Embrace the Future: Unfolding a New Chapter with a Fresh Vision

The Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

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ASEAN Peoples Urged to Continue Preserving Unity and ASEAN Family Spirit

AGGA Maha Thray Sithu Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma U Min Aung Hlaing, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, delivered a message to citizens of Myanmar and the peoples of ASEAN on the occasion of the 59th Anniversary of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, which falls on 8 August 2026. The full text of the message is as follows:

Esteemed Citizens of Myanmar and the Peoples of ASEAN,

Today marks the 59th Anniversary of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). On this auspicious occasion, I extend my heartfelt wishes for the good health, prosperity, peace, and well-being of the people of Myanmar and all the peoples of the ASEAN region.

Established on 8 August 1967 with the vision of building "a united South-East Asian region", ASEAN has, over the past five decades, successfully evolved into a rules-based and people-centred regional organization founded upon shared interests, regional stability, and mutual respect and trust. The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia (TAC),

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5th Yangon International Gems and Jewellery Fair unveiled

YANGON Region Chief Minister U Aung Naing Thu and responsible officials inaugurated the 5th Yangon International Gems and Jewellery Fair with a ribbon-cutting on 6 August at the Lotte Hotel in Yangon, and they subsequently opened the gem auction hall as well.

The event runs through 9 August. The Yangon Region chief minister, Director-General Dr Htein Lin of the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization, under the Ministry of Commerce, Chairman U Aung Kyaw Zin and Vice-Chairman U Zaw Bo Khant of the Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association (Nay Pyi Taw) delivered the remarks, respectively.

The chief minister, officials and invitees posed for a commemorative photo and toured the exhibition hall to view the finished gems and jewellery products on display. — NN/KK



The inaugural ceremony for the 5th Yangon International Gems and Jewellery Fair is underway.

Myanmar President pays homage to Emerald Buddha Temple

A high-level Myanmar delegation led by President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing, currently in Thailand at the invitation of Prime Minister of Thailand Mr Anutin Charnvirakul, paid homage to the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, situated within the grounds of the Grand Palace in Bangkok, yesterday.



President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing receives sacred Dhamma offerings during his homage visit to Bangkok's Emerald Buddha Temple.

Upon arrival at the Grand Palace, the President and his accompanying delegation were warmly welcomed by senior Thai officials. They then toured the Grand Palace grounds, where responsible officials briefed them on the history and significance of the Royal Palace and the Temple of the Emerald Buddha.

The President offered flowers to the Sacred Buddha Image inside the temple. He also presented a marble replica of the Maravijaya Buddha Image and made a monetary donation for the Temple of the Emerald Buddha. The temple authorities accepted the donations and presented Dhamma gifts in return.

The President and his entourage circumambulated the temple clockwise. During the visit, officials explained the history of the Temple of the Emerald Buddha and its religious buildings, after which the President sought further information through discussions with the officials.

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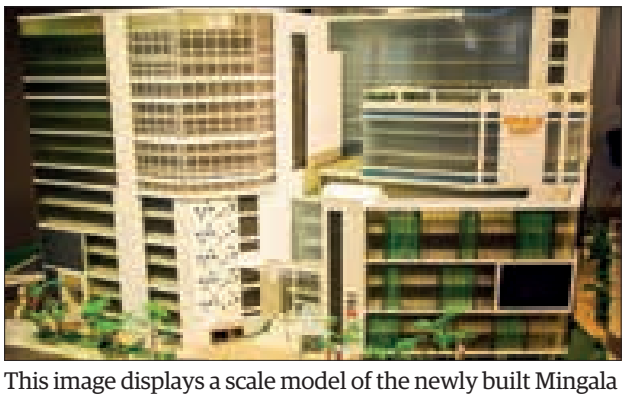
MPT offers free On-Net calls, data, and SMS for flood victims

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MNHRC inspects Hngetawsan Boys' Training School

New Mingala Market Nears Sept Debut



This image displays a scale model of the newly built Mingala Market.

A grand opening for the new Mingala Market in Mingala Taungnyunt Township is set for September 2026.

The new market is designated to replace the Mingala Market, which was destroyed by fire. Original vendors operating shops in the old market will be prioritized for slot allocation.

The modern Mingala Market complex features 15 above-ground floors with two underground levels. The ground floor includes 4,065 stalls, and the market structure is designed up to the fourth floor, developed under the supervision of the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC).

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Public Notice: Cash and In-Kind Donations Invited for Laymyethna Flood Victims

THE public is invited to donate cash and in-kind assistance to support people affected by the overflow of water caused by the subsidence of the embankment through the breach in the sandbar beneath of the Ngawun Embankment in Laymyethna Township, Ayeyawady Region.

Individuals and organizations in Myanmar and abroad may make donations through the following channels. The date, time and venue of the donation ceremony will be announced in due course.

Contact Points

(1) Nay Pyi Taw Council and the respective Region and State governments
(2) Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Office 23, Nay Pyi Taw
Tel: 09 2021491, 09 254170011, 09 43054844, 09 420703647
(3) Central Store (Yangon), Disaster Management Department, Ward 3, Kyaikwaing Pagoda Road, Yangon
Tel: 09 250123885, 09 420740160
(4) Central Store (Mandalay), Disaster Management Department, 65th Street, between 34th and 35th Streets, Pyigyimyatshin Ward, Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay
Tel: 09 420708827, 09 256061196

Thaleitaung Cave poised to become major tourist attraction





Images capture the Thaleitaung cave — a new popular tourist destination.



DEVELOPMENT is underway to transform Thaleitaung, a natural cave in Hpa-an Township, into a tourist destination, according to Tourism Hpa-an.

This plan is ongoing under the leadership of the Kayin State tourism working committee. Led by the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism's director, a field investigation was carried out at the Thaleitaung Cave in Hpa-an's Naungkamyaing village on 4 August, aiming to develop it as a new tourist destination.

If the plan succeeds, the cave will definitely become famous among tourists, said Tourism Hpa-an. It can be reached easily from Hpa-an; just enter from the Myinegyingu entrance and drive about 15 minutes. A direction sign with logs on the left side of the road can be found.

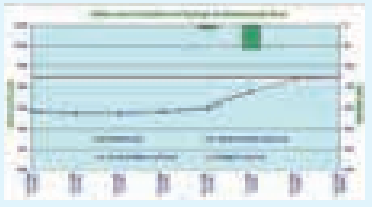
Renowned for its natural beauty, Hpa-an has long been a popular destination for domestic tourists, with visitor numbers continuing to rise. — MT/ZS

Flood Warning

Issued at 3 pm MST on 7 August 2026

ACCORDING to the 2 pm MST observation today, the water level of Dokhtawady River at Myitnge is observed as about 3.5 feet below its danger level. It may reach its danger level during the next 36 hours.

It is especially alert to the people who settle near the river banks and low-lying areas in Myitnge, to take precautionary measures and to stay away from the flood-prone areas in time if the water level will rise. — DMH



MPT offers free On-Net calls, data, and SMS for flood victims



A Cell on Wheel (COW) mobile station is seen at a flood relief camp in Laymyethna Township.

MPT has started providing one-week free emergency communication services, including 1GB mobile data, 100 minutes of MPT-to-MPT calls and 100 SMS messages, for flood-affected people in Laymyethna Township, Ayeyawady Region, starting from 7 August.

Following flooding caused by the rising Ngawun River, MPT restored communication services by installing two B2B satellite terminals and a Cell on Wheel (COW) mobile station at flood relief camps in Sayaykwin and Seiknohgon villages.

MPT will continue providing support to ensure emergency communications and connectivity for affected communities. — MNA/KTZH

Heavy Rainfall Warning No 38

Issued at 8 am MST on 7 August 2026

ACCORDING to the observations at 6:30 am MST today, due to the strong monsoon over the Andaman Sea and the South Bay of Bengal and the strong development of the convective clouds, rain or thundershowers are likely to be fairly widespread to widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Bago, Magway, Sagaing, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhine and Shan States with likelihood of isolated heavy falls from today morning to 10 August 2026.

Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced in the Gulf of Mottama, off and along the Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. The surface wind speed in squalls may reach 35 miles per hour. The wave height will be about 9-11 feet in the Gulf of Mottama, off and along the Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. The squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times in the Deltaic, off and along the Rakhine Coasts. The surface wind speed in squalls may reach 25-30 miles per hour. The wave height will be about 7-9 feet in the Deltaic, off and along the Rakhine Coasts.

Advisory

People should be aware of the strong monsoon over the Andaman Sea and the South Bay of Bengal and the strong development of the convective cloud, such as the heavy rainfall with strong wind, flash floods and landslides in the hilly areas and near small rivers and inland water transport and domestic flights. — DMH

NATIONAL

Bridging Parliaments: Myanmar President Meets Thai National Assembly Acting President to Deepen Ties

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing met Thai National Assembly Acting President Mr Mongkol Surasajja at the Thai Parliament building yesterday morning during his official visit to Thailand at the invitation of Prime Minister Mr Anutin Charnvirakul. Following a warm reception, the signing of the official guestbook, and a commemorative photo session, both leaders led delegation-level discussions, aiming at bolstering parliamentary cooperation, legislative exchanges, and regional ties.



President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with Acting President Mr Mongkol Surasajja at Thailand's National Assembly.

Mr Mongkol Surasajja congratulated the Myanmar delegation on their successful talks and signed Memorandums of Understanding with the Thai Prime Minister. He expressed confidence that joint efforts would enhance regional stability and socioeconomic development, emphasizing Thailand's eagerness to exchange legislative experiences, deepen parliamentary ties, and strengthen bilateral cooperation. He noted that strong bonds between the two legislatures would serve the long-term mutual interests of both nations and their people.

