

## Four Objectives of the National Defence and Security Council

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

## National Development Requires Knowledgeable and Skilled Population

Meetings and discussions have been held with ethnic armed organizations, and they have consistently been welcomed with open doors for the sake of durable peace.

ACTING President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma Min Aung Hlaing sent a message to the 78<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Chin National Day 2026. The full text of the translated message is as follows: -

**SEE PAGE 3**



This image portrays holidaymakers enjoying their time at Chaungtha Beach during the long holiday.

## Over 60,000, including foreign tourists, flock to beach resorts during long holiday

A total of 22,773 local and foreign travellers visited beaches during the 2026 New Year holidays, while the figure surged to over 60,000 during the February long holiday, with the majority of international tourists arriving from China, Russia, India, Korea and Thailand.

**D**uring the six-day-long holiday marking Union Day and the Chinese New Year, more than 60,000 local and foreign visitors visited beach resorts in Ayeyawady Region, including Ngwehsaung, Chaungtha, Shwethaungyan and Goyangyi beaches and other famous sites in Patheingyi, according to the Ayeyawady Region Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

**SEE PAGE 2**

# NATIONAL

## Students' future relies on teachers' qualifications and commitment

❖ “Since the future of students depends on the teachers' academic qualifications and their goodwill, it is important for all of you to embody the seven essential virtues of a teacher. These include being worthy of respect, being worthy of affection, being worthy of praise, correcting students firmly when they make mistakes without showing resentment, being able to answer their questions, being able to explain profound principles, and guiding them towards what is beneficial rather than urging them toward what is not.”

*(Excerpt from the speech delivered by Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with male and female students from the BEd five-year course No 7 of the University for Development of National Races of the Union held on 21 October 2025)*

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

## Public Notice on Private Cinema Operation

THE Central Committee for Video Business Inspection and Supervision has announced that some operators have been running private mini-cinemas using projectors or televisions, partitioned into small rooms in a hotel- or guesthouse-style arrangement. Upon inspection, the committee found that such operations could lead to undesirable social consequences. It has therefore instructed the Region and State Video Business Inspection and Supervision Committees to revoke immediately any screening permits issued to such venues and to take action against illegal screenings under the Television and Video Law.

Despite this directive, inspections revealed that certain private cinemas, including RIO Private Cinema in Sangyoung Township, Yangon Region and The Vibe Mini Cinema, in Pinyin Township of Nay Pyi Taw along with other similar establishments, have continued to operate unlawfully by screening uncensored films.

The committee hereby informs the public that legal action will be taken under existing laws against any venue that continues to operate or screens uncensored films without a valid business licence.

Central Committee on Video Business Inspection and Supervision

## Over 60,000, including foreign tourists, ...



Beachgoers captured enjoying their vacation during the long holiday. **PHOTOS: KANU**

### FROM PAGE 1

During the long holiday from 12 to 17 February, Ngwehsaung beach welcomed 28,173 local travellers and 907 foreigners, whereas Chaungtha welcomed 30,555 locals and 115 foreign visitors, Shwethaungyan welcomed 919 locals and 82 foreigners, Goyangyi welcomed 5,947 local travellers, and the famous sites in Patheingyi hosted 5,947 local travellers and 68 tourists, totalling 66,996 travellers.

In 2025, the statistics reported that some 1,521,619 travellers at home and

abroad visited Ayeyawady Region. At the beginning of 2026, visitor arrivals were already strong, and tourism service providers and hotel operators estimate that even more visitors may travel to the beaches during the upcoming Myanmar New Year Thingyan festival compared to last year.

“Tourism development in Ayeyawady Region has improved thanks to a better transport system. As the regional government continues to supervise and upgrade transport connectivity, travellers

can now reach their destinations quickly and enjoy their holidays in comfort and peace. The strong condition of beach tourism has also boosted related businesses, generated good income and benefited the socioeconomic lives of locals. Since travelling contributes to both physical and mental well-being, we warmly invite visitors to come and relax during the upcoming holidays,” said U Aung Thu Oo, director of the regional directorate.

There are 38 hotels and 66 municipal guest houses at Ngwehsaung beach, 32

hotels and lodges and 60 municipal guest houses at Chaungtha beach, six hotels and lodges at Shwethaungyan beach and 23 hotels and lodges and 68 municipal guest houses in Patheingyi.

There were 22,773 local and foreign travellers to beaches during the 2026 New Year holidays, while there were over 60,000 during the February long holiday. Among the tourists, the largest numbers came from China, Russia, India, Korea, and Thailand. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/KTZH

# NATIONAL

## Residents Urged to Prioritize Public Safety Amid Armed Terrorist Threats

ARMED terrorists have been launching attacks by using residential homes and administrative buildings in towns and villages as cover, where they have forcibly settled. They aim to shield themselves from Tatmadaw counterattacks while also persuading temporarily displaced persons to return to their native areas and recruiting new members. That enables terrorists to use civilians as human shields. Tatmadaw is committed to safeguarding the sovereignty of the State and will respond to these threats based on intelligence and prevailing conditions. Therefore, residents in areas where terrorists have taken control must prioritize their safety and protect themselves from being exploited by these groups.

*(An excerpt from guidance given by Chairman of the State Administration Council, Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to Shan State cabinet members and state-level departmental officials on 3 September 2024)*

## National Development Requires Knowledgeable and Skilled Population

### FROM PAGE 1

#### Esteemed people and Chin ethnic nationalities,

I extend my heartfelt prayers and best wishes for the fulfilment of all forms of well-being and prosperity to all Chin ethnic nationalities, as well as to all national brethren born of the Union on the auspicious occasion of the 78<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of “Chin National Day”, which falls on 20 February 2026.

In the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, all national races born of the Union, including the Chin ethnic people, have for many years lived together on the same land and shared the same water, united in spirit and solidarity like members of one family. Owing to this unity and harmony, the nation has been able to stand with dignity and honour in the community of the world.

Throughout the successive stages of the nation’s independence struggle and during the period of building the State after independence, the Chin ethnic people stood shoulder to shoulder and worked hand in hand with other national races born of the Union. During the time of invasion and occupation by the British colonialists, Chin ethnic leaders such as Bo Khai Kam, Bo Con Bik, Bo Lall Lwe, and Bo Thaung Linh, together with the Chin ethnic people, bravely and resolutely resisted the imperialists alongside other national brethren.

In addition, Chin ethnic leaders such as U Thong Za Khup, recipient of the Naing-Ngan Gonyi Award First Class, U Kio Mang, Wunna Kyaw Htin U Hlur Hmong, Thiri Pyanchi U Thaung Cin Thang, Independence Mawgun Award First Class recipient, and Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu U Vammathamong, Naing-Ngan Gonyi Award First Class recipient and Thiri Pyanchi U That Ling played key roles during the struggle for independence. After independence, during periods of internal unrest, Chin leaders, including Lt-Col Hrang Thio, Lt-Col Lyan Ciin Zamg, Captain Thura Aung San Thuria Taik Chun, Colonel Zeya Kyaw Htin Van Kul, and Naing-Ngan Gonyi award First Class recipient Maj-Gen Thaung Za Khai actively and faithfully carried out their respective duties for the nation alongside their fellow Chin ethnic people.

Thus, the many heroic Chin ethnic people who devoted their lives, blood, and sweat for the stability of the State and the Union, and for the consolidation of sovereignty, and who are forever honoured by the State and Tatmadaw, remain enshrined in history as a source of pride and admiration for the Chin State and the Chin ethnic people.

In 1948, during the early post-independence period, a rally in Falam revoked the feudal administrative system and initiated the regional democratic administrative system. On that day, which fell on 20 February, was designated as “Chin National Day”, and celebrations are held yearly, and this year’s occasion is the 78<sup>th</sup> one.

At present, the ongoing violent and terror acts, lawless acts, and destructive activities within the country, including in certain areas of Chin State, pose a grave danger to the nation. It is especially necessary to remain vigilant and take protective measures against groups, both domestic and foreign, that seek to sow discord, incite hatred, and promote bloodshed among Union-born national brethren, thereby undermining the bonds of friendship and mutual respect that have been built over thousands of years, as well as to guard against the imposition of narrow, ethnocentric ideologies.

