which saw a total of 64 goals fly in around Europe, including one for Bellingham



Erling Haaland and Manchester City survived a scare to reach the next phase of the Champions League. PHOTO: AFP

himself.

It was rather a reference to the fact that the new format — with all 36 clubs playing eight games against eight different opponents — took some getting used to for every club, even the biggest fishes.

Madrid were themselves caught out as they lost three of their first five matches. Manchester City certainly faced jeopardy as the competition's winners in 2023 needed to win their last game at home to Club Brugge in order to avoid elimination, and found themselves 1-0 down at half-time.

They came back to win 3-1 to avoid humiliation and reach the knockout round play-offs, and Club Brugge also went through. — AFP

Rashford 'must be ashamed' of Man Utd exile, says Keane



Marcus Rashford has not played for Manchester United since mid-December. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

FORMER Manchester United captain Roy Keane says Marcus Rashford "must be ashamed" at his exile under Ruben Amorim.

The 27-year-old has not

played for United for seven weeks and manager Amorim has told him starkly that he "has to change" if he is to have a future at Old Trafford.

The England forward has

not been included in the squad for Thursday's trip to Romanian side FCSB in the Europa League despite training with the group during the build-up after a period working by himself.

Rashford has been linked with a loan move to Barcelona but time is tight, with the transfer window closing at 2300 GMT on Monday. Speaking on the Stick to Football podcast, Keane voiced his intense frustration over the situation.

"I can't get involved in the conversation, I still can't understand at any level," he said. "Whatever's going on with players leaving, months left on contracts, a player who doesn't train properly... I don't understand it. — AFP

Figure skating mourns victims of US plane crash

THE close-knit world of figure skating was in mourning on Thursday after a passenger jet carrying athletes and coaches, including former Russian world pairs champions Evgenia Shishkova and Vadim Naumov, crashed into Washington's Potomac River.

The plane carrying 64 collided midair with a military helicopter as it was approaching Reagan National Airport in Washington DC on Wednesday evening, plunging into the freezing river.

Several members of the US figure skating community were also passengers, the sport's national governing body confirmed.

They had been taking part in a training camp for top juniors that was held after the US championships, which took place in Wichita, Kansas, at the weekend.

"US Figure Skating can confirm that several members of our skating community were sadly aboard," the national governing body said in a statement. — AFP



Evgenia Shishkova and Vadim Naumov of Russia (centre) on top of the podium after winning pairs gold at the 1994 world championships in Chiba, Japan. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Italy's Dolomiti Valtellina to host 2028 Winter Youth Olympic Games

ITALY'S Dolomiti Valtellina has been confirmed as host of the 2028 Winter Youth Olympic Games (YOG) after a vote by the 143rd IOC Session here on Thursday. Dolomiti Valtellina's vision for the Winter YOG is to amplify the socioeconomic and sporting impacts of the Milan-Cortina 2026 Olympic Winter Games by returning to many of the same venues and reinvesting in community programmes which promote physical activity, particularly for young people.

Further building on the legacy of Milan-Cortina 2026, the aim of these Winter YOG is to pass the baton to, and empower, a new generation of athletes and leaders. — Xinhua



Indian approves ‘National Critical Mineral Mission’ to build a resilient value chain

THE Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the launch of the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) with an expenditure of Rs16,300 crore and expected investment of Rs18,000 crore by PSUs.

According to the Cabinet, as part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, and recognizing the indispensable role of critical minerals in high-tech industries, clean energy, and defence, the Government of India has undertaken several initiatives over the past two years to address challenges in the critical minerals sector.

The National Critical Mineral Mission, approved by the Union Cabinet, will encompass all stages of the value chain, including mineral exploration, mining, beneficiation, processing, and recovery from end-of-life products.

The mission will intensify the exploration of critical minerals within the country and in its offshore areas. It aims to create a fast track regulatory approval process for critical mineral mining projects.

Additionally, the mission will offer financial incentives for critical mineral exploration and promote the recovery of these minerals from overburden and tailings.