In response, President U Min Aung Hlaing noted that Myanmar's parliamentary system, with only fifteen years of experience under multiparty democracy, stands to gain valuable insights from Thailand's mature legislature. He highlighted several recent political and legislative developments in Myanmar, particularly the implementation of a Mixed-Member Proportional system that combines First-Past-The-Post and Proportional Representation. This hybrid model has significantly expanded parliamentary representation for ethnic, smaller, and independent parties following recent democratic elections. He also pointed to the official launch of the Myanmar-Thailand Parliamentary Friendship Association in July as a key vehicle for ongoing collaboration and growing gender diversity in Myanmar's governance, where women now comprise roughly 13 per cent of parliamentary seats.

Turning to shared regional issues, the President reaffirmed Myanmar's commitment to joint environmental initiatives. He noted that Myanmar will continue to address transboundary haze pollution alongside Thailand and Laos under their agreed three-nation framework, while also collaborating on river conservation. Furthermore, he requested Thailand's continued assistance in safeguarding the legal rights, safety, and welfare of Myanmar migrant workers currently residing across the country.

Concluding the meeting, the President expressed strong optimism that leveraging their respective economic strengths and expanding trade and investment would accelerate socioeconomic growth for both populations. The discussions reaffirmed that closer legislative cooperation will solidify the long-standing friendship between the two parliaments.

Following the talks, the President completed a guided tour of the Thai Parliament building before departing with warm farewells from the Acting President and assembly officials. — MNA/ST

Myanmar President pays homage to ...

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The President and delegation members also visited the Dusit Maha Prasat Throne Hall within the Grand Palace grounds, where they laid a wreath in memory of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, the Queen Mother of Thailand, and donated a marble replica of the Maravijaya Buddha Image.

They also visited the Piman Rattaya Throne Hall, where they laid a wreath in tribute to Princess Bajrakitiyabha, the King's eldest daughter, before presenting a marble replica of the Maravijaya Buddha Image as a commemorative donation. The President also signed the condolence book during the visit. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar Reaffirms Commitment to Protect Rights and Interests of Citizens in Thailand

Myanmar Embassy and Military Attaché Office staff in Thailand are urged to provide the best possible care and support for Myanmar citizens who are residing in or have arrived in Thailand for various reasons, said President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with staff and families from the Myanmar Embassy and Military Attaché Office in Bangkok, along with scholarship trainees, yesterday afternoon.



President U Min Aung Hlaing meets staff and families from the Myanmar Embassy and Military Attaché Office in Bangkok alongside scholarship trainees.

At the meeting held at the Myanmar Embassy, the President heard reports on the President's official visit to Thailand and functions of the embassy presented by the Myanmar Ambassador.

Speaking on the occasion, the President stressed that staff members of the Myanmar Embassy and Military Attaché Office must perform their duties as exemplary civil servants to contribute to the development of the country's political and economic interests and national interests, while working to enhance the nation's prestige and reputation.

The President stated that Myanmar embarked on the path of multiparty democracy in 2011 and must continue to maintain and work towards the strengthening of a firmly established multiparty democratic system. It is also necessary to learn lessons from the experiences and challenges encountered by long-established democratic countries, including Thailand.

Due to the choice of violent means rather than resolving politically arising issues through political means, the President continued that the country has faced armed violence and continues to encounter numerous difficulties and challenges up to the present. Together with dedicated civil servants and responsible citizens, the government is making every effort to safeguard the nation's interests and advance its development. At present, a Hluttaw elected through a fair election in

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NATIONAL

President U Min Aung Hlaing Returns from Official Visit to Thailand



Thai Prime Minister Mr Anutin Charnvirakul bids a formal farewell to Myanmar President U Min Aung Hlaing at Bangkok's Don Mueang International Airport.

The high-level Myanmar delegation led by President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing left Don Mueang International Airport in Bangkok yesterday afternoon after paying an official visit to Thailand at the invitation of Prime Minister of Thailand Mr Anutin Charnvirakul.

The President and his delegation were bid farewell at the airport by Thai senior officers and officials led by Prime Minister of Thailand Mr Anutin Charnvirakul, along with Myanmar Ambassador to Thailand U Zaw Zaw Soe and his wife, Myanmar Military Attaché (Army, Navy and Air) Brig-Gen Win Thu Lin, and officials.

During the farewell ceremony, the Guard of Honour of the Royal Thai Armed Forces also took positions on both sides of the red carpet and saluted the President.

Union Ministers U Khin Maung Yi, U Tin Maung Swe, U Ko Ko Lwin, U Khin Maung Soe and U Tun Ohn, Kayin State Chief Minister U Saw Myint Oo, Taninthayi Region Chief Minister U Zaw Naing Oo, senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, deputy ministers and officials accompanied the President on the same flight.

During the visit, the President held meetings with the Prime Minister of Thailand and the Acting President of the National Assembly of Thailand, and attended the Myanmar-Thailand Business Forum. Discussions were held on further promoting cooperation between the two countries and peoples, as well as between the two parliaments and the private sectors, in various fields including economic cooperation, trade, and the prevention of cross-border crimes. The visit of the President also provided an opportunity to discuss ensuring that Myanmar citizens and workers residing in Thailand for various reasons fully enjoy their rights and receive legal protection. The visit also contributed to further strengthening the existing friendly relations and ties between the two countries. Furthermore, the President's visit to Thailand helped open up a new sector for bilateral cooperation and was a meaningful visit, particularly for Myanmar citizens, including those residing in Thailand. During the visit, both sides signed Memoranda of Understanding and agreements beneficial to the two countries and their peoples.

In the evening, the high-level Myanmar delegation led by the President arrived at Nay Pyi Taw Airport, where they were welcomed back by Vice-Presidents U Nyo Saw and Nan Ni Ni Aye, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U Khin Yi, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Lin Dwe, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services General Ye Win Oo, Union ministers, the Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, the commander of the Nay Pyi Taw Command, and officials of the Embassy of Thailand in Myanmar. — MNA/TTA

Myanmar Reaffirms Commitment to Protect Rights and ...

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accordance with democratic principles, and a new government elected by the Hluttaw has been established in the country.

The President urged staff of the Myanmar Embassy and the Military Attaché Office in Thailand to provide the best possible assistance and consular support to Myanmar nationals in Thailand for various purposes.

The President recounted that he discussed during the meetings with the Prime Minister of Thailand and the Acting President of the National Assembly of Thailand that, regarding those who have arrived in Thailand for various reasons and migrant workers, as they are Myanmar citizens, efforts should be made to ensure their safety and security, guarantee their full labour rights, and protect them in accordance with the laws of both countries.

Regarding academic and training programmes, the President underlined that military and civilian trainees from Myanmar should thoroughly learn and understand Thailand's advanced academic expertise, experiences, and knowledge. Regarding language skills, embassy staff should also strive to learn and become proficient during their assignment period in Thailand, as this will enable them to provide valuable support in promoting bilateral cooperation and in matters that bring mutual benefits to both countries.

The President presented gifts and cash awards to staff families from the Embassy and Military Attaché Office along with the trainees.

The President cordially greeted Myanmar citizens residing in Thailand and working abroad for various reasons who carried out documentation measures at the Embassy, encouraging them to seek assistance from the Embassy and Military Attaché Office at any time whenever they encounter any difficulties, regardless of the nature of the problems. They are also required to live and work in an orderly manner in accordance with the promulgated laws and regulations. The President pledged that Myanmar will continue to protect and safeguard the rights and interests of its citizens in accordance with the law, ensuring that they do not suffer any loss or infringement of their rights.

After inspecting the work procedures at the embassy, the President stressed that Myanmar nationals and Myanmar workers who are in Thailand for various purposes should be provided with protection and assistance in accordance with the law, with goodwill, empathy, and patience. — MNA/TTA

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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

ASEAN Peoples Urged to Continue Preserving Unity and ASEAN Family Spirit

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signed in 1976, and the ASEAN Charter, adopted in 2008, have reinforced the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and rules-based cooperation, thereby providing a solid foundation for ASEAN's unity and continued development.

ASEAN has now entered a period of transition from the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 to the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. The year 2026 marks a historic milestone, signifying the commencement of the implementation of the Vision 2045 and its Strategic Plans. It is also a year in which important foundations are being laid for ASEAN's long-term growth and development. At present, as the ASEAN Chair for the year 2026, the Republic of the Philippines is leading ASEAN under the theme "Navigating Our Future, Together". This theme reflects ASEAN's commitment to promoting regional unity, resilience, and sustainable development.

Today, ASEAN has grown into a regional grouping with a population of more than 680 million people. Guided by the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), ASEAN has continued to promote regional peace, stability, and cooperation. Moreover, through ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the East Asia Summit (EAS), and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), ASEAN has provided for dialogue and consultation on regional and international security issues. In the economic sphere, ASEAN continues to stand as the world's fifth-largest economic bloc and is actively promoting digital and green economic transformations. Furthermore, through cooperation in education, healthcare, youth and women's empowerment, disaster management, and humanitarian assistance, ASEAN has continued to support efforts to improve the quality of life and well-being of its peoples.

Nevertheless, ASEAN continues to face a range of challenges, including strategic competition among major powers, geopolitical tensions, transnational crimes, online scams, energy and food security concerns, and the impacts of climate change. As ASEAN Member States face differing social, economic, and political challenges, their respective interests and policy priorities also vary. In this regard, any tendency to focus solely on addressing domestic issues within individual Member States could have significant implications for ASEAN's Centrality. Therefore, ASEAN must continue to uphold ASEAN Centrality by fostering unity, mutual respect, and understanding among its Member States while further strengthening an inclusive and rules-based regional architecture.