These terror acts were based on instigations with the eagerness to unlawfully seize the State power without accurately reviewing the incidents, or cancelling the results of voting frauds which happened in the 2020 general elections. Some ethnic armed organizations with incorrect attitudes over the State and the people took the

advantages over the instability of the nation and committed destruction and violent attacks on the peaceful and stable areas to expand their areas and control. As such, everyone knows that innocent people from various regions, including the Chin State, face loss of lives, property and houses, as well as a large number of public-owned buildings, facing hardships.

It is the local ethnic people themselves who are directly experiencing the harmful effects of armed violence. The actual destruction and losses also extend to the nation’s resources and basic infrastructure of the State. In a context where development is gaining momentum, such reckless actions reduce the country’s strength and require enormous effort and time to restore conditions to their original state. Because of these violent incidents, the State has been providing financial assistance for civil servants and civilians who have been temporarily displaced. Therefore, all ethnic peoples, including the Chin ethnic community, are encouraged to work together to eliminate terrorist actions and attacks that harm the nation and its people, and to help achieve peace and stability.

The National Defence and Security Council has adopted and is implementing four objectives while striving to continuously create a peaceful and stable environment, intending to end the armed conflicts for the sake of the State and the people. Only when the State has an improved economy will various sectors, including politics, social affairs, education and health, develop. As such, priority must be given to grow economic infrastructure to improve the socioeconomic life of the people.

That is why it is necessary to emphasize larger quantities of agricultural produce in relevant regions and prioritize systematic livestock breeding measures appropriate for the region. I would like to urge all to beef up production of quality MME products through micro, small and medium-sized enterprises based on agricultural and livestock goods produced locally in order to ensure local food security and fulfil the local demand, in addition to increasing the volume of export products. In this regard, the State is providing necessary techniques, capital and production inputs for those businesspersons with more and more aid plans.

For the building of a Union based on democracy and a federal system that the State is striving to establish, and for the social and economic development of the people, all citizens must be healthy, resilient, and equipped with knowledge and skills. Therefore, the State is making efforts to develop all sectors, including education and healthcare, in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. Since national development can only be achieved through a knowledgeable and skilled population, the State provides free and diversified education to ensure that every citizen has the opportunity to complete at least KG+9. In addition, 89 basic education and industrial, agricultural, and livestock schools have been opened to enable those who complete KG+9 to acquire vocational and livelihood skills, thereby cultivating human resources for the nation.

Everybody knows that schools, universities and colleges have been established for the people to have access to basic and higher education. I would like to urge all to enable all school-age youth to attend schools, not to drop out of school and learn education till their goals to become experts, professionals and professors. As health is essential for all societies, like education, the State enhances healthcare services, treatment and sharing activities on health awareness. As such, everybody needs to take care of their health to be long life expectancy.

SEE PAGE 4

# NATIONAL

## National Development Requires Knowledgeable and Skilled Population

### FROM PAGE 3

Due to the voting fraud in the 2020 general elections, the state of emergency for the nation was declared in accord with the Constitution (2008) starting from 1 February 2021, and Tatmadaw took State responsibilities temporarily. From time onward, objectives and roadmaps were implemented for the peace and stability of the Union, the rule of law, the development of economic, social, education and other sectors. Efforts are being made to cease the armed conflicts in accordance with the NCA agreements, and it should be noted that meetings and discussions have been held with ethnic armed organizations, and they have consistently been welcomed with open doors for the sake of durable peace.

The National Defence and Security Council has successfully conducted the free and fair multiparty democratic general election 2025 in three phases, achieving the State's ultimate goal. According to the election results, Hluttaw sessions will be held in March, and the emerging government will assume the responsibilities of the State in accordance with democratic standards. Therefore, in the ongoing processes of

nation-building, it is urged that the people fully participate, exercising their freedom and justice in accordance with laws and regulations, to ensure the full implementation of a genuine, well-disciplined multiparty democratic system.

Since State peace and stability and the rule of law are crucial for the country's development and nation-building endeavours, it is earnestly urged that all ethnic peoples, including the Chin ethnic community, work hand in hand with the State government to implement the ceasefire of armed conflicts. On this 78<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Chin National Day, with prayers for continued success, it is hoped that the Chin people, grounded in the longstanding spirit of Union unity and love for their heritage, will continue to serve the interests of Chin State as well as those of the Union as a whole.

*Senior General Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu  
Thadoe Thiri Thudamma Min Aung Hlaing  
Acting President, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar  
Chairman, the State Security and Peace Commission*

## Union Minister meets cabinet members of Chin State government, departmental staff

STATE Security and Peace Commission Member and Union Minister for Border Affairs and for Ethnic Affairs Lt-Gen Yar Pyae met cabinet members of the Chin State government and departmental staff at the meeting hall of the General Administrative Department of the Chin State government in Haka Township yesterday.

Speaking at the occasion, the Union minister said it has been observed that civil servants serving in Chin State face certain challenges compared to those serving in other regions and states. The government staff have a responsibility to carry out their duties professionally. The Civil Service Personnel Law states that civil servants must be free from party politics. He added that party

politics and national politics are different -party politics serve the interests of a particular political party, whereas national politics generally involves safeguarding Our Three Main National Causes. Regardless of which government assumes office, the civil servants are accountable to the State and must perform their duties by cooperating with their respective ministries, referencing the law and rules enacted by the government.

Chin State Chief Minister Dr Wong Hsun Thang and township department heads briefed the regional development programmes.

Union Minister for Ministry 3 of the President's Office U Maung Maung Tint, Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than, Deputy Minister for Information U



SSPC Member and Union Minister Lt-Gen Yar Pyae addresses the meeting with the Chin State government and departmental personnel in Haka yesterday.

Ye Tint, Deputy Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Aye Tun, Deputy Minister for Agricul-

ture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Tin Htut and Deputy Minister for Health Dr Aye Tun coordinated

the discussion, and Union Minister Lt-Gen Yar Pyae concluded the meeting. — IPRD/KTZH

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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

## SWRR Union Minister receives Russian delegation

THE Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Dr Soe Win, received Mr Konstantin Kanarev, Representative for Russia-Myanmar Trade Relations, and a delegation from the Shamanov Foundation, one of the largest charitable organizations in the Russian Federation, at the ministry's meeting hall yesterday morning.

Both parties cordially exchanged views on the provision of humanitarian assistance by the Shamanov Foundation of the Russian Federation for disaster-affected people in Myanmar, the status of cooperation towards the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief

and Resettlement and the Ministry of the Russian Federation for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM) to establish a Russia-Myanmar Joint Humanitarian Response Centre, international assistance, including that provided by Russia, in response to the major Mandalay earthquake; and the ministry's ongoing activities in social protection, disaster management and rehabilitation.

The permanent secretary and directors-general, as well as the representative for Russia-Myanmar Trade Relations and members of the Shamanov Foundation, were present on the occasion. — MNA/MKKS



Union Minister Dr Soe Win holds talks with the Russian delegation in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

## LNG-fired plants to bolster Yangon power supply before summer

ELECTRICITY generated by LNG-fired power plants will be distributed to Yangon Region during the coming summer, according to the Department of Thermal Power Plants under the Electric Power Generation Enterprise of the Ministry of Electric Power.

A responsible official from the department said that the Thanlyin and Thakayta LNG power plants will play a key role in supplying electricity to consumers in Yangon during the summer period. Electricity previously utilized elsewhere will

be redistributed to the public, contributing to improved power availability. Furthermore, electricity generated by LNG plants will be delivered via dedicated lines to industrial zones, special economic zones and industrial enterprises on a 24-hour basis.

At present, the Thakayta and Thanlyin LNG-fired power plants in Yangon Region have been producing 500 megawatts of electricity since 14 January 2026. LNG carrier vessels are also expected to continue arriving throughout February.

