

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Four Objectives of the National Defence and Security Council

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

Prioritizing Rail Transport Key to Curbing Commodity Price Rises



Acting President and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing chairs the meeting to ensure fuel security, affordable fertilizers, the use of natural over chemical inputs, and the adoption of solar-powered farming systems.

To reduce heavy foreign currency expenditure on imported edible oil, it is necessary to expand the cultivation of oilseed crops such as sunflower, soybean, and sesame, improve sunflower production, ensure affordable access to fertilizers, and provide maximum State support while encouraging farmers to maximize yields.

ACTING President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing stated that to prevent increases in commodity prices caused by transportation costs, it is necessary to prioritize the use of public transport systems, such as railways, for the movement of goods.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

made the statement at a meeting on ensuring the availability of sufficient fuel and fertilizers for agricultural activities, held yesterday afternoon at the meeting hall of the Office of the National Defence and Security Council Chairman in Nay Pyi Taw.

He mentioned that, as the rail transport system reduces the cost of transporting goods, there is a need to expand freight train services and that relevant

ministries and officials in regions and states should take steps to promote the wider use of rail transport for goods. And as fuel prices rise, commodity prices may also increase in line with transport costs. Therefore, the State is taking steps to ensure that diesel fuel, which is essential for public transport, can be purchased at affordable prices.

The Acting President also highlighted that, during this period of rising

fuel prices and a slight increase in the US dollar exchange rate – driven by higher spending on fuel and other imported goods – efforts should be made to prevent increases in domestic prices, particularly for low-income groups and employees, including reducing taxes on imported fuel and giving priority to diesel, which is primarily used in public transport, when importing fuel.

SEE PAGE 3

NATIONAL

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

India extends duty-free black gram, pigeon pea imports to Mar 2027

ACCORDING to negotiations between the governments of Myanmar and India, the Government of India has extended the free import policy for black gram and pigeon peas until 31 March 2027. This was announced by India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry through official notifications issued on 31 March 2026. — MNA/KTZH



These images portray holidaymakers enjoying their time at the Ngwehsaung Beach during the first quarter in 2026. PHOTO: KYAW LIN OO (IPRD)

According to the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism, a total of 112,936 domestic and international visitors travelled to the Ngwehsaung Beach, one of Myanmar's most well-known seaside resorts, in the first three months of 2026. The number of visitors reached 32,294 in January, 37,403 in February, and 43,239 in March.

The Ngwehsaung Beach attracts a steady flow of tourists due to its clear

Over 112,000 tourists visit Ngwehsaung Beach in Q1 2026

seawater, clean and well-maintained sandy shoreline, and reliable safety conditions. Visitors can enjoy swimming, surfing, and leisurely walks along the beach in a calm and relaxing atmosphere. In addition, activities

such as jet skiing, banana boat rides, and speedboat trips allow tourists to appreciate the beauty of the sea and nearby islands at close range. The area also offers a wide variety of places to visit, further enhancing

its appeal.

There are 38 hotels and 70 guest-houses at the Ngwehsaung Beach, providing accommodation and services for tourists. — Kyaw Lin Oo (IPRD)/MKKS



NATIONAL

Prioritizing Rail Transport Key to Curbing Commodity Price Rises

FROM PAGE 1

He continued to say that, with the onset of the hot and dry summer season, the use of air conditioners has increased, leading to higher electricity consumption and more frequent use of generators, and emphasized that, alongside the need to conserve electricity, reducing generator fuel and vehicle usage can help decrease fuel consumption and foreign exchange expenditure, while the import of electric vehicles (EVs) should be implemented through a system that allows old fuel-powered vehicles to be surrendered in exchange for EVs.

The Acting President and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman also discussed that, just as agricultural activities require inputs such as water and fertilizers and equipment

such as tractors and water pumps depend on fuel, it is necessary to implement solar-powered electric pumping systems to reduce fuel consumption, while, in light of rising fuel and fertilizer prices, the use of chemical fertilizers should be reduced in favour of natural alternatives, with subsidies provided to make essential fertilizers more affordable, tax collection minimized, and a continued focus on ensuring the food security of the people.

He stated that, since domestic edible oil is imported every year to meet local demand, resulting in significant foreign currency expenditure, it is necessary to expand the cultivation of oil-seed crops such as sunflower, soybean, and sesame, and that further improvements in sunflower production would reduce the need for imports and lower

foreign exchange spending, while also emphasizing that fertilizers essential for farmers should be made available at affordable prices, with the State providing maximum support and farmers striving to maximize production.