Myanmar joined ASEAN in 1997 and has now reached its 29th year of membership. Throughout this period, Myanmar has actively contributed to ASEAN through responsible, active, and constructive engagement. It has participated actively in ASEAN Community-building efforts, regional cooperation initiatives, and various ASEAN mechanisms. In addition, Myanmar continues to work closely with fellow ASEAN Member States in advancing the implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045.

Myanmar successfully held a free and fair multiparty democratic general election between December 2025 and January 2026, in accordance with the will of the people. The newly elected Government will continue to advance peace, stability, and national development through a Myanmar-owned and Myanmar-led process. At the same time, as an ASEAN Member State, Myanmar will continue to uphold and adhere to the fundamental principles of ASEAN and work closely together with its fellow ASEAN Member States in promoting regional peace, stability and prosperity.

Over the past 59 years, the achievements of ASEAN have been the result of the consistent adherence to ASEAN Centrality and the principles enshrined in the ASEAN Charter, underpinned by mutual respect, trust, responsibility, and the spirit of the "ASEAN Family" among its Member States. While preserving these strong foundations, ASEAN should continue to build a more resilient, innovative, sustainable, people-centred community in accordance with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and the principle of "Leaving No one Behind". At the same time, I wish to urge all ASEAN Member States to continue working together to uphold and promote ASEAN's unity, Centrality and core values, with a view to further enhancing the quality of life of the peoples in the region.

On this auspicious occasion of the 59th Anniversary of ASEAN, I sincerely hope that all the peoples of ASEAN will continue to uphold the spirit of unity and the ASEAN Family, and work together even more actively in promoting peace, stability, and prosperity across the region. I also wish that the ASEAN region will continue to remain peaceful and stable, achieve sustainable development, and grow into an even stronger and more resilient community. May all members of the ASEAN Family enjoy good health, happiness, prosperity, and an abundance of auspiciousness.

Agga Maha Thray Sithu
Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma
U Min Aung Hlaing
President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

NSPNC, SSPP hold second round of peace talks

THE National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee (NSPNC) and the Shan State Progress Party (SSPP) held peace talks yesterday morning at the Shwe San Eain Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw, focusing on local stability, political solutions, and efforts to combat online scams and illegal gambling.



The second-round peace talks between the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee and the Shan State Progress Party is underway in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, NSPNC Chairman Lt-Gen Yar Pyae said the SSPP was the first organization to respond to the government's 21 April 2026 peace call. He emphasized the government's determination to eliminate key causes of local instability, particularly online fraud and illegal online gambling. He also stressed the importance of preventing armed conflict, which he said results in significant losses of local resources. Lt-Gen Yar Pyae also called for an open discussion on the implementation of decisions reached during the two sides' initial meeting, including the formation of a joint task force to promote regional stability.

In response, SSPP Vice-Chairman 3 Sao Say Paing Fa expressed hope that the latest talks would build on previous agreements and produce positive outcomes. He reaffirmed the SSPP's commitment to building a Union based on democracy, federalism, self-determination, and peaceful coexistence, while emphasizing that political issues should be resolved through political dialogue. He added that the SSPP is currently focused on regional development without active clashes with the Tatmadaw, noting that stability is essential for local progress and that peace is indispensable for the country.

During the meeting, both sides discussed resolving political issues through dialogue, advancing an inclusive political process to achieve lasting nationwide peace, and strengthening national solidarity. They also exchanged views on regional security, including cooperation to eradicate online fraud, illegal online gambling, and illicit drugs, as well as the management of territorial boundaries and the maintenance of regional stability. In addition, the delegations discussed regional development priorities, including education, healthcare, and improvements to telecommunications infrastructure, with particular attention to securing MPT internet connectivity in the Wamhai area.

Following the discussions, NSPNC Secretary Lt-Gen Min Naing responded to the SSPP's proposals on education, healthcare, and regional development. Both sides then signed and recorded the meeting minutes before exchanging commemorative gifts with closing remarks from the heads of the two delegations. — MNA/TH

NATIONAL

UCSB delegation attends Heads of Civil Service Meeting for 23rd ACCSM and 8th Heads of Meeting for ACCSM+3

THE delegation led by U Tin Maung Win, the Chairman of the Union Civil Service Board, attended the meetings hosted by the Ministry of Civil Service of Cambodia in Siem Reap, the Kingdom of Cambodia. The delegation participated in the Senior Officials Meeting on 3 August 2026; the Forum on Good Governance on 4 August 2026; and the Heads of Civil Service Meetings on 5 August 2026. Discussions at these meetings focused on the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM) Work Plans (2021-2025) and (2026-2030), the ASEAN Resource Centre (ARC), and the ASEAN Network of Public Service Training Institutes (PSTIs).



The group commemorative photo session of the Heads of Civil Service Meeting & the 8th ASEAN+3 Cooperation on Civil Service Matters in progress in Cambodia on 3-5 August 2026.

Before the opening ceremony, Mr Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei Hun Manet, Prime Minister of Cambodia, met and extended a warm welcome to the Heads of Civil Service from ASEAN Member States and the Plus Three countries, the Secretary-General of the ASEAN Secretariat and the Chairman of the Union Civil Service Board of Myanmar on 5 August 2026. At the opening ceremony, congratulatory remarks were delivered by Cambodian Prime Minister Mr Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei Hun Manet, and the opening remarks were delivered by Mr Hun Many, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Civil Service of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

During the meetings, the Chairman of the Union Civil Service Board of Myanmar exchanged views and shared updates on the implemented activities of Myanmar under the ASEAN Cooperation on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM) and ACCSM+3 Work Plans (2021-2025), the two proposed further activities under the newly adopted ACCSM and ACCSM+3 Work Plans (2026-2030), and the future implementation plans related to the ASEAN Resource Centre (ARC) and the ASEAN Network of Public Service Training Institutes (PSTIs).

The meeting discussed and endorsed the implementation progress made by each ASEAN Member State, strengthened cooperation with the Dialogue Partners, namely China, Japan and the Republic of Korea, and served as a platform for sharing best practices and innovations in public service delivery. The Meetings were attended by approximately 80 delegates, including Heads of Civil Service from ASEAN Member States and the Plus Three Countries, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, senior officials, ACCSM Focal Points, and representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat. Similarly, the Forum on Good Governance was attended by approximately 280 participants, comprising 80 international delegates and 200 domestic participants.

The Chairman of the Union Civil Service Board of Myanmar held a discussion and exchanged views with the Secretary-General of ASEAN on 5 August 2026. On the same day, the Chairman attended the closing dinner reception hosted by the Deputy Prime Minister of Cambodia.

The Myanmar delegation, together with delegates from the ASEAN Member States and the Plus Three Countries, visited the Ta Prohm Temple and Angkor Wat Temple in Siem Reap on 4 August 2026. — MNA

MNHRC inspects Hngetawsan Boys' Training School


The MNHRC inspection team is pictured during their tour of the Hngetawsan Boys' Training School in Kawhmu Township.

THE inspection team led by U Than Win, a member of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, conducted an inspection visit to the Hngetawsan Boys' Training School in Kawhmu Township, Yangon Region, under the supervision of the Department of Social Welfare under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, yesterday.

The team inspected the systematic arrangements made for providing mental rehabilitation and vocational training to the children who are being cared for at the school, aimed at alleviating their psychological trauma, fear of social ostracism, and loss of self-confidence; the healthcare provision; the food supply; the provision of purified drinking water; the dormitory facilities; and the efforts made to obtain Citizenship Scrutiny Cards for them. Furthermore, the team examined the rehabilitation efforts aimed at fostering the youths' mental and physical development through behavioural reformation to ensure their successful reintegration into society, and measures taken to ensure that they enjoy fundamental human rights, including the right to education, the right to contact and reintegration with their family members, and the right to freedom of religion and belief.

The inspection team will send its findings and recommendations to the relevant department for necessary action under the Commission's law. – MNHRC

Ngasitsva hydropower plant, office, and staff housing repaired in Falam

ELECTRICITY has been supplied to Falam and nearby villages through two 400-kilowatt power generators. Repair works are currently being carried out on the Ngasitsva hydropower plant, offices and staff housing units that were partially damaged due to terrorist attacks.


Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Kyaw Swa Oo and officials inspect repair work in Falam, Chin State.

Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Kyaw Swa Oo and relevant officials inspected the repair works yesterday.

During the inspection, the officials from the hydropower plant reported on the machinery that had been damaged or lost due to terrorist acts and the current status of the plant's rehabilitation. The deputy minister provided necessary assistance and coordinated the required measures.

He also inspected the salvage operations for materials from the partially damaged building of the Falam Township Department of Rural Road Development, the roof replacement and repair works at the District Fire Services Office and staff housing, and the reconstruction and renovation works being carried out with financial support from the National Disaster Management Committee at the Falam District Department of Sports and Physical Education Office, Falam District Information and Public Relations Department Office, Falam Myoma Police Station and Township Land Records Department Office.

He instructed the need to complete the work plans within the time frame and meet the standards. — MNA/KTZH

NATIONAL
BUSINESS

YR exceeds monsoon chilli cultivation target

YANGON Region has exceeded its target for cultivating monsoon chilli (Hmyarni variety). A total of 211 acres had been targeted for cultivation in Hlegu and Taikkyi townships, but by the first week of August, farmers had already planted 257 acres, according to the Yangon Region Department of Agriculture.



A thriving chilli plantation in Hlegu Township.

Yangon mainly depends on chilli supplies from Upper Myanmar and the hilly regions. To ensure consumers have access to chillies at affordable prices while generating income for farmers, fresh chillies are cultivated during the rainy season, while both fresh and dried chillies are produced in the cool season. Rainy-season chillies yield about 570 viss per acre, and the fresh produce is sold directly at the Thiri Mingala Market.