The ministry stated that

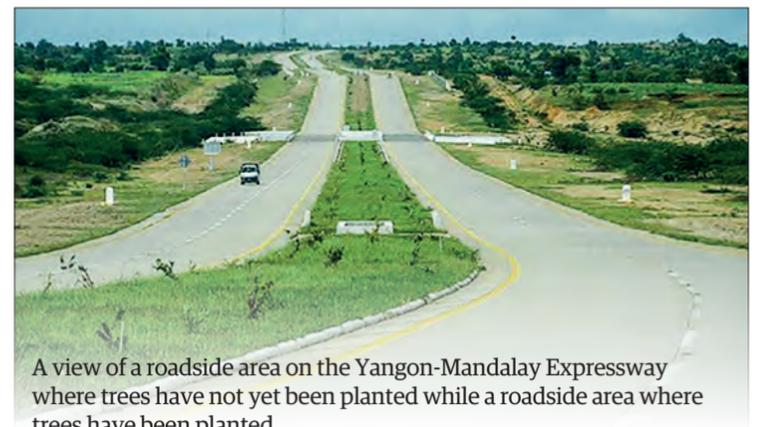
electricity generation declined by approximately 1,570 megawatts in 2025 due to the destruction of national grid transmission lines, natural disasters and a reduced gas supply from the Yadana offshore field.

As hydropower plants and solar power projects cannot be implemented within a short timeframe to meet nationwide electricity demand, LNG-fired power plants have been prioritized to enable electricity generation and distribution within a limited period ahead of the summer. — ASH/KZL



This image displays a general view of the Thanlyin LNG-fired power plant.

## Over 120,000 shade trees to line Yangon-Mandalay Expressway



A view of a roadside area on the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway where trees have not yet been planted while a roadside area where trees have been planted

MORE than 120,000 shade trees will be planted along the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway to promote a greener and more pleasant environment, according to the Expressway Maintenance and Supervision Committee.

As part of a project aimed at enhancing the landscape along the expressway, the planting of shade trees will commence in the coming rainy season and is expected to take between two and three years to complete.

"We have set a target of planting more than 120,000 trees along the entire Yangon-Mandalay route. The rainy season is the appropriate time for tree planting. As soon as the rains begin, we plan to plant a large number of trees. The main species will include rain, madhuca longifolia and neem trees. Star-flower trees will be planted on the traffic islands. Along the roadside, we will

plant rain, cassia siamea, neem, madhuca longifolia, star-flower and tamarind trees, as well as manjansha. Our primary focus is to plant rain and manjansha trees on the Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw section, and cassia siamea, neem and tamarind trees on the Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay section. At present, we are carrying out maintenance of the existing trees," said an official from the Expressway Maintenance and Supervision Committee.

Previously, tree planting and maintenance activities were carried out through a tender system. However, seedlings are now being supplied by the Forest Department, and the expressway authority is undertaking the work directly. At present, efforts are focused on maintaining and caring for trees that have already been planted. — ASH/MKKS

# NATIONAL

## MCEF rolls out free masonry course in Mandalay for 100 trainees

THE Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Federation (MCEF) has announced the opening of Batch 1 of a Building Renovation Masonry training course in Mandalay, which aims to train up to 100 participants.

The free masonry training will run for one month, from 18 February to 18 March. Currently, Batch 1 in the first location is underway with an initial group of 20 trainees.

Project Team Leader U

Myo Nyunt and trainers U Khin Maung Myint, U Khaing Zaw Win, U Phyo Linn Aung, and U Yan Naing explained several key aspects of the industry, including the objectives of the training and the On-the-Job Training (OJT) system, trainee codes of conduct and the mandatory use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for safety, specialized construction topics such as working at heights, electrical hazards, and equipment safety, and house-



Trainees attending Batch 1 of the free Building Renovation Masonry (OJT) training course.

keeping, waste management, emergency response, and safety communication (Toolbox Talks).

The programme is struc-

tured to train 20 participants per location across five different sites to reach the 100-person goal. According to MCEF, the primary ob-

jective is to disseminate technical construction knowledge, and the course is open to anyone with basic masonry skills. — MT/ZN

## Shwepyitha garment factory fire extinguished after 13 hours



Myanmar firefighters are pictured extinguishing the garment factory fire.

A fire broke out at a garment factory in Shwepyitha Township of Yangon Region and was put out 13 hours later, according to the Myanmar Fire Services Department.

The fire began at 12:20 pm on 18 February at a garment factory owned by the Straightex Co Ltd, located at the Wahtaya Industrial Zone in Shwepyitha. It was initially put out by four fire engines, two water trucks from the township fire station and the blaze was under control at around 1:38 pm by level 1 and level 2 firefighting vehicles, as well as fire trucks from the headquarters, and completely put out at 1:30 am on 19 February.

Some parahita groups provided help at the scene from 1 pm yesterday until 5 am the following morning.

"We provided help at the garment factory fire for more than 16 hours. We had to drive for so long to reach there, and it took too long to be able to give help. It was an unforgettable moment," said Ko Pu Tuu from the Shwe Thanlyin parahita group.

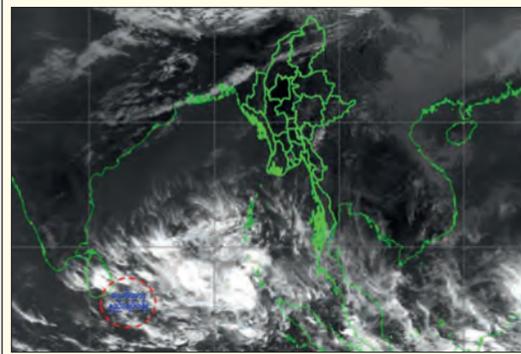
Similarly, the Yethurain Sangyoung reserve fire brigade also went to help in putting out the fire.

"Our Sanchaung reserve fire brigade remained at the scene providing water until 2 am this morning," said an official earlier this morning. — Htun Htun/ZS

### Low-Pressure Area Condition

Issued at 4 pm MST on 19 February 2026

ACCORDING to the observations at 3:30 pm MST today, the low-pressure over the Equatorial Indian Ocean and adjoining South-West Bay of Bengal still persists. It is likely to move west-northwestwards towards Sri Lanka during the next 24 hours and weaken gradually. — DMH



## 80 Myanmar women workers granted OWIC and overseas job training

80 Myanmar women workers, going to work in Japan under the management of overseas employment agencies, have been allowed to attend the overseas job training course and apply for the Overseas Worker Identification Card, said the Safe Migration under the Ministry of Labour on 18 February.

According to the announcement, the women workers will need to attend the job training course on 20 February and apply to the OWIC on 21 February. They will need to resubmit if they are unable to do so by the schedule, it said.

Agencies will need to resubmit an Excel soft copy of the list of sending workers, a copy of the passport, and a copy of the OWIC within a week of the departure date to the Department of Labour at [dolmigrationjapan@gmail.com](mailto:dolmigrationjapan@gmail.com). — MT/ZS

### Myanmar Daily Weather Report

Issued at 7 pm Thursday, 19 February 2026

**BAY INFERENCE:** According to the observations at 5:30 pm MST today, the low-pressure over the Equatorial Indian Ocean and adjoining South-West Bay of Bengal still persists. It is likely to move west-northwestwards towards Sri Lanka during the next 24 hours and weaken gradually. The weather is partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and South Bay of Bengal and a few clouds elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF 20 February 2026:** Fairly widespread rain or thundershowers in Taninthayi Region, scattered rain or thundershowers in Kayin, and Mon States and isolated rain or thundershowers in Yangon, Bago, and Ayeyawady Regions and Kayah, and (southern and eastern) Shan States. The degree of certainty is 80 per cent. The weather will be generally fair in Lower Sagaing Region and Chin State and partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

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

**OUTLOOK FOR THE SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of isolated light rain or thundershowers in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Bago, Magway, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Regions and Kayah, Kayin, Mon, Rakhine, and (southern and eastern) Shan States.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20 February 2026:** Partly cloudy.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20 February 2026:** Partly cloudy and isolated rain or thundershowers. The degree of certainty is 80 per cent.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20 February 2026:** Partly cloudy. — DMH

# NATIONAL

## Responsible Business & Natural Resources Development Committee sets future roadmap

THE Responsible Business and Natural Resources Development Committee of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) might have many tasks to undertake in collaboration with the government, said Committee Chair, Daw Khine Khine Nwe.