He also noted that, due to current conflicts in the Middle East, the world is facing a fuel shortage, and Myanmar is making efforts to address this challenge by implementing an odd-even rotation system for vehicles and motorcycles and QR code-based oil refuelling, as well as allowing government offices and departments to work from home every Wednesday to reduce domestic fuel consumption further.

The attendees then discussed ongoing efforts to import fuel to address the domestic shortage, measures to ensure a sufficient supply of fuel for

public transport, including railways, ships, and buses, and steps to guarantee an adequate supply of fertilizers for agricultural activities.

Afterwards, Acting President and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing guided discussions on the reports and subsequently adjourned the meeting.

The meeting was attended by Prime Minister U Nyo Saw, Commission Member U Aung Lin Dwe, Commission Secretary and Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services General Ye Win Oo, Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Phone Myat, Union Minister for Finance and Revenue Dr Kan Zaw, Union Auditor-General Dr Khin Naing Oo, and Central Bank of Myanmar Governor Daw Than Than Swe. — MNA/TH

Public Announcement

1. To ensure the continuous development of the agricultural sector, which is a fundamental pillar of the State's economic growth, and to reduce production costs for farmers, a two-per cent advance income tax levied on the importation of fertilizers will be exempted from 1 April 2026 to 30 April 2026.
2. This tax exemption will apply only to fertilizers imported during the specified period for which Import Declarations (ID) are opened with the Customs Department between 1 April 2026 and 30 April 2026.

Ministry of Finance and Revenue

Public Announcement

1. Due to conflicts in the Middle East, global fuel prices have been rising, and domestic fuel prices have also been gradually increasing. In response, efforts are being made to stabilize the prices of essential foodstuffs and commodities transported using diesel-powered vehicles.
2. By taking measures to stabilize and reduce the price of High-Speed Diesel (HSD 500 ppm), which is predominantly used in the transport of goods, it is expected that commodity prices can also be stabilized and reduced.
3. Therefore, to stabilize and lower commodity prices, exemptions will be granted on customs duty, special goods tax, commercial tax, and advance income tax (two per cent) levied on the importation of HSD (500 ppm) diesel. These exemptions will be effective from 1 April 2026 to 30 April 2026.
4. This tax exemption will apply only to imports of HSD (500 ppm) diesel for which Import Declarations (ID) are opened with the Customs Department within the specified period.

Ministry of Finance and Revenue

Public Notice

1. It has already been announced that, for mobile handsets currently in use by the public to be included in the CEIR system's whitelist without requiring tax payment, all SIM slots of the handset must have been activated with SIM cards (MPT, ATOM, Ooredoo, Mytel) by 31 March 2026.
2. For mobile handsets that support 1 SIM + eSIM or SIM1, SIM2 + eSIM, if at least one SIM card was inserted and used in any SIM slot before 31 March 2026, such handsets have already been included in the whitelist.
3. After 31 March 2026, if additional physical SIM cards or eSIMs are inserted into the remaining SIM slots of these whitelisted handsets, the IMEI code may be shown as unpaid and prompts requesting tax payment may appear. However, no tax payment is required for these handsets.
4. In cases where one IMEI code is marked as paid while another remains unpaid, or when an IMEI appears as unpaid during eSIM usage, users can visit the CEIR system website at <https://ceir.gov.mm>, click Check Status, and submit the required information along with the unpaid IMEI. The system will automatically update the IMEI status to paid.
5. For further information, inquiries can be made via the CEIR call centre at 1577 and 1755. In-person enquiries can also be made during office hours at the CEIR one-stop service (OSS) centre located at the Customs Department, 132, Strand Road, Kyauktada Township, Yangon, and at the Medium Taxpayers Office 5, 60th street, between 101 (A) Street and 102 Street, Chanyathazi Township, Mandalay.

CEIR and EIR System Management Team

Daily newspapers available online

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

News and Periodicals Enterprise



NATIONAL

Discussions held to open heat relief centres

A coordination meeting was held in Minbu Township, Magway Region, yesterday, to open heat relief shelters after the area recorded a high temperature of 43°C, ranking among the world's hottest locations.

Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Soe Win, regional ministers, departmental officials and town elders attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the officials of the Minbu Township heat relief shelters opening supervisory committee reported on the establishment of centres at Pyinnya Alinn Young Private School and Sasana Beikman (downstairs), and Union ministers coordinated the discussion and made proper instructions.



Union Ministers U Khin Maung Yi and Dr Soe Win join discussions to open heat relief shelters in Minbu Township, Magway Region.