The mission aims to encourage Indian PSUs and private sector companies

Plans to intensify exploration within India and offshore, fast-track regulatory approvals, and offer financial incentives.



Critical minerals are essential for economy

- **Energy Transition:** Green technologies like solar panels, wind turbines, batteries, and electric vehicles are integral to the transition toward clean energy and a low-carbon economy.
- **Economic Development:** Industries such as high-tech electronics, telecommunications, transport etc heavily rely on these minerals.
- **National Security:** These minerals are vital for defence, aerospace, nuclear, and space applications, necessitating the use of high-quality and reliable materials.
- **Agriculture:** Fertilizer minerals like phosphorite, glauconite etc are important for agriculture sector.

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There is a need to establish an effective framework for India's self-reliance in the critical mineral sector. In line with this vision, the Finance Minister announced the setting up of the Critical Mineral Mission in the Union Budget for 2024-25 on 23 July 2024. **PHOTO: ANI**

to acquire critical mineral assets abroad and enhance trade with resource-rich countries. It also proposes development of stockpile of critical minerals within

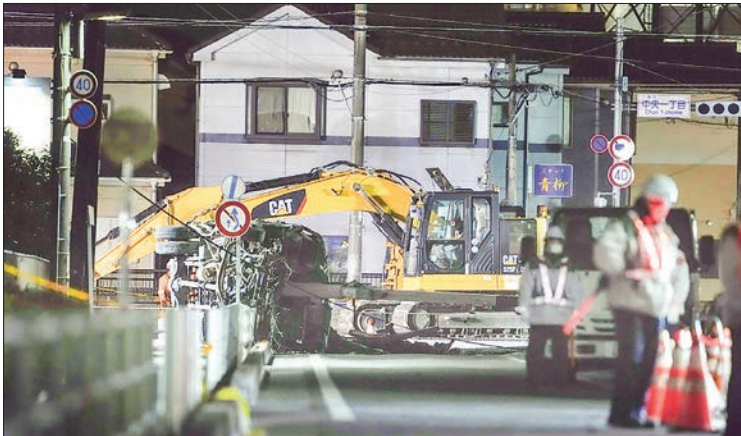
the country.

The mission includes provisions for setting up of mineral processing parks and supporting the recycling of critical

minerals. It will also promote research in critical mineral technologies and proposes setting up Centre of Excellence on Critical Minerals. — ANI

Sinkholes near Tokyo merge, man still trapped on 3rd day

A sinkhole at an intersection near Tokyo that swallowed a truck collapsed further Thursday and merged with a second



Rescue operations continue on 29 January 2025, at an intersection in Yashio in Saitama Prefecture, near Tokyo, after a sinkhole opened up the previous day, swallowing a truck and a man believed to be its driver. **PHOTO: KYODO**

opening that had formed nearby, as rescue efforts continued into a third day to save the driver.

The sinkhole in Yashio, Saitama Prefecture, now measures roughly 20 metres in width after first appearing on Tuesday, with further cave-ins occurring. Local fire authorities are considering how to employ heavy machinery to remove earth and rubble accumulating there.

While the trapped 74-year-old man was initially able to speak, communication has been lost since Tuesday afternoon, with the driver's seat of the truck buried in debris. — Kyodo

CONSERVE ELEPHANT POPULATION

Laos to host annual Elephant Festival

THE annual Elephant Festival will be held in northern Lao province of Xayaboury on 18-24 February, featuring 50 elephants in a spectacular show to attract large crowds and support elephant conservation efforts.

The festival aims to preserve Laos' dwindling elephant population, which is at risk of extinction, while inspiring support for their conservation and ensuring their cultural significance endures, Lao national TV reported on Thursday.

Each year, the festival attracts large crowds to Xayaboury, where visitors can witness the majestic elephants, trained and led by their mahouts. This year, 50 elephants will participate in the festival, reflecting the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

The festival will kick off with a mini-marathon and elephant rides, followed by cultural performances. A street market will offer a variety of products from Laos and beyond. — Xinhua