She gave these remarks during the first coordination meeting of the committee held on 21 January at the UMFCCI meeting hall, according to the UMFCCI press release issued in the afternoon of 19 February.

“As there may be many tasks that need to be undertaken

jointly with the government, it is necessary to carefully define the committee’s objectives, policies, and strategies. We will collaborate with all committee members to achieve the committee’s objectives and vision. It is also necessary to review, amend, and supplement the duties and authorities and submit them accordingly,” she said.

The committee members provided necessary data and recommendations regarding the review and amendment of duties and authorities, and discussed issues related to online scams that may be encountered in the future. — Htun Htun/KK



The first coordination meeting of the Responsible Business and Natural Resources Development Committee is underway at the UMFCCI.

## Illegal sales at Thukha Dagon Public Rental Housing to face legal action



Apartment units of Thukha Dagon public rental housing in Dagon Myothit (South)Township.

THE Department of Urban and Housing Development (DUHD) stated that legal action has been taken against individuals engaged in unauthorized and illegal sales and their accomplices at the Thukha Dagon Public Rental Housing.

This housing is a public rental housing project that provides a five-year lease to retired civil servants and current civil service personnel who have housing difficulties.

However, some individuals who were granted a rental permit are not residing in the units themselves. Instead, some are found to be leasing the apartments to subtenants, allowing individuals not listed on the rental agreement to live there. Unscrupulous individuals are also selling rooms and shop units that they do not own.

Consequently, legal proceedings have been initiated against those involved in the unauthorized and illegal sale of state-owned apartments and their accomplices. Three individuals have been sentenced by the court to one year of imprisonment with hard labour under Section 6 (1) of the Public Property Protection Act for their offences. The department has also revoked its rental permits.

Therefore, DUHD notified the residents to refrain from subletting apartments to individuals not listed in the rental agreement or engaging in the sale of apartments. Anyone found violating these rules will have their rental permit revoked and face legal action in accordance with the law.

The Thukha Dagon Public Rental Housing, managed by DUHD, has issued guidelines through its Public Rental Housing Apartment Allocation and Disciplinary Committee for those granted rental rights. No one other than the person granted the right to rent the apartment and those listed in the apartment agreement are permitted to live in the unit. Subletting or transferring the rental of the apartment is prohibited. The apartment must not be transferred, sold, mortgaged, or given away in any manner, whether for payment or free of charge. The person granted the rental right must reside in the apartment themselves and must not leave the apartment closed and unoccupied. Those who violate the aforementioned rules will result in revocation of permits revoked and will be prosecuted. — NN/KK

## CBM pumps large volume of foreign currency into market on 18 Feb

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold US\$900,000 to edible oil-importing companies and \$2 million to fuel oil-importing companies on 18 February, along with an injection of \$2 million, 130,000 yuan and over 679,540 baht on that day.

CBM announced on 11 February that it would pump \$30 million into the fuel oil sector.

Additionally, CBM sold \$851,000 to edible oil-importing companies, after selling over 737,600 yuan and over 1.45 million baht in the foreign exchange market on the same day.

CBM sold over \$1.366 million to edible oil-importing companies on 6 February, along with an injection of \$24,287 and over 2.54 million baht into

the market.

CBM sold over \$43 million, 65 million baht and over four million yuan in January 2026.

CBM aims to curb the instability in the foreign exchange market and currency devaluation. According to CBM’s notification on 15 March 2024, 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

## UMFCCI to offer Food Processing Technology Seminar on 21 Feb

A Food Processing Technology Seminar will take place at the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry from 9 am to noon on 21 February.

The seminar is organized by FAM Enterprise, with a view to providing knowledge and insights for food industry entrepreneurs, confectionery manufacturing business owners and individuals interested in food technology. The seminar will promote

advancement in food production technology, enhance understanding of food preservation techniques, provide insights into the application of food additives and raw materials and support the food industry through knowledge sharing by food doctor U Kyaw Min Htike. Early registration through <https://forms.gle/iaeq-JWyedhM5XuAfA> is advised due to the limited number of participants. — NN/KK

# OPINION

## Forge a united spirit to develop Chin State

Chin National Day is a distinguished day on which the Chin ethnic people, together with their ethnic brethren born of the Union, strove with unity and a strong Union spirit to oppose colonial rule, fight for independence, abolish the feudal system, strengthen solidarity among all hill and plain ethnic nationalities, and transform the system of rule by traditional chiefs into a democratic system of governance.

Under the current circumstances, the occurrence of riots and violent acts, violations of the rule of law, and numerous destructive actions that could lead to the disintegration of the nation in various parts of the country, including some areas of Chin State, poses a grave danger to the country.

It is necessary to be mindful that when unity collapses, and people take up arms driven by misguided ideas and self-interest, fighting one another, the nation may fall into decline and ultimately lose its sovereignty. To prevent such a situation from arising, the one essential requirement is the strengthening of the spirit of the Union.

Just as Chin ethnic people and various other national races live together hand in hand across the country in both hill and plain regions, so too in Chin State, Chin nationals and ethnic people from different regions are serving in their respective duties. Therefore, all ethnic people should cooperate in various sectors with a spirit of fraternity, emphasizing the development of Chin State and improving the social and economic lives of future generations. They must also be able to overcome attempts by external elements to incite division and create discord among ethnic nationalities.

lectively contributing their efforts in unity. They are also sharing knowledge and skills to support the State's progress.

Just as Chin ethnic people and various other national races live together hand in hand across the country in both hill and plain regions, so too in Chin State, Chin nationals and ethnic people from different regions are serving in their respective duties. Therefore, all ethnic people should cooperate in various sectors with a spirit of fraternity, emphasizing the development of Chin State and improving the social and economic lives of future generations. They must also be able to overcome attempts by external elements to incite division and create discord among ethnic nationalities.

In ethnic regions and in rural areas far from urban centres, it has been observed that due to language barriers, limited educational support, and other challenges, there are low levels of education and limited access to learning opportunities. At present, in some areas, including Chin State, armed violence, disruptions, destruction, and threats have prevented schools from reopening. As a result, many local ethnic students are suffering significant losses in their education.

In reality, Chin people live dispersed across various parts of Myanmar together with other ethnic nationalities. Likewise, in Chin State, people of different ethnic backgrounds—including government staff and religious personnel—are residing and dutifully serving while working together with goodwill for the development of Chin State. Since the development of Chin State cannot be achieved by the Chin ethnic people alone, the national brethren are col-

I am a football fan. I always watch football matches sitting up late to watch matches from different leagues such as La Liga in Spain, Bundesliga in Germany, Calcio in Italy and Premier League in England. I especially prefer to watch Premier League Football matches. I am a delirious fan of Liverpool F.C. Out of 20 football teams which are participating in this season, I like Liverpool the most. I always support Liverpool, whether they win or lose.

I enjoy watching their matches and applaud the team. Especially, I admire M Salah (Striker) most because he can make an excellent delivery of the ball into the net (the goal-posts). He is very quick at breaking through the defensive lines of the opposite teams. The defenders of the opposite teams are always thrown into helter-skelter by his attacks. No matter how hard the defenders try to block him, he manages to score the goals, weaving his way through the footballers of the opposite team. So, his performances can take the breath of the audience away. Due to his outstanding talent, he remains a top scorer of Premier League for some years

# A Football Match I have Watched at Dagon University Football Stadium

By Maung Maung Aye

to penetrate. Moreover, he always leads the team during the match. Under his leadership, Liverpool won many games and even the Premier League Trophy at the end of the last season. I also like Florian Wirtz, a new winger, who recently transferred from Leverkusen (Germany), because he is good at dribbling, passing the ball and formulating the way of playing. I notice his performances always contribute to the victories of Liverpool over other teams. So, I think he is also a promising player for the team. In this season, Liverpool is struggling to hold fast to the current champion (2025).