Union ministers handed over K30 million and oral re-hydration salts and juice worth K9,080,000 provided by the Acting President, and other materials provided by the ministries to the relevant officials.

Union ministers then inspected the Pyinnya Alinn

Young Private High School, Aung Thukha Monastery, Mogok Vipassana Dhamma Yeiktha and Sasana Beikman in Minbu Township to establish the heat relief centres.

They proceeded to the Sagu Township People's Hospital and inspected the preparations to treat the emergency cases due to heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Union Minister Dr Soe Win and the party visited the cooling centres in Magyikan village in Magway Township established by the ministry, and cordially greeted the locals, and presented cash assistance, drinking water and juice.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement opened four heat relief centres in Magway, Chauk, Yenangyoung and Natmawk townships starting from 16 March. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar's first Leadership Talk on the Intelligence Economy concludes

GUSTO College successfully hosted Myanmar's first Leadership Talk on the Intelligence Economy, delivering a dynamic and insightful platform for knowledge-sharing and cross-industry dialogue.

The event brought together leading voices from various industries to explore how Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data are transforming today's economic landscape.

Attendees gained valuable insights into how the Intelligence Economy is reshaping business models, decision-making, and future workforce demands.

The programme commenced with an opening speech by Professor Dr Win Htein Win, and it was followed



A documentary group photo session of the attendees at The Talk on the Intelligence Economy.

by a keynote address by Professor Dr Aung Tun Thet.

The panel discussion featured distinguished industry leaders: MTB Bank CEO Dr Win Lwin, U9 CEO Caroline Yin Yin Htay, Founder and Chairman of Myanmar Information Technology Dr Tun Thura Thet, A Bank Chief Digital Operations Officer U Bo Bo Zin, and Mandalay Technology Managing Director Dr Zaw Naing.

Panellists shared practical insights, real-world experiences, and strategic perspectives on AI adoption, digital transformation, and innovation across industries, followed by an interactive Q&A session. —MT/ZN

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NATIONAL

17 petrol stations fined, 24 warned for regulatory breaches nationwide

ACTION has been taken against 17 petrol stations nationwide for failing to comply with fuel sales regulations, while 24 stations have been issued strong warnings, according to the Ministry of Energy.

To facilitate smoother fuel purchases for the public, an upgraded system using barcode and QR code mechanisms has been introduced, allowing fuel to be sold based on designated quotas according to engine capacity. The system is currently implemented at fuel stations in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, Yangon, Mandalay, Taunggyi, Bago, PyinOoLwin, and along the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway and the Yangon-Mandalay highway.

Authorities took action following complaints received through the call centre regarding station closures, failure to scan barcodes or QR codes,

overpricing, and illegal sales practices that adversely affect consumers.

As part of enforcement measures, a total of 17 petrol stations in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, Mandalay Region, Yangon Region, and Mon State have been penalized due to the temporary closure of stations.

In addition, 24 stations found to be selling fuel without scanning barcodes or QR codes have been strongly warned. These include three stations in the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, four in Yangon Region, ten in Mandalay Region, and seven in Shan State.

Authorities have stated that effective action will be taken against any stations found to be repeatedly violating the prescribed regulations. — ASH/KZL



A vehicle is seen being refuelled at a petrol station.

EVs to pay road and bridge tolls from 1 Apr

THE Ministry of Construction has announced that, starting from 1 April 2026, electric vehicles (EVs) will be required to pay road and bridge tolls.

This measure follows the expiry of the exemption period for road usage fees granted to electric vehicles and their related equipment, which ended on 31 March. Consequently, the Ministry of Construction, through its Department of Highways and Department of Bridges, will begin collecting usage fees from EVs travelling on major roads and bridges



An EV vehicle is seen on the road.

under its management.

Tolls will be charged according to designated vehicle

categories and prescribed rates. — ASH/MKKS

SSID to rent shops at Myanmar Handicrafts Centre



The Myanmar Handicraft Centre showcases various handicraft items.

THE Small Scale Industries Department of the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development will grant permits to rent shops at the Myanmar Handicrafts Centre and use a cash memo for the 2026-2027 financial year.

The monthly rental fee is set at K210,000 for an 11-foot-by-12-foot glass-fronted shop

and K157,500 for an open shop, while one sales booth cart is rented for K52,000 per month.

Individuals can enquire about details through the centre located near Maelamu Pagoda and Kyaukyaytwin Bus Stop in North Okkalapa Township at 067 3410710 and 01 9669959. — NN/KK

Five cities in Myanmar listed among 15 hottest cities in world

FIVE cities in Myanmar were listed among the 15 hottest cities in the world on 31 March, and residents of the cities need to be aware of heat-related health issues, including heat stroke, said meteorologist U Win Naing.