The Hmyarni chilli variety takes just over three months to mature and can be harvested continuously for about two months. At present, fresh Hmyarni chillies are fetching around K 13,000 per viss at the Thiri Mingala Market. Chilli supplies from Upper Myanmar are also trading actively.

"We grow chillies throughout the year in Yangon Region, but cultivation is greater during the cool season. In the rainy season, cultivation is more widespread in Lower Myanmar, while during the cold season, more chillies are grown in the central dry zone. In Yangon Region, the Thai Hmyarni chilli variety is cultivated mainly in Hlegu and Taikkyi townships. It can be harvested about 100 days after planting, and fresh chilli prices are currently very favourable," said U Myo Myint, Deputy Director of the Yangon Region Department of Agriculture.

Bayintnaung Wholesale Market in Yangon receives various chilli varieties, including rainy-season long chillies, long green chillies, bell peppers, Salin chillies, Thazi chillies, Shan chillies, Chinese bell peppers and Sinphyukyun chillies, before redistributing them to regions and states across the country. Myanmar produces approximately 150,000 tonnes of dried chillies annually, while in 2024 the country imported 902.7 tonnes of dried chillies from China, Thailand and Singapore.

During the cold season, bell peppers and long chillies are the main crops. The harvested chillies are supplied to factories in industrial zones across the country for chilli powder production and to the Yangon market. During the rainy season, farmers mainly cultivate the marketable Hmyarni chilli variety to help meet local demand in Yangon Region. Chilli production is carried out in both the rainy and cold seasons to support the region's self-sufficiency in chilli consumption. — Thitsa (MNA)/KTZH

Shwebo ships 2,200+ tonnes of premium Pawsan in early Aug

A total of 44,588 premium-quality Shwebo Pawsan rice sacks (2,229 tonnes) were delivered across the country within the first week of August 2026, according to the Department of Consumer Affairs in Sagaing Region.

The supply from Shwebo area hit 25,718 sacks to Yangon, 8,495 to Mandalay, 625 to Nay Pyi Taw, 285 to Bago, 60 to Pyay, 210 Toungoo, 260 to Meiktila, 650 to Kayin, 3,920 to southern Shan State, 3,395 to Mon State, 275 to Magway, 150 to Kachin State, 490 to Taninthayi Region and 55 to Ayeyawady Region.

Sagaing Region is reputed as the third rice bowl of the country, contributing to domestic food security and rice export. Shwebo is the main producing district of Sagaing Region, covering about 300,000 acres of Shwebo Pawsan paddy out of 440,000 farmland acres with an irrigation channel connecting to Thaphanseik Dam.

Myanmar is pursuing international Geographical Indication (GI) status to boost global market recognition. Myanmar aims to achieve export targets of 1.8 million tonnes of rice and 1.2 million tonnes of broken rice through sea and border trade routes this FY, totalling three million tonnes. Myanmar shipped over 529,000 tonnes of rice and broken rice in the first quarter (April-June), bagging US$167 million, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF). — KK

New Mingala Market Nears Sept Debut

FROM PAGE 1

Ground-floor shops measure five feet by five feet, while upper-level units are more spacious, 10 feet by 10 feet. The building will have 20 escalators, with parking capacity for 750 vehicles.

Construction of the new market project began in 2018 but was temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The construction then resumed only in 2023. The 17-storey complex will include two parking floors, restaurants, banks, a supermarket, market stalls, auto parts shops, warehouses, office spaces, and a cinema. — ASH/KK

YGN palm oil wholesale reference price shows downtick

THE wholesale reference price of palm oil set for the Yangon market slightly decreased to K7,208 per viss this week ending 13 August after the rate was stable at K7,220 per viss in the past three consecutive weeks from 17 July to 6 August, according to the Supervisory Committee on Edible Oil Import and Distribution.

Despite the reference price, the market price is still high. The Consumer Affairs Department under the Ministry of Commerce has announced that consumers may lodge complaints of overcharging through its call centre hotline. The department also urges the public to refrain from purchasing palm oil at inflated prices.

The Committee has warned that anyone engaged in price gouging or hoarding oil to manipulate the market will face legal action under the Essential Goods and Services Law.

The department, in collaboration with the Myanmar Oil Dealers' Association and cooking oil importers, is working to provide consumers with imported palm oil at affordable prices.

Consumers may lodge complaints of overcharging through the Consumer Affairs Department's call centre hotline at 1535, or via the department's official Facebook page and the respective regional and state offices. Domestic palm oil consumption is estimated at one million tonnes annually, while local production accounts for only about 400,000 tonnes. To meet demand, approximately 700,000 tonnes of palm oil are imported each year from Malaysia and Indonesia. — NN/KK

YSX stock trading values exceed K2.16B in July

THE grand trading of the eight listed companies on the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) amounted to K2.16 billion from 262,340 shares traded in July 2026, according to YSX's statistics.

At present, shares of eight listed companies – First Myanmar Investment (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB), First Private Bank (FPB), TMH Telecom Public Co Ltd (TMH), the Ever Flow River Group Public Co Ltd (EFR), Amata Holding Public Co Ltd (AMATA) and Myanmar Agro Exchange Public Co Ltd (MAEX) are traded in the securities market.

FMI topped the trading on YSX with over K774.47 million from 43,151 shares, followed by MTSH with stocks worth K657.7 million from 77,801 shares, FPB with K427.9 million from 62,660 shares, MAEX with over K153.8 million from 23,970 shares, EFR with K92.7 million from 47,597 shares, MCB with K35.58 million from 2,613 shares, AMATA with K13.76 million from 3,280 shares and TMH with over K4.6 million from 1,268 shares.

The stock trading value was estimated at K4.6 billion with 688,457 shares traded in June 2026. The stock trading value in July is down by over K2.46 million compared to that of June. — NN/KK

OPINION

Strengthen constructive relations between Myanmar and ASEAN

More than the past five decades, ASEAN has successfully evolved into a rules-based and people-centred regional organization founded upon shared interests, regional stability, and mutual respect and trust.

Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia (TAC), signed in 1976, and the ASEAN Charter, adopted in 2008, have reinforced the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and rules-based cooperation, thereby providing a solid foundation for ASEAN's unity and continued development.

ASEAN has now entered a period of transition from the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 to the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. The year 2026 marks a historic milestone, signifying the commencement of the implementation of the Vision 2045 and its Strategic Plans. It is also a year in which important foundations are being laid for ASEAN's long-term growth and development.

The newly elected Myanmar Government, through the free and fair multiparty democratic general election between December 2025 and January 2026, will continue to advance peace, stability, and national development. As an ASEAN Member State, Myanmar will continue to uphold and adhere to the fundamental principles of ASEAN and work closely together with its fellow ASEAN Member States in promoting regional peace, stability and prosperity.

ASEAN has grown into a regional grouping with a population of more than 680 million people. Guided by the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, ASEAN has continued to promote regional peace, stability, and cooperation. ASEAN continues to face a range of challenges, including strategic competition among major powers, geopolitical tensions, transnational crimes, online scams, energy and food security concerns, and the impacts of climate change.

As ASEAN Member States face differing social, economic, and political challenges, their respective interests and policy priorities also vary. In this regard, any tendency to focus solely on addressing domestic issues within individual Member States could have significant implications for ASEAN's centrality.

The newly elected Myanmar Government, through the free and fair multiparty democratic general election between December 2025 and January 2026, will continue to advance peace, stability, and national development. As an ASEAN Member State, Myanmar will continue to uphold and adhere to the fundamental principles of ASEAN and work closely together with its fellow ASEAN Member States in promoting regional peace, stability and prosperity.

Myanmar joined ASEAN in 1997 and has now reached its 29th year of membership. Throughout this period, Myanmar has actively contributed to ASEAN through responsible, active, and constructive engagement. It has participated actively in ASEAN Community-building efforts, regional cooperation initiatives, and various ASEAN mechanisms. In addition, Myanmar continues to work closely with fellow ASEAN Member States in advancing the implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045. Myanmar's constructive cooperation has contributed to ASEAN's unity, integrity and regional development, while ASEAN's engagement with Myanmar should also bring about positive reflections for Myanmar.

ARTICLE

MSMEs as the Backbone of Economic Growth and Development

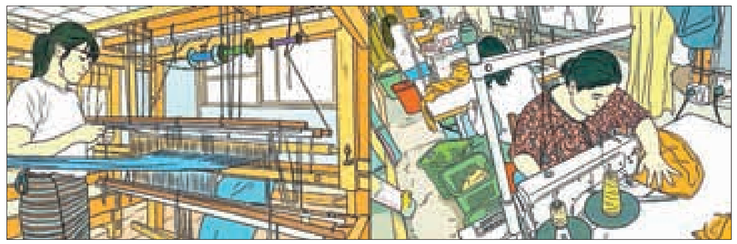
By Than Zaw (Homalin)

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a significant role in the economic progress of countries around the world, including Myanmar. These enterprises are not only important for national economic growth but also contribute greatly to the development of urban areas, small towns, and rural communities. Furthermore, MSMEs support international trade by expanding market activities and strengthening business connections. Research indicates that nearly 99 per cent of businesses in Myanmar are MSMEs, and they generate over 70 per cent of the country's employment opportunities.

MSMEs make a major contribution to improving capital flow, generating job opportunities, and alleviating poverty. To support national prosperity and strengthen food security, the Government is introducing modern farming and livestock production methods. In addition, initiatives such as "One Region One Product" are being promoted to encourage regional development and transform local products into value-added goods, leading to increased production and economic growth.

To strengthen the development of MSMEs, the Government has actively established the Central Committee for MSME Development as well as the Working Committee for MSME Development. Through these committees, continuous efforts are being made to promote and support the growth of micro, small, and medium enterprises across the country.