Last week, I went to the Dagon University Football Stadium to watch the football match be-



The opening event of the Dagon University Football Tournament.



Footballers and spectators who are applauding in the Dagon University Football Stadium.

in a row. Another Liverpool footballer who can catch my attention most is Van Dijk, one of the best defenders in the Premier League. He knows very well how to block the ball carried by the players of the opposite team. He is very strong, fast and tactful. He is very competent in sliding and heading away the ball. So, to the strikers of the opposite team, he appears to be a strong defensive wall difficult

tween the Sports Science Team and the Chemistry Football Team, which was scheduled to kick off at 9 am. It was after 8 am when I walked into U Soe Thein's food stall next to Dagon University Football Stadium. It was congested with many university students waiting enthusiastically to watch the match. I walked straight, sat at an empty table and ordered food. While having breakfast, I looked

out at Padauk Road, lined with Padauk trees. Some hostels stood beside this road. I found many students flocking toward the football stadium to support their major's team. After I had breakfasted, I drank green tea. Then, I went directly to the stadium, passing through the line of cars that were parked along Padauk Road. Some footballers were warming up in

the stadium just before the kick-off. I entered the stadium through the middle gate and walked up to the upper terraces of the grandstand. Some spectators took the seats on the left side of the grandstand and some on the right side, depending on the position of the teams they were to cheer. I took a vacant seat on the left. The university students and some in-charge teachers were eager to watch the

soccer competition. Some fans were beating the drums. Some were applauding their team loudly, holding up posters which read 'Our team must win'. The whole stadium was agog and active with a competitive mood. Referees and assistant referees in uniform were sitting at a table near the sideline in the shade of two large umbrellas. Next to them, a Red Cross group was stationed in the shade of a large umbrella. The first line-ups of the teams were having their documentary photos taken. Soon, the footballers filed out onto the field. The shouts of the spectators became louder. The Chemistry Team started to pass the ball. After receiving the ball, one of their midfielders ran with the ball through the footballers of the opposite team and delivered it to a left winger, who dribbled it and then dashed it to the main striker. He caught the ball with his right foot and shot it into the left corner

of the goal-posts with the slash of his left foot. The goalkeeper of the Chemistry Team managed to defend it by diving out into that corner. Thereupon, he placed the ball before him and passed it to the right defender, who ran with the ball along the edge of the field. The footballers of the Sports Science Team followed him and tried to block him. He dodged them and passed the ball to a midfielder of his team, who wove his way through the defenders of the opposite team and gave the ball to the main striker of his team with his left heel. The striker also jumped up a few feet from the ground and headed the ball away into the goal-posts of the Sports Science Team. The ball hit the net, and the whole stadium echoed with the applause of the spectators. From then on, the Sports Science Team intensified its attacks on the Chemistry Team. So, all footballers, except the goalkeeper, went forward simultaneously in the total football style. So, their counterattacks sent the Chemistry Team into chaos. Suddenly, while the footballers were being locked in a wrestle for the ball near the goal area of the Chemistry Team, one of the defenders of the Chemistry Team



Welcome to Dagon University

intentionally gave a kick on the calf of the main striker of the Sports Science Team, making him fall on his face. So, the main referee ran to the offender and showed a yellow card to him. Thus, the Sports Science Team chanced to deliver a free-kick into the goal-posts of the Chemistry Team. The main striker and captain of the Sports Science Team, one of the top scorers, was to deliver the free-kick at a 25 metre-distance from the goal-post. With a great desire to equalize his team, he, having concentrated on the ball and put forth all his efforts, shot it. All the spectators held their breath, and their eyes followed the ball. At first, it seemed to pass just above the upper bar of the goal-posts, but when it neared the goal-posts, it suddenly diverted its course and dropped down and went into the right upper corner of the goal-posts. All of a sudden, the pin-drop silence which had reigned for a few seconds burst out into a roaring applause. The first half ended with 1-1.

After a break, they resumed the game. The footballers made more efforts in the second half. So, throw-ins and fouls were frequent. The yellow cards were often shown. The Sports Science Team earned a corner kick eight minutes after the start of the second half, while the Chemistry Team got a throw-in a few minutes afterwards. In 62 minutes, the Sports Science Team had a clear shooting opportunity, but the Chemistry Team's goalkeeper made an excellent save.

No team got the upper hand. Despite several attempts, neither team managed to score during the second half. But the Chemistry Team players had greater stamina, and, therefore, although a defender was injured in the 66th minute, he was able to continue playing. The Sports Science created several chances but failed

to convert them into goals. The Chemistry Team gradually gained the upper hand and even hit the post in 76 minutes. Substitutions were made by both teams, and more yellow cards were shown as the match grew more violent.

The competition felt like a tug-of-war because some professionals who stood for the Myanmar National League played their best to be able to win. Spectators applauded loudly, waved placards featuring their favourite players, and occasionally jeered at opposing players. Soon after a water break, an injured footballer from the Chemistry Team limped off the field in 80 minutes. Both teams continued to fight until the final whistle. Despite several free kicks and chances, the match ended in a 1-1 draw.

When the referee blew the final whistle, the players shook hands and left the field. The spectators slowly dispersed from the stadium, excitedly ruminating over the match they had just enjoyed.

In conclusion, the author thinks that, nowadays, football is more than just a game or a sort of sport which creates a sound body and mind. It also opens up a way for young people to make their livelihood. Moreover, it teaches them valuable lessons in cooperation, discipline, and resilience. Moreover, participation in sports helps young people avoid illegal drugs and develop a healthy lifestyle. In addition, the author notices that the football tournament is held at Dagon University twice a year, and some footballers produced by Dagon University become Myanmar-selected footballers who can bring laurels to the country. So, it can be said that the football matches held at Dagon University can contribute considerably to the enhancement of the standard of the sport in Myanmar.

## SCI/ENVIRON: WORLD

# Repeated weight loss may improve health even if pounds return: study



Repeated cycles of weight loss and regain, often called “yo-yo dieting,” may still provide lasting health benefits. **PHOTO: PIXABAY**

*The research followed approximately 500 participants for as long as a decade within two controlled diet and lifestyle intervention studies.*

A long-term international study suggests that repeated cycles of weight loss and regain, often called “yo-yo dieting”, may still provide lasting health benefits, Israel’s Ben-Gurion University of the Negev said Wednesday.

Yo-yo dieting, also known as weight cycling, refers to a common pattern in which people lose weight through diet and exercise but later regain it, prompting another attempt. The practice is often viewed

as ineffective or harmful. The new research challenges that assumption.

The study tracked about 500 participants for up to 10 years as part of two controlled diet and lifestyle trials. Researchers compared Mediterranean-style diets and exercise programmes with standard diets, using MRI scans to measure body fat.

Even participants who regained weight before starting a second programme showed

improvements. Visceral fat, the fat surrounding internal organs, was 15 to 25 per cent lower than at the outset. They also demonstrated better insulin sensitivity and healthier blood lipid levels.

Five years after the second programme ended, those who made a second attempt had regained less weight and accumulated less abdominal fat than participants who dieted only once. — Xinhua

## Eight skiers missing in California avalanche found dead

EIGHT of the nine skiers missing in California after an avalanche have been found dead and one remains missing in horrific blizzard conditions, police said Wednesday.

Rescuers have been desperately searching for the group, which was caught in the avalanche early Tuesday on Castle Peak in the Tahoe area. Earlier, six skiers were found alive, two of them being taken to hospital.

“We are still looking for one

of the members at this time,” Nevada County Sheriff Shannan Moon said, cautioning that the storm is hampering any movement.

“Extreme weather conditions I would say is an understatement: lots of snow, gale-force winds, winds making it impossible to see,” Moon said.

Sugar Bowl Academy said multiple victims were linked to the private, ski-focused school, without identifying the people.