Minbu, Magway and Chauk in Magway Region and Bago and Toungoo in Bago Region were included in the 15 hottest cities in the world on 31 March. According to the temperature ranking, Minbu has been ranked second with 42.2 degrees Celsius, while Magway has been ranked eighth with 41.3 degrees Celsius; Toungoo has been ranked tenth

with 41.3 degrees Celsius; Chauk has been ranked twelfth with 41 degrees Celsius, and Bago has been ranked fourteenth with 40.9 degrees Celsius.

Due to elevated temperatures, people need to be aware of heat-related health issues such as dehydration, heat exhaustion/heat stroke, respiratory issues, UV radiation index and eye and skin problems, said U Win Naing.

Similarly, stakeholders in the agriculture sector will need to seek technical advice to prevent losses due to soil moisture loss and evapotranspiration, heat stress and pest outbreaks,

Choose a Region		
World		
Maximum Temperature Last 24h 03/31/2026 at 10:00 UTC		
No.	Location	Amount
1	Qalhat (Oman)	42.8°C
2	Minbu (Myanmar)	42.2°C
3	Tittagarh (India)	41.8°C
4	Wardha (India)	41.6°C
5	Amraoti (India)	41.4°C
6	Banda (India)	41.4°C
7	Akola (India)	41.3°C
8	Magway (Myanmar)	41.3°C
9	Thoen (Thailand)	41.3°C
10	Toungoo (Myanmar)	41.3°C
11	Kurnool (India)	41.2°C
12	Chauk (Myanmar)	41°C
13	Pbo Anantapur (India)	41°C
14	Bago (Myanmar)	40.9°C
15	Adilabad (India)	40.8°C

Table showing the world's cities with the highest temperatures on 31 March 2026.

he added.

Day temperatures will rise

from 30 March to 5 April, and maximum temperatures for

townships in southern Yangon-Kyauktan, Kungyangon, Kayan and Thongwa will be 37-39 degrees Celsius with a minimum temperature of 23 degrees Celsius, while it will be 39 degrees Celsius in Botahtaung, Kyauktada, Kamayut, Thingangyun, Hline, Tamway, North Okkalapa, Mayangon and Dagon Myothit townships, and the minimum temperature will be 23 degrees Celsius. In northern, eastern and western Yangon, the maximum temperature will be 40 degrees Celsius with a minimum temperature of 23 degrees Celsius. — MT/ZS

NATIONAL



This image shows farming in the Shan hills that is drawing FDIs.

SSIC clears 2 foreign service firms

THE Shan State Investment Committee gave the green light to two foreign enterprises to invest in the service sector with an estimated capital of K11.79 billion at the SSIC's meeting held on 17 March 2026. Those businesses will create 57 jobs for locals.

SSIC approved nine foreign businesses and 26 domes-

tic projects between February 2021 and March 2026, bringing in capital of US\$100.86 million and K1,677 billion.

Foreign investors eye Shan State's agriculture sector. Foreign direct investments also flow into manufacturing, power, mining, hotels, tourism and service sectors in the region.

Domestic investments are

primarily put into the hotels and tourism sector, followed by the manufacturing sector.

Investors making investments in the townships recognized as a moderate development zone are entitled to enjoy a five-year tax exemption, while the least developed zone offers seven-year tax-free incentives.

— ASH/KK

Foreign enterprises step up investment in Myanmar's manufacturing sector

SEVENTY foreign enterprises have made foreign direct investments of over US\$220 million in Myanmar's manufacturing sector in the past 11 months of the current financial year 2025-2026, beginning 1 April, as per the statistics released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

Chinese companies primarily made investments in the manufacturing sector. MIC give priority to the manufacturing enterprises that need a large labour force to create more job opportunities for the locals.

Myanmar Investment Commission approved 74 projects from China, Hong Kong SAR, India, Japan, Thailand, the Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore and the UK to invest

over \$417 million during the April-February period, including expansions of capital by some existing enterprises.

This FY, one new enterprise was founded, investing \$21 million in the Oil and Gas sector. The manufacturing sector drew \$223 million from 70 enterprises, while the services sector attracted \$3.688 million from three enterprises. Livestock and fisheries, manufacturing, power, and transport and communication sectors saw capital expansion by the existing enterprises.