To ensure the effective implementation of MSME development programs, several supporting organizations have been established. These include the MSME Review and Reporting Team, the MSME Development Agency, and the MSME Fund Management Team, all of which play important roles in supporting and coordinating MSME development activities.



Furthermore, to help small and medium enterprises (SMEs) more easily access business information, technological support, and financial resources, as well as to improve their access to both domestic and international markets, enhance competitiveness, and create new employment opportunities that contribute to increased public income, a legal framework has been established. This framework also aims to reduce the operational challenges and barriers faced by SMEs. Accordingly, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Law was enacted on 9 April 2015, followed by the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Rules issued on 13 October 2016.

Currently, efforts are being made to revise and re-enact the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Law as the MSMEs Development Law. Despite these initiatives, MSMEs still encounter significant challenges, including limited access to loans and credit, insufficient access to technology, and a lack of adequate market information. These issues continue to hinder the growth and development of MSMEs.

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) can be categorized based on their scale of operation, workforce size, and level of technology used.

Micro enterprises are small-scale businesses that typically operate with a limited number of employees and rely on simple or low-level technology. Common examples include handicraft production, home-based industries, and family-run businesses.

Small enterprises, on the other hand, require relatively modest investment and operate within a more structured business model. Examples include small manufacturing units and consumer goods production businesses.

Medium enterprises are larger in scale, employing a greater number of workers and utilizing more advanced and modern technologies in their production and operational processes.

Countries such as India, China, and Japan have achieved significant economic growth by actively developing their micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Similarly, in Myanmar, MSMEs play a crucial role in driving economic development by generating employment opportunities, supporting growth in both urban and rural areas, and contributing to higher household incomes.

With technical assistance from the United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER), the Central Statistical Organization conducted both quantitative and qualitative surveys on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) during 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020. Based on these surveys, reports on the status of MSMEs in Myanmar's manufacturing sector were published, presenting key findings along with theoretical and practical analyses, as well as policy recommendations.

Currently, the Central Statistical Organization is working to independently conduct MSME surveys using its own internal resources. Building on previous survey activities, the methodology has been revised and updated to include additional data requirements that better reflect changing business practices and current economic conditions. In line with this effort, a nationwide MSME survey focusing on the manufacturing sector has been planned over three years, from the 2024-2025 financial year to the 2026-2027 financial year.

During the 2024-2025 financial year, the MSME Manufacturing Sector Survey 2024 was successfully carried out in six regions and states. At the same time, data collection activities are still ongoing in the remaining regions and states where the survey has yet to be completed. The data collected from these surveys will assist policymakers, financial institutions, and entrepreneurs in developing appropriate strategies and plans. These efforts are aimed at improving productivity, strengthening competitiveness, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of Myanmar's MSME sector.

A review of the current situation of MSMEs in Myanmar highlights several key challenges:

(a) Many MSMEs struggle to access low-interest bank loans due to their small scale of operations, weak financial record-keeping, limited use of technology, and lack of sufficient collateral.

(b) A large number of MSMEs do not maintain systematic accounting and financial records. As a result, they have a limited understanding of their actual business performance, face difficulties in preparing documentation for bank loan applications, and lack clear knowledge of tax procedures and compliance requirements.

(c) Most MSMEs have limited technological capacity, which leads to low production output, inconsistent product quality, and insufficient capital to adopt modern technologies. This ultimately reduces their overall competitiveness.

(d) Collaboration among MSMEs remains weak, resulting in limited cluster development and poor sharing of information, technology, and experience, which in turn weakens their collective competitiveness.

(e) The majority of MSMEs in various regions and states mainly produce goods for local markets, which restricts their opportunities for market expansion.

(f) Insufficient attention to employee training and skills development has led to shortages of skilled labour and qualified management personnel within MSMEs.

(g) Frequent price fluctuations, heavy dependence on the national electricity grid, and high transportation costs have negatively affected MSME productivity and business performance.

(h) Incomplete MSME data and complicated business registration procedures make it difficult to obtain reliable baseline information for policy formulation. Moreover, limited research-based implementation has further slowed the development of the MSME sector.

To promote the growth and development of MSMEs in Myanmar, several key measures can be implemented as follows:

(a) Establishing clear regulations that allow movable assets to be used as collateral, while also improving entrepreneurs' understanding of loan requirements, conditions, and financial rights.

(b) Formulating and implementing policies that support the development of digital financial systems and the wider use of electronic payment platforms.

(c) Raising awareness among entrepreneurs on the importance of technology adoption to build a more modern business environment, promote entrepreneurship, facilitate technology transfer, and enhance both competitiveness and product quality.

(d) Encouraging MSMEs to form clusters and strengthen cooperation among businesses to improve efficiency and productivity.

(e) Expanding human resource development initiatives to produce skilled workers, while increasing access to vocational education and industrial training programs outside formal workplaces.

(f) Effectively implementing a One-Stop Service system to simplify business registration processes, as many enterprises currently need to register with multiple departments depending on their business activities.

(g) Promoting "Buy Local Product" initiatives and procurement programs to encourage the consumption of domestically produced goods, given that most MSMEs depend heavily on the local market.

(h) Ensuring a stable electricity supply while also promoting the use of alternative energy sources, such as solar power, through awareness campaigns, technical support, and policy advocacy to reduce energy shortages.

(i) Enhancing market access by providing timely information on marketing and export opportunities, as well as organizing trade fairs and exhibitions.

(j) Increasing public awareness of government policies, programs, and support measures aimed at strengthening MSME development.

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Myanmar serve as a key driving force behind the country's economic growth. Therefore, it is essential to support their development by addressing existing challenges related to finance, technology, and collaboration. By improving access to financial resources, promoting the use of modern technologies, expanding market opportunities, and implementing necessary legal and regulatory reforms, MSMEs can achieve sustainable growth and further development.

A Meaningful Life Has No Deadline

By Laura Htet (UDE)

There comes a quiet moment in life when we begin to question the beliefs we once accepted without hesitation. For many of us, that moment arrives not through success or celebration, but through experience. It is then that we realize life has never followed the timetable we carefully imagined.

Many of us once believed that everything had to happen according to a fixed schedule. We thought success should arrive before a certain birthday. We believed marriage, a stable career, a comfortable home, and financial security all had their "right" time. Looking at people around us, we quietly measured our own progress against theirs. When someone achieved more at a younger age, we wondered whether we were already falling behind.

Time, however, is an honest teacher. As the years pass, it gently reminds us that life is not a competition with a single finish line. Every person carries a different story, shaped by unique dreams, unexpected opportunities, painful disappointments, and personal struggles that others may never fully understand. Some people reach their destination sooner than expected, while others spend years discovering where they truly belong. Neither journey is greater than the other. They simply follow different roads.

The danger of comparison is that it quietly steals our peace. When we constantly measure ourselves against someone else's achievements, we overlook the progress we have already made. We become so busy chasing another person's version of success that we forget to appreciate our own journey.

Perhaps true wisdom begins when we stop asking, "Why am I not there yet?" and start asking, "Am I becoming the person I truly want to be?"

Growing older changes more than our appearance. It changes our understanding of people and relationships. In our younger years, we often imagine that those we love will remain beside us forever. Friendships seem permanent, promises feel unbreakable, and goodbyes appear impossible.

Life, however, tells a different story. Some people remain with us through every season of life. They witness our happiest celebrations and our deepest disappointments. They become part of our identity, reminding us who we are when we begin to forget.

Others walk beside us only briefly. They enter our lives unexpectedly, leave unforgettable memories, and then quietly continue their own journey. At first, these departures leave us with questions that have no easy answers. We wonder why someone who once meant so much is no longer beside us.

Yet not every relationship is meant to last forever. Some people arrive to teach us courage. Others show us forgiveness, kindness, patience, or resilience. Their time in our lives may be short, but their influence often remains for years.

SEE PAGE 10

NATIONAL/ARTICLE

MDY Clayware Festival set for 2 days in Obo Ward



This photo features participants in the Mandalay Clayware Festival in the previous year.

THE Mandalay Clayware Festival will be held for two days in Obo Ward, Aungmyaythazan Township, Mandalay Region, on the 7th and 8th waxing days of Wagaung (20 and 21 August), according to the Clayware Festival Organizing Committee.

The Clayware Festival, one of Mandalay's most important regional festivals, will be officially held for two days starting this year due to public demand. In previous years, the Clayware Festival was held only on the 8th day of Wagaung, but this year it is planned for two consecutive days, on the 7th and 8th days of Wagaung.

Children's play pots, cups, small plates, small kitchen utensils, and colourfully painted clay figurines are sold. In addition, many traditional Mandalay foods and traditional cakes are for sale during the festival. It is a lovely family tradition that parents and grandparents buy small clay pots as gifts for their children and grandchildren during the Clayware Festival.

The Clayware Festival is a famous traditional festival in Mandalay and is also known as the prelude to the Taungpyone Festival. The Clayware Festival has been held in Obo Ward near the Ayeyawady River in Aungmyaythazan Township for many years. Recently, due to the increasing popularity and interest in the Clayware Festival, plans are underway to expand the festival to two days. — ASH/MKKS



Visitors tour the Bagan Archaeological Zone.

Bagan welcomes over 180K visitors in 7 months

MORE than 180,000 domestic and international visitors toured the Bagan Archaeological Zone between January and July, with Chinese tourists accounting for the largest proportion of foreign arrivals, according to the Ministry of Hotels, Tourism and Culture.

The ministry said that domestic travellers accounted for the majority of visitors during the seven months, while international arrivals remained comparatively low.

Visitor numbers were highest during the first four months of the year before declining in June and July, the rainy season, when travel activity typically slows.