— AFP



Rescuers were searching for ten people caught up in an avalanche in the Sierra Nevada mountains. **PHOTO: NEVADA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE/AFP**

## Bird flu ravaging Antarctic wildlife, scientist warns

SCIENTISTS are sounding the alarm over the spread of bird flu across Antarctica, with a leading Chilean researcher telling AFP Tuesday of an observed strain “capable of killing 100 per cent” of infected fauna.

Researchers have been warning in recent years of bird flu’s spread on the icy continent, which hosts temporary teams of scientists but no permanent residents. But a particularly dangerous strain of the disease was detected in April 2024 by Chilean researcher Victor Neira and his team in five skuas, a type of polar seabird.

Since then, the virus has spread to other species, with cases detected along 900 kilometres (560 miles) of coastline studied by scientists. In a recent



In a recent expedition to Antarctica, new cases of avian flu were discovered in Antarctic cormorants, kelp gulls, Adelie and gentoo penguins, and Antarctic fur seals, according to researcher Victor Neira. **PHOTO: CHILEAN ANTARCTIC INSTITUTE/AFP**

expedition to Antarctica, new cases were discovered in Antarctic cormorants, kelp gulls, Adelie and gentoo penguins, and Antarctic fur seals, Neira told AFP.

“The virus has completely

spread throughout the Antarctic region where we have the capacity to go and study,” said Neira, a scientist at the University of Chile and the Chilean Antarctic Institute (INACH) — AFP

## AI tech can aid the starving as funding collapses

AT a high-profile AI summit in India, tech leaders celebrate billion-dollar deals amid rapid innovation, but World Food Programme (WFP) Deputy Executive Director Carl Skau warns of a dire funding collapse fuelling record hunger.

With 318 million people in 68 countries facing acute hunger — triple the level from five years ago — conflicts, climate disasters, and supply chain shocks like wars, fertilizer costs, and crop failures drive the surge.

WFP funding dropped 40 per cent in 2025, forcing brutal cuts: halved aid in Afghanistan leaves widowed mothers without support, risking deaths this winter; Sudan sees ration slashes amid famine pockets from civil war. — AFP

# Rio Carnival parade honouring Lula draws fire, and the lowest score

*Each year at Rio's Carnival, the top 12 samba schools choose a theme and transform it into a spectacular parade featuring massive floats, powerful drumlines and vibrant samba dancers.*

A Carnival parade honoring Brazil's president on Wednesday came dead last in Rio de Janeiro's fierce annual competition, as a political backlash grew over elements of the show that mocked conservatives.

The samba school Academicos de Niteroi, from a city neighbouring Rio, was relegated to the second division of the competition, which works like a football league.

Each year, the top 12 samba

schools pick a theme which thousands of performers bring to life with towering floats, thundering drum sections and scantily-clad samba queens, in the showpiece of Rio's Carnival.

Academicos's choice to honor the life of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva angered the opposition even before it took place, as images mocking former far-right leader Jair Bolsonaro appeared in technical rehearsals. — AFP



Samba dancers participate in a parade during the Carnival 2026 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 18 February 2026. PHOTO: LUCIO TAVORA/XINHUA

## Horror comics boom in our age of anxiety



American comics creator James Tynion IV (R) poses with Canadian visual artist and writer Michael Walsh. PHOTO: AFP

HORROR sells right now. Having swept the film, television and video game industries, it is also a winning formula in the world of comics. Just ask James Tynion IV.

The New York-based writer sold around five million copies of his "Something is Killing the Children" series, which first appeared in 2019.

It follows Erica Slaughter, a mysterious woman with a stuffed octopus, who can see the invisible monsters that have been murdering children in a small American

town. Subsequent works "The House on the Lake" or "The Department of Truth" have tackled human survival and conspiracy theories, helping turn Tynion into one of the top-selling independent American comics creators across all genres.

"Horror allows you to talk about what you're afraid about in society, and what you're afraid about in yourself, and you get to dial it up to all of these extremes," he told AFP in an interview in Paris. — AFP

## Taylor Swift bags best-selling artist of 2025 award: industry body

US pop star Taylor Swift was crowned the biggest-selling global artist of 2025, industry body IFPI announced Wednesday, the fourth consecutive year and sixth time she has claimed its annual prize.

The 36-year-old's success

was turbo-charged by the October release of her latest album, "The Life of a Showgirl", which set several streaming records, as well as the release of a docuseries about her record-breaking The Eras tour.

"2025 was another land-

mark year (for Swift), driven by exceptional worldwide engagement across streaming, physical and digital formats with the release of her 12<sup>th</sup> album ... and the documentary of her tour," IFPI said.

— AFP

## Spain births increase for first time in over a decade

THE number of babies born in Spain rose for the first time in more than a decade in 2025, official data showed Wednesday, a boost for a country facing one of Europe's most serious demographic crises.

Spain recorded 321,164 births last year, a rise of 3,159 or around one percent over 2024, according to preliminary figures from national statistics institute INE.

It is the first time that the yearly number of births has increased since 2014.

But the number of deaths in 2025 rose 2.5 percent over the previous year to 446,982, leading to a natural population decline of 122,167.

Spain has recorded a natural population decline — more deaths than births — each year since 2017. — AFP



Official data indicates that births in Spain increased for the first time in over a decade in 2025. PHOTO: PIXABAY

# ECONOMY WORLD



National carrier Vietnam Airlines placed an \$8.1 billion order for around 50 Boeing 737-8 aircraft, and opened discussions for an additional order for around 30 wide-body aircraft in the future, the airline said in a statement. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

## Vietnam airlines sign US contracts worth \$36.9 bln

*Vietnam posted eight per cent growth last year despite the new US tariffs.*

THREE Vietnamese airlines announced nearly \$37 billion in purchases Wednesday, in a series of contracts signed with US aerospace companies.

The agreements come as Hanoi and Washington continue trade negotiations on US tariffs on Vietnamese products, currently set at 20 per cent.

The South-East Asian nation posted eight percent growth

last year despite the new US tariffs, defying expectations when many feared the collapse of its export-driven growth model.

Fledgling airline Sun PhuQuoc Airways said Wednesday it placed an order for 40 of Boeing's 787 Dreamliners, a long-haul aircraft, with an estimated total value of \$22.5 billion.

Founded just a year ago, the airline said in a statement

that the purchase "reflects Sun PhuQuoc Airways' strategic ambition to build a truly intercontinental network".

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### NEWS IN BIREF

#### General strike to protest Milei's labour reforms starts in Argentina

ARGENTINA'S Javier Milei faces the fourth general strike of his term Thursday, this time by workers protesting a labor reform bill pushed by the budget-slashing president and set to be debated in parliament.

The country's main trade union called the strike, which began at midnight local time (0300 GMT) and is set to last 24 hours.

The contested reforms would make it easier to hire and fire workers in a country where job security is already hard to come by.

It would also reduce severance pay, limit the right to strike, increase work hours and restrict holiday provisions. The measure was approved by the senate last week and will now come before the chamber of deputies for consideration. The labour action comes as Argentina's economy is showing signs of a downturn in manufacturing, with more than 21,000 companies having shuttered in two years under Milei, who campaigned in 2023 with a chainsaw to symbolize his austerity intentions. — AFP

## Private companies seek to import fuel amid Cuban energy crisis

FACED with a severe energy crisis exacerbated by US sanctions, private companies in Cuba are attempting to import fuel after the island's government agreed to end its monopoly on the sector.

The fuel crisis, already chronic due to the communist government's lack of foreign currency, has worsened significantly since the halt of Venezuelan oil deliveries and

Washington's threats to impose tariffs on any country selling Cuba oil.

On the island of about 9.6 million people, diesel sales are now suspended and gasoline sales are drastically rationed.

"We bought an isotank... through a state-owned importer," the owner of a private company planning to import nearly 25,000 litres of diesel from the United States told AFP on the

condition of anonymity, referencing a container used to transport diesel.