Myanmar's garment enterprises operate under the Cutting, Making, and Packaging model. European Union member countries, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the US and China place garment orders

from Myanmar. Myanmar's garment sector plays a pivotal role in the economic development of the country, contributing to the country's GDP to a certain extent. In addition to garments, the manufacturing of electrical devices, footwear, bags, wigs, and cameras is also running under a CMP system.

The Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association and Myanmar Industries Association jointly organized CMP product booth at the Union-Level MSMEs Expo held on 9-14 February 2026 in Nay Pyi Taw, showcasing high-quality CMP garment products, various local clothing wear, the manufacturing capabilities and quality standards of Myanmar's garment industry. — KK

BEVs eligible for reduced duty under Obelisk and Reduction codes

BATTERY-POWERED electric vehicles are entitled to a duty reduction benefit through the Obelisk code and Reduction code, according to Notification 007/2026 released by the Myanmar Automated Cargo Clearance System division under the Department of Customs.

In pursuance of the decision of the Union Government, the Ministry of Finance and Revenue had already reduced the customs duty set in the Myanmar Customs Tariff 2022 for battery electric vehicles (BEVs) imported as completely built up (CBU), completely knocked down (CKD), and semi-knocked down (SKD) and the related parts and accessories of electric vehicles that have the technical endorsement

of the Ministry of Electric Power and the recommendation of the Ministry of Industry, with a view to promoting the use of electric vehicles and the development of related industries.

Consequently, duty reductions can be availed for battery-powered goods imported as CBU, CKD and SKD by using the designated Input HS detail code (Obelisk code) appended to the HS codes for which dual use is applicable and by using the Reduction code for related parts and accessories of electric vehicles.

Individuals can contact the MACCS division's Help Desk Section at 01 379429 for any inconvenience matters, the Customs Department stated. — NN/KK

53 container vessels scheduled to enter Yangon Port in Apr

A total of 53 container vessels are slated to call at the Yangon Port in April 2026, the Myanma Post Authority announced.

Eleven container vessels run by M/S Cosco Shipping Line, nine by M/S SITC Shipping Line and five each by M/S Maersk A/S Line and M/S MSC Line, four each by M/S CMA CGM Line and M/S One Line, three each by M/S RCL Line, M/S Samudera Shipping Line and M/S Ti2 Container Line and two each by M/S BLPL Shipping Line, M/S Evergreen ASIA Line and M/S Land And Sea are scheduled to dock at the Yangon Port in April.

The Myanma Port Authority has arranged maritime trade

channels to handle increasing imports to meet domestic demand, to bolster exports, and to improve port capacity for significant arrivals in ships. Myanma Port Authority notified that it will inform exporters and importers of ship arrival schedules promptly upon the extension of the schedule. Yangon Port handled 59 container vessels in March, 60 each in February and 63 in January 2026.

After the new navigation channel (Kings Bank Channel) accessing the inner Yangon River was found, the draft extension work was accelerated. After that, the port can now handle larger ships. The container vessel MV

SITC Zhaoming (185.99-metre LOA, 35.25-metre Beam, 29,232 GRT and 2,698 TEUs) of Hong

Kong-based SITC Shipping Line docked at Asia World Port Terminal for the first time on 22 June,

which is the largest ship that AWPT Port has handled. — NN/KK



A bird's-eye view of a container yard with containers from shipping lines at Yangon Port along the Yangon River.

MFVP, MyanSeed sign MoU to enhance cooperation

THE Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer and Exporter Association (MFVP) and Myan Seed Agribusiness Consultancy Co Ltd signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 30 March 2026 to enhance collaborative efforts in future activities.

This MoU aims to cooperate in research activities for agricultural development, organizing training, seminars, and technical talks, exchanging research findings and implementing advanced farming methods. — NN/KK



Officials from the Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer and Exporter Association (MFVP) and MyanSeed Agribusiness Consultancy Co Ltd show their MoU documents at the signing event on 30 March 2026.

India extends free import policy for pulses to March 2027



Black gram.

INDIA extended the free import policy of black gram (urad) and pigeon peas (tur) up to March 2027, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of the Government of India announced on 31 March. This policy is to meet the

growing demand in India, traders stressed. India is the main buyer of Myanmar's black gram and pigeon peas. Consequently, the black gram and pigeon pea prices are closely tied to India's demand.

According to a Memorandum of Understanding between

Myanmar and India signed on 18 June 2021, India will import 250,000 tonnes of black gram and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon peas (tur) from Myanmar for five consecutive years from the 2021-2022 financial year to 2025-2026 FY. This G-to-G pact will not affect the pulses' annual quota set by India. Myanmar's exporters are also entitled to deliver the pulses to India under that yearly quota.