Foreign tourists were particularly drawn to Bagan's ancient temples, distinctive architecture, mural paintings, sand paintings and traditional lacquerware industry. — ASH/KZL

FROM PAGE 9

A Meaningful Life Has No Deadline

Even those who leave behind sadness may also leave behind valuable lessons that help us grow into wiser and stronger people.

The same is true of pain. Some disappointments stay hidden behind our smiles. Some dreams quietly slipped away, words we wish we had spoken, and moments we wish we could live once more. Some wounds heal quickly, while others seem to remain with us for a lifetime. Still, time possesses a remarkable gift.

It may never erase every painful memory, but it slowly changes our relationship with it. What once felt unbearable becomes easier to carry. The tears gradually become quiet reflections. The sadness no longer controls our future. Instead, it becomes part of the story that shaped who we are today.

Healing is rarely about forgetting. More often, it is about learning to remember without allowing yesterday's pain to steal today's happiness. Perhaps that is why many of us begin to treasure life's simplest moments more deeply as we grow older.

The peaceful silence of an early morning. A warm breakfast shared with family. A message from someone we care about. The comfort of good health. A calm heart after a difficult season. These moments rarely appear on social media or make newspaper headlines, yet they quietly become the richest parts of our lives. While the world often celebrates extraordinary achievements, lasting happiness is usually built from ordinary days lived with gratitude.

Modern society constantly encourages us to chase more. More success. More possessions. More recognition. More applause. We are often led to believe that happiness can be measured by what we own or by how others see us. An experience tells a different story.

Many people possess everything they once dreamed of and still struggle to find peace. Others have very little in material wealth, yet their lives are filled with genuine joy because they have learned the priceless value of contentment.



Real happiness begins the moment we stop being our own harshest critics. It grows when we forgive ourselves for not being perfect. It becomes stronger when we recognize that our worth has never depended on meeting impossible expectations.

Life has never offered a single definition of success. For some, success means building a respected career. For others, it means raising kind children, caring for ageing parents, helping those in need, creating something meaningful, or simply finding peace after years of struggle. Every path deserves respect because every life carries its own purpose.

Instead of asking whether we have accomplished enough, perhaps we should ask different questions. Have we become kinder than we were yesterday? Have we learned to love a little more generously? Have we found more reasons to be grateful?

If the answer is yes, then our lives are already moving in the right direction.

We have only one opportunity to experience this remarkable journey called life. It would be a great loss to spend it racing toward someone else's destination while ignoring the beauty of our own path. There is no prize for arriving first, and there is no shame in arriving later. What matters most is continuing to move forward with honesty, compassion, and hope.

If each new day allows us to smile a little more than yesterday, to appreciate the people beside us a little more deeply, and to live more faithfully according to our own values, then we are already achieving something truly meaningful.

The world will always encourage us to hurry. It will always offer new standards by which to judge ourselves. But perhaps the greatest act of courage is choosing a different way – to walk at our own pace, to embrace our own season, and to trust that our journey is unfolding exactly as it should.

When we finally stop comparing, stop rushing, and stop punishing ourselves for not living someone else's life, we discover something surprisingly beautiful. The ordinary life we once overlooked has quietly become an extraordinary one.

And perhaps that is life's greatest success – not living the life others expected from us, but living each day with gratitude, authenticity, and the quiet confidence that we are exactly where we need to be.

NATIONAL

Rescue, relief operations continue in flood-hit areas



Rescuers navigate severe flooding to evacuate families in Laymyethna Township, Ayeyawady Region.

RESCUE and relief operations are continuing after heavy rainfall caused subsidence of the Ngawun River embankment through the breach in the sandbar in Laymyethna Township, Ayeyawady Region, leading to flooding in urban wards and villages across several townships on 30 July.

As of today, flooding has affected five urban wards, major roads and 83 surrounding villages in Laymyethna Township, 33 villages in Hinthada Township, one ward and 10 surrounding villages in Yekyi Township and four villages in Kyonpyaw Township, totalling six urban wards and 130 villages that have been inundated.

To assist flood victims, temporary relief camps have been opened, including 13 in Laymyethna Township, four in Hinthada Township, six in Yekyi Township and one in Kyonpyaw Township.

Tatmadaw members of the South-West Command, members of the Myanmar Police Force, Fire Services Department, social rescue organizations, volunteer groups and residents are working together to conduct search and rescue operations, help evacuate people and belongings to safer locations, distribute food and essential supplies, and provide necessary healthcare services to affected communities.

At the same time, efforts are underway to prevent further riverbank erosion and embankment damage by placing sandbags along vulnerable sections, constructing water-retarding structures, and reinforcing the embankment with additional earth.

Officials from the South-West Command visited the affected areas to inspect the ongoing rescue and rehabilitation operations, encourage personnel on the ground, and coordinate additional assistance as required. — MNA/KTZH

Regional govt distributes fuel for rescue boats for free

THE Ayeyawady Region Disaster Management Team Coordination Meeting stated that the regional government is distributing fuel oil for boats conducting rescue operations in the flood-affected areas at the Ngawun embankment in Laymyethna Township, Ayeyawady Region.



Officials oversee ongoing relief efforts in Laymyethna Township, Ayeyawady Region.

The meeting was held yesterday morning at the meeting room of the regional government office. The regional chief minister instructed that relief materials be transported to the nearest location in advance, as schools and hospitals have been prepared to reopen once water recedes.

At the meeting, secretaries from the disaster management working committees discussed the progress of steel sheet pile driving at the Ngawun Embankment (25/3) in Laymyethna Township. Officials discussed the status of cleaning and disinfecting wells, water tanks, and mechanical wells when the water level drops again, organizing rehabilitation activities, providing healthcare education, preventing diarrhoea, storing water purification tablets, ensuring uninterrupted communication systems, reopening schools, and pre-delivering school books and stationery to the nearest areas.

In addition, the regional chief minister received financial assistance for pregnant mothers and persons with disabilities from the flood relief camps provided by the Regional Social Welfare Department, the first 200 rice bags, cash assistance, an oxygen concentrator and flow meter donated by the representatives and the families from the Amyotha Hluttaw and Yangon Region Music Association on behalf of the Myanmar Music Association. — Region IPRD/MKKS

Emergency works shield Ngawun Embankment from escalating erosion



Urgent repairs underway to stop erosion and block deep-water flows following the Ngawun Embankment breach.

EMERGENCY operations are underway to prevent further erosion and block deep-water flows after a section of the Ngawun Embankment at milepost 25/3 in Laymyethna Township was damaged.

The protection works are being carried out using heavy machinery, vessels and manpower, including two dredging support vessels, the Shwe Sin Kye 3 for driving steel sheet piles, the Shwe Sin Kye 5 for transporting steel sheet piles, the Dagon Samari for placing geotextile bags (geobags), sand dredgers and 14 sand-pumping boats.

A total of 358 workers are also engaged in placing sandbags and installing protective barriers to reduce erosion on both sides of the embankment.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Bo Bo Kyaw, accompanied by officials, inspected and supervised the ongoing operations.

Ongoing measures include placing geobags for riverbank protection, constructing water-diversion barriers using geobags, reinforcing the embankment slope with geotextile materials and geobags, and using large sand-filled geobags and sandbags to block deep-water channels.

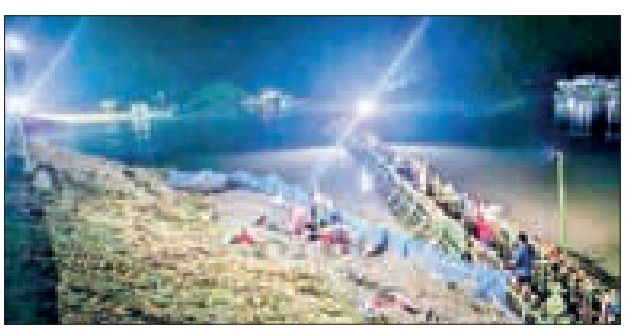
Steel sheet piles are also being driven into the riverbed to reduce the force of the water flow. Officials and technical teams from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Construction, the Ayeyawady Region Government, members of the Tatmadaw and firemen are coordinating the operations. — MNA/KZL

Round-the-clock efforts reinforce Ngawun Embankment

ACCORDING to the Ayeyawady Region Government, crews are working around the clock in Laymyethna Township, Ayeyawady Region, using geotextile bags (geobags) to reinforce low-lying sections of the Ngawun River embankment where water is overflowing due to sand-piping seepage through the sand layer of a nearby oxbow lake.

To control water seepage through the oxbow lake sand layer and reduce flow velocity, high-intensity lighting has been fully installed to support nighttime operations, ensuring that work continues without interruption. A joint team comprising personnel from relevant departments is using vessels, sand-pumping boats, and heavy machinery to transport and systematically place geobags filled with sand, along with sandbags, into wooden and bamboo pile frames beneath water. In addition, crews are constructing flood barriers by stacking sandbags layer by layer along low-lying sections of the embankment and at water inlets.

SEE PAGE 12



This photo captures workers, vessels, and heavy machinery operating around the clock in rotating shifts to seal the breach urgently.

NATIONAL

Ayeyawady Region CM directs post-flood recovery efforts



The coordination meeting of the Ayeyawady Region Disaster Management Committee in progress.

AYEYAWADY Region Chief Minister U Aye Kyaw has instructed relevant departments to make preparations and cooperate closely to carry out rehabilitation work once floodwaters recede.

The chief minister gave these instructions during the coordination meeting of the region's Disaster Management Committee, held yesterday at Meeting Hall (1) of the Region Government Office.

Following presentations by the secretaries of the disaster management working committees and regional government ministers regarding current actions and plans, the chief minister provided the necessary instructions.