"They should deliver it this week." The operation is being carried out under a license issued by the US Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), a branch of the Treasury Department, which allows private businesses on the island to import certain products, including fuel. — AFP

## Sri Lankan lawmakers scrap their pensions, delivering on a campaign promise

SRI Lankan legislators overwhelmingly voted Tuesday to scrap their pensions, in a bid to fulfil a key preelection campaign promise by the ruling Marxist-leaning government following anger over the country's economic crisis. Lawmakers passed the bill on Tuesday by 154 votes in the 225-member House, with only two against. The remaining legislators were not present during the vote. In Sri Lanka, a lawmaker was previously entitled to a pension after serving a five-

year term. The new law stops payments to anyone who already receives, or qualifies for, the pension. President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, voted into office in 2024, pledged to end the practice during his election campaign.

In a similar move, Dissanayake's government abolished perks provided to former presidents in September in response to popular demand. Those included state funding for housing, allowances, pensions and transport. — Kyodo



Vehicles wait in line to refuel at a petrol station in Havana. **PHOTO: ADALBERTO ROQUE / AFP/FILE**

## German railways to cut 6,000 jobs at cargo subsidiary

GERMANY'S state railway Deutsche Bahn said Thursday it would cut about 6,000 jobs at its cargo subsidiary in a bid to boost profitability and reduce dependence on government funds.

"The current restructuring plan envisages a reduction of approximately 6,000 jobs at DB Cargo," Deutsche Bahn said in a blog post.

"The plan is to implement this in a socially responsible manner." Loss-making DB Cargo is facing an EU investigation under state aid rules, and an official decision is due in October. — AFP

## French transport police to trial stun guns on trains

SEVERAL hundred officers who police France's trains and the Paris metro are to be armed with stun guns on an experimental basis in a bid to increase security, Transport Minister Philippe Tabarot said on Thursday.

Electroshock weapons are designed to temporarily incapacitate suspects with a shock before police detain them.

But police use of the weapons has been controversial and linked to many deaths, with rights groups claiming that it can be deadly if misused. Taser, the biggest manufacturer of stun guns, insists their products are safe. — AFP

## Central Tokyo average condo price up 15.8% in Jan

THE average price of a new condominium in central Tokyo in January rose 15.8 per cent from a year earlier to 121.26 million yen (\$782,000), a research institute said Thursday.

The price in the greater metropolitan area covering the capital and its three surrounding prefectures rose 14.2 per cent to 83.83 million yen, increasing for a ninth consecutive month, due to rising construction costs and the presence of luxury properties in central Tokyo, the Real Estate Economic Institute said.

However, on a month-on-month basis, the price declined for a fifth straight month.

Developers are shifting their focus to supplying properties in Tokyo's suburban areas and its neighbouring prefectures because of the difficulty in acquiring land in the capital's 23 wards, an official of the institute said, adding, "The rate of year-on-year price increases will slow."

The number of new condos listed for sale in Tokyo and the neighbouring prefectures edged up



The price in the greater metropolitan area covering the capital and its three surrounding prefectures rose 14.2 per cent to 83.83 million yen. **PHOTO: KYODO**

1.3 per cent to 628 units, four months, according to rising for the first time in the institute. — Kyodo

## Warner Bros gives Paramount one week to outbid Netflix

WARNER Bros Discovery said Tuesday it will give Paramount Skydance a chance to make its "best and final offer," Warner Bros. Discovery said in a statement that stressed it prefers the Netflix merger and has scheduled a special shareholders meeting to vote on it on 20 March.

Television and film titan Warner Bros Discovery, which owns CNN, announced in late October that it was open

to acquisition offers. Its board subsequently accepted a bid from Netflix to buy only its streaming and studio business.

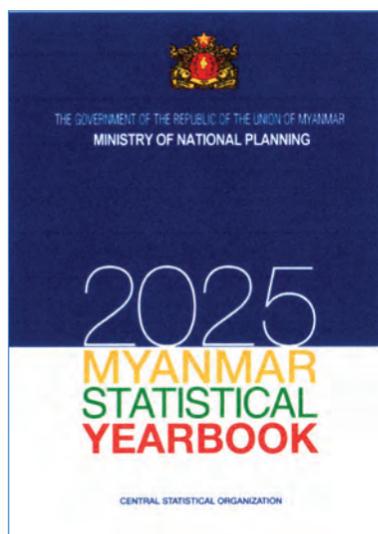
Paramount Skydance, which first approached Warner in September, is seeking to buy all of Warner Bros. Discovery for \$108 billion. Netflix is offering \$83 billion for its more limited merger. — AFP

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Paramount Skydance, which first approached Warner in September, is seeking to buy all of Warner Bros. Discovery for \$108 billion. Netflix is offering \$83 billion for its more limited merger. — AFP



Warner Bros Discovery grants Paramount Skydance one week to sweeten buyout offer amid fierce Netflix bidding battle. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**



**Myanmar Statistical Yearbook 2025** has been published, just as international statistical bulletins, which includes 16 chapters and over 304 tables with an updated compendium of statistics, technical notes, glossary and the data from many surveys conducted by the Central Statistical Organization.

It can be purchased at 160,000/-Kyats for both Hard Copy & CD-Rom, and at 15,000/-Kyats for CD-Rom only. Myanmar Statistical Yearbook 2025 is available at Central Statistical Organization, Office No(32), Nay Pyi Taw; Central Statistical Organization, La-127/128, Hluttaw Compound, Alone Road, Dagon Township, Yangon Region, and Sar Pay Beik Man Store (Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon) respectively.

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

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# ROLLING UPDATES

## WORLD

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Ex-President Yoon gets life sentence

A South Korean court on Thursday sentenced former President Yoon Suk Yeol to life imprisonment for leading an insurrection with his short-lived declaration of martial law in December 2024, a verdict underlining the country's democratic foundations.

The Seoul Central District Court found Yoon acted as the "ringleader" in an attempt to subvert the constitutional order. The statutory penalties for leading an insurrection under South Korean law are death, life imprisonment, or life imprisonment without labor. — Kyodo

#### First woman envoy for Palestine dies in France

LEILA Shahid, the first woman diplomat representing Palestine abroad, died in southern France aged 76, her family said Wednesday.

"She died today," her sister Zeina told AFP, without providing further details.

Born in Lebanon in 1949, Shahid was the first woman to represent the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) abroad, beginning her career in Ireland before also becoming representative in the Netherlands.

She served as envoy in France and later as the representative at the European Union. — AFP

#### Zuckerberg testifies in social media addiction trial

META CEO Mark Zuckerberg appeared in a Los Angeles court on Wednesday, where he testified in a trial that has put his company in the spotlight over social media's harmful effects on children. A California woman who used Meta's Instagram and Google's YouTube as a child has said the apps fueled her depression and suicidal thoughts. The plaintiff started using YouTube at age 6, Instagram at 11, then TikTok and Snapchat. The latter two already reached a damages settlement with the woman. The suit accuses the companies of seeking to get children hooked on their services, despite being aware of the mental health harms they can cause. At issue is the notion of whether or not social media apps are addictive to children. — ANI

## Japan's 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of US investment may involve next-gen nuclear reactors

*US eyes advanced nuclear reactors to meet soaring electricity demand fuelled by generative AI expansion.*



Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI) is currently a leading developer of next-generation nuclear technology, transitioning from traditional light-water reactors to a diverse lineup of advanced designs. The image shows a Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI) transportable microreactor designed for remote locations. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/MHI**

JAPAN is looking to invest in the construction of next-generation nuclear reactors in the United States in the second round of a \$550 billion commitment under a trade deal struck with the administration of President Donald Trump last July, a source familiar with the matter said Thursday.

The Japanese government is

drawing up plans ahead of Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's scheduled visit to the United States next month.

The two governments have just announced the first tranche of investment worth a total of about \$36 billion. It features synthetic diamond production, natural gas power generation and construc-

tion of a crude oil export terminal. Japanese companies have expressed interest in participating in the three projects. The idea of investing in next-generation nuclear reactors comes in response to growing electricity demand in the United States amid the spread of the use of generative artificial intelligence. — Kyodo



## King Charles' younger brother Andrew arrested: reports

ANDREW Mountbatten-Windsor, the younger brother of Britain's King Charles, has been arrested on suspicion of misconduct in public office, the BBC

and other media outlets reported Thursday. The former Prince Andrew, 66, has come under scrutiny for his ties with convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, facing allegations that he sent confidential government documents to the American. The US government has released a plethora of documents related to Epstein. The

former prince has always denied any wrongdoing in relation to Epstein, Reuters said.