Myanmar is highly trusted as a consistent source of various pulses, including black gram and pigeon pea. The five-year Myanmar-India pulse trade agreement brought mutual benefits to the two countries, showing a strong trade partnership, said the Secretary of the Department of Consumer Affairs, during the 4th South Asia Agri Forum 2026 held in Yangon. — KK

CBM continues dollar injection into fuel-importing companies



Greenbacks are seen at the money changer counter.

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) made over 4.1 million baht transactions in the forex market on 31 March. CBM injected US\$2 million into fuel oil-importing companies on that day, after selling \$2.3 million to fuel oil-importing companies on 30 March, in addition to the injection of over one million baht in the foreign exchange market.

CBM intervened in the market by injecting \$400,000 to edible oil-importing companies and three million dollar to fuel oil importing companies on 26 March, in addition to selling 4.4 million baht in the market.

CBM announced on 25 March that it would inject \$26 million to fuel oil-importing businesses. Furthermore, CBM sold \$1 million to edible oil-importing companies and \$289,300 to fuel oil-importing companies, along with an injection of 2.2 million baht.

Furthermore, CBM sold over \$1 million to edible oil-importing companies and \$3 million to fuel oil-importing companies on 24 March, in addition to sales of 5.678 million baht in the foreign exchange market. CBM also made a \$45 million injection into the fuel oil import sector on 23 March to increase oil imports.

CBM's report showed a transaction of 50 million baht

on the foreign exchange trading platform to importers to meet the market's needs, along with selling 2.424 million baht in the market. CBM also sold \$1.339 million to fuel oil-importing companies on that day.

CBM sold \$1.5 million to edible oil-importing companies and \$1.16 million to fuel oil-importing companies on 20 March, along with an injection of 3.37 million baht into the market.

In addition to the injection of large amounts of foreign currencies (yuan, dollar, baht) into the foreign exchange market, CBM has been injecting US dollars to stabilize the foreign exchange market and calm the oil prices.

CBM injected foreign currencies into the market, with a view to curbing the instability in the foreign exchange market and currency devaluation. According to CBM's notification on 15 March 2024, it has been collaborating with law enforcement agencies to combat and prosecute those who attempt to manipulate the currency market under the existing laws. CBM allowed authorized dealers (private banks) to operate online foreign exchange trading freely as per the market rate, depending on supply and demand, starting from 5 December 2023. — NN/KK

OPINION

Provide care and support to people with autism

SINCE the United Nations General Assembly designated 2 April as World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) in 2007, the UN has worked to promote the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for autistic individuals, ensuring their equal participation in society. Over the years, significant progress has been made, driven in large part by autistic advocates who have worked tirelessly to bring the lived experiences of autistic

individuals to the forefront of global discussions.

The 2026 observance of World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD), held under the theme "Autism and Humanity – Every Life Has Value," highlights and affirms the dignity and worth of all autistic people as part of our shared human future. At a time when misinformation and regressive rhetoric about the lives of autistic people is resurfacing, this year's virtual event is a call to action to move beyond limiting narratives and to recognize the inherent dignity, equal rights, and unconditional worth of every autistic person.

One in every 100 children is reported to have autism, which accounts for about one per cent of the world's population, or roughly 75 million people. The prevalence of autism is increasing annually, with males more likely to be affected than females. Autism is also linked to environmental degradation and genetic factors.

Out of about 625 million people in ASEAN countries, around six million are estimated to have autism. In Myanmar, the State is conducting a registration process for persons with disabilities, including those with autism, to collect information on the type of disability, level of impairment, and population data.

This enables the planning and provision of necessary health-care and care services, education, employment, and support across all relevant sectors according to the type of disability. It also allows for better implementation of measures to help people with autism become self-reliant, participate in community life, access social support, and enjoy legal justice.

Autism Day commemorative activities have been held in Myanmar since 2011, led by the parents of children with autism. These events aim to raise public awareness and understanding about the care, nurturing, and rehabilitation of people with autism, to ensure their access to legal rights, and to promote the active participation of those with special needs in community-based rehabilitation efforts. It is necessary to provide care and support to help individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism lead continuously improving lives and to enable them to live independently alongside others. People with autism should be included in the community and guided with support to participate fully in their own lives.

TODAY'S world is a digital era dominated by screens. Our daily lives, work, education, and social interactions increasingly depend on smartphones, tablets, computers, and televisions. With the rapid development of technology, digital devices have become essential tools that support communication, learning, and entertainment. During the COVID-19 pandemic, remote working and online learning became more widespread, making the digital environment not just convenient but necessary. As a result, people of all ages now spend a significant portion of their day in front of screens.