Key directives include providing free fuel to boats involved in rescue operations, disseminating timely and accurate information to prevent public misunderstanding about the flood, pre-positioning relief items at the nearest locations, stockpiling water purification tablets for drinking water, and preparing to swiftly reopen schools and hospitals as soon as the floodwaters recede. — Htun Htun/ZN

Round-the-clock efforts reinforce Ngawun ...

FROM PAGE 11

Supervisors, heavy machinery operators, vessel crews, and other personnel continue to work late into the night under close supervision.

Additionally, lower sections of the embankment are being reinforced with layers of sandbags to strengthen and stabilize the foundation. To prevent further water seepage into nearby homes and farmland, officials, technical experts, and workers are operating around the clock in rotating shifts, using vessels and heavy machinery to urgently seal the breach, according to the Ayeyawady Region Government. — ASH/TH

156 offenders linked to online scams, gambling arrested



This map, including an inset, shows the crackdown arresting online scammers in Kengtung Township.

A total of 156 individuals involved in illegal online scam and gambling operations were arrested along with a large quantity of equipment during a security operation in Kengtung Township, Shan State (East), yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, the authorities arrested 156 suspects, comprising 140 Chinese men, four Chinese women, one Lao woman, eight Myanmar men and three Myanmar women, and seized 658 mobile phones, 134 all-in-one desktop computers, 28 laptops, three Wi-Fi routers, 13 Starlink Gen-3 devices, 15 CPUs, five UPS units, one 120-kVA generator, one 155-kVA generator, one refrigerator and one freezer.

The offenders will face action under the existing law after proper examination, and the seized materials will be managed in accordance with the procedures. — MNA/KTZH

Tatkon's MSY village project introduced; committee formed



An inauguration and committee formation ceremony for the Emerald Green village project in progress in Tatkon Township.

THE Department of Rural Development, under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development, held an introductory briefing on the Mya Sein Yaung (Emerald Green) Village Project and formed a village project committee in Nyaunggon Village, Tatkon Township, yesterday.

Tatkon Township Department of Rural Development Head Daw Zin Lin Htet explained that K30 million in revolving funds under the Emerald Green Village Project would be provided at a low interest rate to create employment opportunities, increase family incomes and implement village development activities with the increased funds. The project in-charge detailed the rules and regulations to be followed in forming the project committee, policies in the project manual and implementation procedures.

Villagers and village elders then elected and formed a seven-member Emerald Green Village Project Committee through a voting system and consensus to effectively lead and carry out project activities in Nyaunggon Village for the 2026-2027 financial year. — Sein Lwin (Rural)

PyinOoLwin's Emerald Green village project introduced; committee formed



The initiation and committee formation ceremony for the MSY village project is underway in PyinOoLwin Township.

THE Department of Rural Development, under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development, held an introductory briefing on the Mya Sein Yaung (Emerald Green) Village Project and formed a village project committee at the monastery in Peinhnegon (North) Village, PyinOoLwin Township, yesterday.

PyinOoLwin District Department of Rural Development Head U Set Naing Tun explained that K30 million in revolving funds under the Emerald Green Village Project would be provided at a low interest rate to create employment opportunities, increase family incomes and implement village development activities with the increased funds. PyinOoLwin Township Department of Rural Development Head Daw Khin Mon Kyaw and the project in-charge detailed the rules and regulations to be followed in forming the project committee, policies in the project manual and implementation procedures.

Villagers and village elders then elected and formed a seven-member Emerald Green Village Project Committee through a voting system and consensus to effectively lead and carry out project activities in Peinhnegon (North) Village for the 2026-2027 financial year. — Cho Than Nyunt (Rural)

German industrial orders rise but war, dry rivers cloud outlook

INDUSTRIAL orders in Germany came in above expectations in June, the country's statistics office said Thursday, but analysts warned that rivers running dry and the Mideast war could spell trouble.

Industrial orders, a measure of future business activity, rose 3.1 per cent in June on the previous month, Destatis said, well above the one percent increase expected in an analyst poll by financial platform FactSet.

"The slight upturn in new orders is continuing," LBBW bank analyst Jens-Oliver Niklasch said.

"All-in-all it seems as if the economy is doing somewhat better than was recently expected."

A run of brighter-than-expected data has boosted hopes that Europe's biggest economy is defying the worst as the Mideast war has led to higher energy prices.

Industrial production in May ticked up slightly more than expected, and business sentiment in July rose for the third month in a row according to a survey by the Ifo institute.

But Germany's economy, suffering from US tariffs and intense Chinese competition for key exports from cars to chemicals, remains fragile, posting virtually no growth since the end of the Covid pandemic in 2022. — AFP



A container ship on the Rhine sails past Thyssenkrupp Steel Europe AG in Duisburg. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Japan govt mulls cost-sharing among private firms for oil bypassing Hormuz

THE Japanese industry ministry said Friday it is considering creating a system for oil wholesalers and trading firms to share the extra costs of importing crude through routes that avoid passing the Strait of Hormuz.



File photo taken on 26 April 2026, shows a tanker carrying US-origin crude oil in Tokyo Bay. **PHOTO: KYODO**

The move is aimed at diversifying procurement sources in the resource-poor nation that has long heavily relied on the Middle East for its crude oil imports, over 90 per cent of which have transited the strait. But households could face higher gasoline prices if companies pass on the added costs.

The Economy, Trade and Industry Ministry presented the idea to a task force discussing ways to enhance the supply capacity of oil products. Details of the scheme will be discussed later.

It takes about 20 days to transport Middle East-produced crude oil, but around 50 days for tankers carrying US-origin oil via a route that passes near South Africa's Cape of Good Hope, creating a challenge on how to bear additional fuel and personnel costs stemming from the longer journey. — Kyodo

China unveils five-year plan for civil aviation industry

CHINA'S civil aviation regulator on Friday released a development plan for the civil aviation industry during the 2026-2030 period.

According to the plan issued by the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), the industry aims to achieve world-class standards in safety, service capacity and infrastructure by 2030, while securing major breakthroughs in technological innovation, green and low-carbon development, and governance capacity.

By then, the industry will provide stronger support for major national strategies, boost regional economic and social development, and better meet people's needs for air travel, according to the plan. To achieve these goals, the industry will pursue smart, green and integrated development during the 2026-2030 period, with safety as the bottom line, the plan notes. — Xinhua

State Bank of India profit rises

STATE Bank of India (SBI) reported a 10.23 per cent year-on-year rise in net profit to Rs21,121 crore for the first quarter of FY2026-27, supported by strong growth in net interest income and advances, along with improvement in asset quality. The country's largest lender had reported a net profit of Rs19,160 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous financial year. Sequentially, profit rose 7.30 per cent from Rs19,684 crore in the March quarter.

Net Interest Income (NII), the difference between interest earned and interest paid by a bank, increased 14.88 per cent year-on-year to Rs46,992 crore during the quarter from Rs40,907 crore a year earlier. Operating profit grew 9.77 per cent to Rs33,529 crore. SBI's domestic net interest margin (NIM) stood at three per cent in Q1 FY27, improving by seven basis points from 2.93 per cent in the preceding quarter. However, it was marginally lower than 3.01 per cent recorded in the year-ago period. — ANI

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GLOBAL VIEWPOINTS:
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Record Russian LNG imports fail to boost EU winter gas reserves

EU gas storage hits historic lows despite record Russian energy imports.

DESPITE record purchases of Russian liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the first half of 2026, EU gas storage levels remain at their lowest for this time of year in a decade and a half, according to data from Gas Infrastructure Europe (GIE) and EU regulators analyzed by Sputnik on Thursday.

As of 6 August, EU storage was around 57 per cent full, well below previous years and the lowest seasonal level since monitoring began. To reach the EU's adjusted 80 per cent target by the heating season, injection rates must accelerate significantly.

Meanwhile, Russian gas imports have not declined but increased. From January to May, pipeline gas imports rose seven per cent year-on-year, while LNG imports increased 11 per cent, according to Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators (ACER). Russian gas still accounts for about 12 per cent of EU consumption.



The Jemgum underground gas storage facility in northwest Germany is a major salt cavern storage site. **PHOTO: GAZPROM**

France, Belgium, and Spain remain the largest Russian LNG importers. Belgium received 100 per cent of its LNG imports from Russia in July.

The main problem is in Germany and the Netherlands, whose storage levels are below 50 per cent: Germany at 47 per cent and the Netherlands at 38 per cent. Together, they hold about a quarter of EU storage capacity.

Experts warn the EU risks entering the heating season with storage at just 67-76 per cent, a historic low. High gas prices make it commercially unviable for countries to inject and store gas for winter.

The EU has confirmed a gradual phase-out of Russian gas, with a full ban due by 2027. Analysts attribute rising Russian LNG purchases to long-term contracts still being honored. However, low storage levels reflect cold winter drawdowns, high demand, and supply constraints. EU officials continue to push for a complete phase-out of Russian energy. — SPUTNIK

Takaichi avoids clear pledge on Japan maintaining nonnuclear principles

PRIME Minister Sanae Takaichi on Thursday failed to explicitly pledge that Japan will maintain its nonnuclear principles, simply saying the government "is upholding" the long-held policy, as the country marked the 81st anniversary of the US atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

At a press conference after a memorial ceremony in the western Japan city, Takaichi said Japan will promote "realistic and practical" efforts towards a world without nuclear weapons, repeating the wording she used in her speech at the ceremony, which she attended as prime minister for the first time.

Her government is reportedly considering rethinking the three principles of not possessing, producing or allowing nuclear weapons in Japan as it plans to revise a set of key national security documents by the end of this year. — Kyodo

Agni-4' Ballistic Missile successfully test-fired

MEDIUM Range Ballistic Missile 'Agni-4' was successfully test-fired from the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur in Odisha on Thursday. The launch validated all operational and technical parameters, and the test was carried out under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command, the Ministry of Defence said in a statement.