Thames Valley Police said they have arrested a man in his 60s in Norfolk, northeast of London, and have "opened an investigation into the offence of misconduct in public office", but refrained from naming the arrested man. — Kyodo

Andrew Mountbatten Windsor, former prince, has been arrested on suspicion of misconduct in public office. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

# SPORTS

## Switzerland's Fatton wins women's ski mountaineering sprint on Olympic debut

SWITZERLAND'S Marianne Fatton won Olympic gold in the women's ski mountaineering sprint in Bormio on Thursday in the event's debut at the Winter Games.

Fatton clocked a winning time of two minutes 59.77 seconds on the Stelvio course, depriving France's four-time World Cup champion Emily Harrop by 2.38 seconds.

Spain's Ana Alonso Rodriguez claimed bronze, 10.45 seconds down on Fatton's pace.

Harrop, a four-time World Cup overall champion, had been hot favourite in skimo, an adrenaline-packed sprint requiring athletes to negotiate uphill climbs on ski and foot before descending by ski.

But she paid the price for a slow second transition. — AFP



Switzerland's Marianne Fatton celebrates victory in the women's sprint ski mountaineering. PHOTO: AFP



Ayeyawady United and Rakhine United are in action in their match. PHOTO: MNL

## Dagon Star, Ayeyawady claim full points in MNL

MATCHDAY 18 of the 2025-2026 Myanmar National League (MNL) continued on 19 February, with Dagon Star United and Ayeyawady United securing victories.

At the Thuwunna Youth Training Centre, Ayeyawady United defeated Rakhine United 2-1. Capitalizing on Yadanabon's defeat on the same day, Ayeyawady United climbed to seventh place in the standings. Rakhine United, meanwhile, remain under pressure and must continue battling to avoid the relegation zone in the upcoming fixtures.

Both sides fielded strong line-ups. Ayeyawady United controlled the first half and took a two-goal lead through striker Ti Nyein Min, who scored in 23 and 41 minutes. In the second half, Rakhine United pushed forward and pulled one back in 61 minutes when Khin Kyaw Win converted a penalty, but Ayeyawady United held on for the win.

In the match at the Thanlyin Thihadipa Ground, Dagon Star United edged Yadanabon 2-1. The victory strengthened Dagon Star United's position in the race for third place,

while Yadanabon slipped to eighth.

Dagon Star United opened the scoring in 56 minutes when Yan Kyaw Htwe converted a penalty. Aung Thiha added a second in stoppage time (90+1). Yadanabon managed a late consolation goal in 90+5 minutes through Phyto Khant Nyein.

Matchday 18 concludes on 20 February, with Yangon United taking on Shan United at YUSC Ground, while Thitsar Arman face Dagon Port at Thuwunna Youth Training Centre. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

## China names squad for Women's Asian Cup

THE Chinese Football Association on Thursday named a 26-player squad for the 2026 AFC Women's Asian Cup in Australia.

Head coach Ante Milicic has selected defender Wang Ying and forward Yuan Cong, who both joined A-League side Western Sydney Wanderers last September.

Also in the squad are several players from European leagues, including forwards Wu Chengshu and Wang Yanwen from French side Dijon, and right-back Li Mengwen from Scotland's Rangers.

Captain Wu Haiyan, who has been a leading figure in the national team for nearly a decade, is expected to partner Wang Linlin in central defence, with Li Mengwen and Chen Qiaozhu on the flanks. The tournament will be Milicic's first major competition as head coach of China's women since his appointment in May 2024. — Xinhua



Liverpool manager Arne Slot. PHOTO: AFP

## Liverpool boss Slot says Isak in 'final stages of rehab'

LIVERPOOL manager Arne Slot said on Thursday he believes striker Alexander Isak is in the "final stages of rehab" and could return by the end of next month to bolster the Reds' push for Champions League qualification. The British record signing has been sidelined since mid-December when he fractured a bone in his lower leg and needed ankle surgery following a sliding tackle from Tottenham's Micky van de Ven.

His injury came just as 26-year-old Sweden international Isak, who joined Premier League champions Liverpool for £125 million (\$169 million) from top-flight

rivals Newcastle in September, was finding his form at Anfield with two goals in six matches.

"Alex has been on the pitch, not with his football boots but with his running shoes for the first time this week," Slot told reporters.

"The next step is doing work with the ball, which every player likes most, then the next step is to come into the group and then it takes a while before you're ready to play. "It will be some time around there, end of March, start of April, where he is hopefully back with the group. That is not to say you are ready to play, let alone start a game. — AFP

Japan's 2<sup>nd</sup> batch of US investment may involve next-gen nuclear reactors

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# WORLD

Artificial intelligence must be accessible and inclusive, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi told world leaders and tech CEOs on Thursday, at a summit focused on the fast-evolving technology.

His call was echoed by UN chief Antonio Guterres, who warned the gathering that AI cannot be left to “the whims of a few billionaires”.

“We must democratize AI. It must become a medium for inclusion and empowerment,” Modi said, speaking in Hindi.

“We are entering an era where humans and intelligence systems co-create, co-work and co-evolve,” he added. “We must resolve that AI is used for the global common good.”

Frenzied demand for generative AI has turbocharged profits for many companies while fuelling anxiety about the risks to society and the planet.

The AI Impact Summit is the fourth annual international gathering to discuss how to handle it, following previous meetings in Paris, Seoul and Britain.

Sam Altman, head of ChatGPT maker OpenAI, Google’s Sundar Pichai and other tech bosses are speaking on Thursday, but Microsoft founder Bill Gates cancelled just hours before his speech.

This year’s AI summit — the largest yet — has been attended by tens of thousands of people from across the sector, including dozens of world leaders and ministers. — AFP

## India’s Modi calls for inclusive tech at AI summit

*Speaking in Hindi, he said that AI must be democratized so it becomes a tool for empowerment and inclusion, rather than exclusion.*



India’s AI summit has been attended by tens of thousands of people. PHOTO: AFP

## Trump kicks off his ‘Board of Peace’, with eye on Gaza and beyond

US President Donald Trump on Thursday gathers allies to inaugurate the “Board of Peace”, his new institution

focused on progress on Gaza but whose ambitions reach much further.

Around two dozen world leaders

or other senior officials have come to Washington for the meeting — including several of Trump’s authoritarian-leaning friends and virtually none of the European democrats that traditionally sign on to US initiatives.

The “Board of Peace” came together after the Trump administration, teaming up with Qatar and Egypt, negotiated a ceasefire in October to halt two years of devastating war in Gaza.

The United States says that the plan has now entered its second phase with a focus on disarming Hamas.

At the “Board of Peace” meeting, Trump is expected to detail pledges of more than \$5 billion for Gaza, where the vast majority of buildings lie in rubble and the property-mogul-turned-president has improbably suggested developing resorts. — AFP



US President Donald Trump speaks at the “Board of Peace” meeting during the World Economic Forum in Davos on 22 January 2026. PHOTO: MANDEL NGAN/AFP/FILE

## Slovak govt declares oil state of emergency

THE Slovak government declared a state of emergency in relation to oil supplies on Wednesday, the News Agency of the Slovak Republic (TASR) reported.

The country will release up to 250,000 tonnes of oil from the national material reserves for the Bratislava-based Slovnaft refinery, according to a government decision in response to the interruption of oil supplies via the Druzhba pipeline.

The Druzhba oil pipeline infrastructure in eastern Ukraine was damaged in late January due to military activities. This meant a halt to oil supplies to Slovakia, which haven’t been resumed yet, TASR reported. In addition, the Slovnaft refinery is halting its diesel exports to Ukraine, and all products will now be designated for the domestic market, said Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico after the government decision to release the 250,000 tonnes of oil reserves. — Xinhua