Recent studies show that the average person worldwide spends about seven hours a day using screens. For many teenagers, this number is even higher, with some spending up to nine hours daily on non-educational screen activities such as gaming, social media, and video streaming. While technology has brought many advantages, this dramatic increase in screen time has raised serious concerns among health professionals, educators, and parents. Excessive screen use can influence not only physical health but also emotional well-being, cognitive development, and social relationships.

Screens and Children's Development

The increasing use of screens among children has become one of the biggest challenges of modern society. Young children are especially vulnerable because their brains are still developing, and their habits are easily shaped by their environment. According to guidelines from organizations such as the American Academy of Paediatrics (AAP) and the World Health Organization (WHO), children aged two to five should not use screens for more than one hour per day, and this time should ideally be spent on high-quality educational content. For children over five, recreational screen time should be limited to less than two hours daily.

However, in reality, many chil-

dren exceed these recommendations, sometimes by a large margin. Busy parents often rely on screens to keep children occupied while they manage work or household responsibilities. Although this may provide short-term convenience, it can lead to long-term developmental issues if not properly managed. For example, excessive screen exposure in early childhood has been linked to delayed language development, reduced attention span, and weaker problem-solving skills.

Experts emphasize that the quality of screen content is just as important as the quantity of time spent. Watching educational programmes, engaging with interactive learning apps, or participating in creative digital activities can support children's development when used appropriately. Furthermore, co-viewing, where parents watch or interact with children during screen use, can significantly enhance understanding and communication. This shared experience allows parents to explain concepts, ask questions, and guide children towards meaningful learning.

Impacts on Physical Health

Excessive screen use has a direct impact on physical health. One of the most common problems is eye strain, often referred to as digital eye strain or computer vision syndrome. Staring at screens for long periods can cause dryness, blurred vision, headaches, and discomfort. Poor posture while using devices can also lead to neck pain, back pain, and long-term musculoskeletal problems.

Another major concern is the lack of physical activity. When individuals spend too much time on screens, they are less likely to engage in exercise or outdoor play. This sedentary lifestyle contributes to an increased risk of obesity, particularly among children and teenagers. Studies indicate that children who spend more than two hours a day on screens are significantly more likely to gain excess weight. Obesity, in turn, can lead to other health problems



Balancing Screen Use in the Digital Age

By Ms Monn

such as diabetes, heart disease, and reduced overall fitness.

Sleep is also negatively affected by excessive screen use. Many people use their devices late at night, which disrupts their natural sleep cycle. The blue light emitted from screens reduces the production of melatonin, a hormone that regulates sleep. As a result, individuals may find it difficult to fall asleep or experience poor-quality sleep. Lack of proper rest can lead to fatigue, reduced concentration, and lower academic or work performance.

Impacts on Mental and Emotional Well-being

In addition to physical health, excessive screen time can affect mental

and emotional well-being. Research has shown a strong connection between high screen use and increased levels of anxiety, depression, and stress. Teenagers, in particular, are vulnerable due to their frequent use of social media platforms. Constant exposure to unrealistic images, online comparisons, and negative comments can lower self-esteem and create feelings of insecurity.

Furthermore, spending too much time online may reduce face-to-face interactions with family and friends. Human beings are social by nature, and direct communication plays a vital role in developing empathy, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal skills. When screen use replaces real-life interaction, individuals may feel isolated

or disconnected from others.

Another concern is the potential for digital addiction. Some individuals develop a strong dependency on their devices, feeling anxious or uncomfortable when they are unable to use them. This can interfere with daily responsibilities, academic performance, and personal relationships. Recognizing these risks is essential in promoting healthier digital habits.

Healthy Screen Habits

To address these challenges, experts recommend adopting a balanced and mindful approach to screen use rather than completely avoiding technology. This approach focuses on four key principles:

- 1. Content Quality**
The content should be appropriate for the user's age and should provide educational or meaningful value. Instead of passive consumption, users should engage with content that encourages thinking, creativity, and learning.
- 2. Parental Involvement and Guidance**
Parents and caregivers play a crucial role in guiding children's screen use. By watching together, discussing content, and setting clear expectations, they can help children develop healthy digital habits and critical thinking skills.
- 3. Time Management and Boundaries**
Establishing clear rules is essential. For example, families can set limits on daily screen time, avoid using devices during meals, and turn off screens at least one hour before bedtime. Creating "screen-free zones" such as bedrooms can also promote better sleep and family interaction.
- 4. Balanced Lifestyle**
Screen use should not replace important daily activities such as physical exercise, social interaction, hobbies, and rest. Encouraging children and adults alike to participate in outdoor activities, sports, reading, and creative hobbies can help maintain a healthy balance.