Agni-4 is a two-stage, surface-to-surface missile propelled by a solid-fuel rocket motor. It is capable of striking targets at a distance of up to 4,000 kilometres. Earlier this year, India also conducted successful trials of the Agni-Prime and Agni-3 missiles. — ANI



Agni-5 ballistic missile equipped with Multiple Independently Targeted Re-Entry Vehicle (MIRV) technology on 9 May 2026. **PHOTO: ANI/FILE**

Shooting in Thailand leaves 8 dead, wounds over 30: PM

THAI Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said on Friday afternoon that eight people were confirmed dead, including the gunman and his grandparents, and over 30 people were injured, with nine in critical condition, as a gunman opened fire at a school and home in Nonthaburi province earlier the day.

Local police were notified around 10 am local time after a gunman opened fire at Debsirin Nonthaburi School in the Bang Kruai district of Nonthaburi province on the northwestern outskirts of Bangkok.



Students at a school north of the Thai capital said they started running after they saw a teen shooter walking towards their building. **PHOTO: AFP**

A witness at the scene said the gunman wore a purple tracksuit and fired dozens of shots in the school. Video footage released by the media shows continuous gunfire heard throughout the campus.

The alleged attacker, identified as a 14-year-old student, had been living with his grandparents. Thai police discovered the bodies of his grandparents at their home, with investigators believing they were shot dead before the attack at the school. — Xinhua

SPORTS

Maradona bloated, bedridden and resigned before death, says icon's masseur



Argentina football legend Diego Maradona died in 2020. **PHOTO: AFP /FILE**

DIEGO Maradona was bedridden, suffering from edema, and appeared resigned to his fate in his final days, according to the testimony of the Argentine football legend's masseur at the trial into the circumstances of his death in 2020.

Maradona "wouldn't get out of bed, he didn't want to eat, he didn't want to wash, he didn't want to look after his personal hygiene", Nicolas Taffarel testified on Thursday.

He claimed that at the time he had alerted the 1986 World Cup winner's medical team that they should be more present and visit "every day", as heard in an audio message played in court.

Seven healthcare professionals have been on trial since mid-April in Argentina for potential negligence that may have contributed to the football icon's death.

"I reported the issues I observed with him, but I saw no concrete action or swift resolution," added the masseur, on the verge of tears as he spoke of Maradona.

"He was bloated, his legs were swollen...," Taffarel recounted.

"The doctors told me to calm down, that these symptoms would pass. When you're anxious, you put your trust in them; you tell yourself it will pass, that everything will sort itself out. But it didn't pass."

On 24 November, the day before Maradona's death, Taffarel told how he tried in vain to persuade him to come round and drink mate. — AFP



Futsal fireworks ignite intense knockout stage battles

THE 2026 Inter-Ministry Futsal Tournament continued with group-stage matches at Wunna Theikdhi Futsal Stadium in Nay Pyi Taw, with teams securing their places in the next round of the competition.

In the men's group-stage fixtures, the Ministry of Digital Development and Communications defeated the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development 6-4, while the Ministry of Finance and Revenue beat the Ministry of Hotels, Tourism and Culture 7-2.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation recorded a 3-0 win over the Office of the Auditor-General of the Union, and the Ministry of Construction secured a 9-0 victory against the Ministry of Electricity and Energy.

The match between the Ministry of National Planning, Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and the Supreme Court of the Union ended in a 3-3 draw.

The tournament will move into the second-stage knockout round on 8 August, featuring matches between the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development, the Ministry of Finance and Revenue and the Ministry of Border Affairs, and the Ministry of Sports and the Supreme Court of the Union. — MNA/KZL

Man City reject Barcelona bid for Rodri - reports

MANCHESTER City have reportedly rejected an opening bid of £38.5 million ($52 million) from Barcelona for World Cup winner Rodri.

The 30-year-old has just one season remaining on his deal at the Etihad Stadium and has been strongly linked with a return to his native Spain.

City are understood to want about £68 million for Rodri, who was named player of the tournament at the recent World Cup in North America.



Manchester City midfielder Rodri won the Ballon d'Or in 2024. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Real Madrid had appeared likely to be Rodri's next club, but La Liga rivals Barcelona now seem to be in pole position.

Rodri joined City from Atletico Madrid in 2019 and won multiple Premier League titles and the 2023 Champions League under former boss Pep Guardiola.

He won Euro 2024 and that year's Ballon d'Or before a serious knee injury ruled him out of much of the 2024/25 campaign. — AFP

Trafford shrugs off 'point to prove' after record Leeds switch

JAMES Trafford said he does not care if he has a "point to prove" after joining Leeds from Manchester City in a move that makes him the most expensive British goalkeeper in history.

The England player, who signed a deal reportedly worth up to £45 million ($61 million), said he was looking forward to a fresh challenge after a frustrating season at the Etihad.

The former City academy player, 23, returned to the club from Burnley last year but City then signed Italy goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma, who became first choice. Trafford made just 17 appearances in all competitions but played a major role in City's League Cup and FA Cup triumphs.

"I don't really care if I have a point to prove," he told LUTV. "I know my own abilities. I go out and try as hard as I can and have as much fun as I can. "Everything that comes with it is what it is. I am really excited and just really happy that it is finally done. I can get onto preparing for the new season and can focus on getting in with everyone next week. — AFP

FIFA to contribute US$300K to reconstruction of MDY Football Academy

THE Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) has announced that the reconstruction of the Myanmar Football Academy (Mandalay), which was damaged by the major Mandalay earthquake, is expected to cost about US$3 million. FIFA will provide US$300,000, equivalent to 10 per cent of the total construction cost.

On 31 July, MFF President U Zaw Zaw and officials inspected the progress of the reconstruction work at the academy.

The academy is being rebuilt with the aim of reopening before the start of the 2027 academic year, and it is expected to accommodate more than 100 students. — TWA/KZL



Model designs and reconstruction work at the Myanmar Football Academy (Mandalay).

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Three nations sign joint defence pact

SAUDI Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan on Friday signed the Makkah Joint Defense Agreement, stipulating that any armed attack against one of the three countries will be considered an attack against them all.

The agreement was signed by Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif during the Makkah Summit for Joint Defence held in the Saudi city of Makkah, according to a joint statement issued after the summit.

The agreement reflects the three countries' commitment to strengthening their collective security and safeguarding regional peace and stability, according to the statement. — Xinhua

Nearly 200 French citizens received traditional values visas to move to Russia

RUSSIAN consular offices in France issued nearly 200 so-called traditional values visas to French citizens in the past year and a half, the Russian Embassy in Paris told RIA Novosti.

"In 2025, about 140 such visas were issued to French citizens, and around 50 in the first half of 2026," the embassy said.

The Russian consular offices in France continue to receive inquiries from French citizens about the possibility of obtaining a visa and move to Russia, the embassy added.

On 19 August 2024, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on humanitarian support for those sharing traditional Russian spiritual and moral values. — SPUTNIK

Firefighters battle Mount Bromo wildfire as El Nino takes root

INDONESIAN authorities battled Friday to contain a wildfire that has swept through Mount Bromo National Park on Java island, destroying more than 120 hectares (296.5 acres) as the country braces itself for an extreme El Nino-fuelled dry season.

The fire started Monday near Mount Bromo in East Java, one of Indonesia's most visited tourist destinations but now closed until further notice.

Local authorities deployed two water-bombing helicopters against the flames that have razed at least 127 hectares (313.8 acres) of national park land to date, fire official Bambang Setyo Antoko told AFP. — AFP

Trump signs order targeting 'birth tourism'

The order targets children of terrorists and foreign government lobbyists, Miller said.

US President Donald Trump on Thursday made another attempt to curb birthright citizenship, signing an order targeting those who he said enter the country under the guise of tourism while actually intending to give birth.

"They've taken birthright citizenship and they've made a joke out of it," Trump told journalists in the Oval Office.

The US Supreme Court struck down his previous effort to restrict the constitutionally granted right in a late June ruling that Trump described as "very unfortunate".

"We're making adjustments because it's very unfair," he said. Stephen Miller, one of Trump's closest advisors, said the order also aims to deny birthright citizenship to others, including children of members of "foreign terrorist organizations" as well as "large categories of people who lobby and act on behalf of foreign governments".



Demonstrators rallied at the Supreme Court in support of birthright citizenship during oral arguments 1 April. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

The move "ensures that large numbers of people who wrongly (would) be getting birthright citizenship will no longer be eligible for those benefits," Miller said.

The president signed another executive order last year decreeing that children born to parents in the United States illegally or on temporary visas would not automatically become US citizens. — AFP

Oman and Azerbaijan combine maritime and land networks for Eurasian trade

THE Middle Corridor, also known as the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR), is a strategic trade and transport corridor that connects Asia and Europe via the Caspian Sea region. The Middle Corridor continues to strengthen its position as one of the most promising regional connectivity initiatives across Eurasia.

The Republic of Azerbaijan lies at the heart of this corridor and has firmly established itself as a pivotal hub for transportation, logistics, and freight transit. Through sustained investments in transport infrastructure, multimodal logistics services, digital trade facilitation, and port development, Azerbaijan has significantly strengthened its role as a reliable gateway connecting East and West. His Excellency Mr Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, has consistently emphasized that the development of international transport corridors is one of the country's strategic priorities. Under his leadership, Azerbaijan has made substantial investments in expanding its railway and highway networks, the Port of Baku, and logistics infrastructure, while actively promoting regional connectivity and international cooperation. These efforts have further consolidated Azerbaijan's position as one of the most reliable transportation and logistics hubs across the Eurasian region. — ANI



Freight train travels the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, a vital Middle Corridor trade link between Europe and Asia. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ CASPIANPOST**