Role of Schools and Communities

In addition to families, schools and communities also have an important role in promoting healthy screen habits. Schools can incorporate digital literacy education into their curriculum, teaching students how to use technology responsibly and effectively. They can also encourage activities that involve collaboration, creativity, and critical

thinking beyond screens.

Communities can support families by providing safe spaces for outdoor activities, sports programs, and social events. Public awareness campaigns can also educate people about the risks of excessive screen use and the importance of maintaining a balanced lifestyle. By working together, society can create an environment that supports healthy digital behaviour.

Maintaining Balance in the Digital Age

Healthy screen use does not mean completely avoiding digital devices, but using them wisely and responsibly. Even for adults, experts suggest limiting recreational screen time to less than two hours per day whenever possible. Being mindful of how and why we use screens can help us avoid unnecessary overuse.

Adults should also serve as positive role models for younger generations. When children observe responsible screen use by parents and teachers, they are more likely to develop similar habits. Creating meaningful family time without screens, such as talking, playing games, or spending time outdoors, can strengthen relationships and improve overall well-being.

As digital technology continues to advance, screen use will remain an integral part of our lives. It offers many benefits, including access to information, improved communication, and new opportunities for learning and creativity. However, these advantages must be balanced with awareness and responsibility.

The key is not simply how much time we spend on screens but how we use them. By focusing on high-quality content, maintaining balance, encouraging real-life interaction, and promoting healthy habits, we can reduce the negative effects of excessive screen use. In doing so, we can create a healthier, happier, and more balanced life in the modern digital world.

Volunteering: Small Actions, Big Change

By Lynn Lynn Myat Oo

IN EVERY society, some people face difficulties such as poverty, loneliness, lack of education, or limited access to basic needs. While governments and organizations work to solve these problems, ordinary citizens

can also make a meaningful difference. Volunteering — offering one's time, skills, or effort without expecting payment — is one of the most powerful ways individuals can help improve their communities. Even small acts of service

can create positive change that spreads far beyond what we might imagine.

One of the most important benefits of volunteering is its ability to support people who are in need. Volunteers often assist in community programmes such as tutoring children, helping at shelters, distributing food to the

poor, or supporting elderly people who live alone. These efforts may seem small, but they can greatly improve the lives of those who receive help. For example, a few hours spent teaching a child to read may open the door to a brighter educational future.

Volunteering also strengthens the sense of community.

When people work together for a common cause, they build trust, understanding, and cooperation. Communities with active volunteers often become more united and supportive. People learn to care not only about their own lives but also about the well-being of others around them. This sense of shared responsibility helps create a more compassionate society.

Another important impact of volunteering is personal growth. People who volunteer often gain

valuable skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving. These experiences can be especially beneficial for young people who are exploring their future careers. At the same time, volunteering teaches empathy and humility. When individuals see the challenges others face, they develop a deeper appreciation for their own opportunities and become more motivated to contribute positively to society.

SEE PAGE 10



ARTICLE/TECH/ENVIRON WORLD

Xiong'an national observatory officially inaugurated

Meteorological data will be transmitted in real time to a cloud-based big data platform.



An aerial drone photo taken on 18 March 2026 shows the Baiyangdian Lake in Xiong'an New Area, north China's Hebei Province. **PHOTO: ZHU XUDONG/XINHUA**

CHINA on Wednesday inaugurated its 27th national climate observatory in the Xiong'an New Area in north China's Hebei Province.

According to the China Meteorological Administration, the observatory consists of one main station and eight auxiliary stations, covering four major ecosystem types ranging from urban areas to forests, wetlands and farmlands.

Meteorological data will

be transmitted in real time to a cloud-based big data platform, enhancing capabilities in climate monitoring, early warning, and sector-specific meteorological services.

About an hour's drive from Beijing, the Xiong'an New Area, dubbed the "city of the future", was established in 2017 to relieve Beijing of functions nonessential to its role as the nation's capital, while also advancing the coordinat-

ed development of Beijing and neighbouring Hebei and Tianjin Municipality.

After entering operation, the observatory will not only undertake climate observation tasks but also carry out research in several key areas, providing more reliable support for climate resource analysis, climate change monitoring and assessment, and disaster risk identification. — Xinhua

Scientists uncover over 110 new deep-sea species in Australia's Coral Sea

MARINE researchers have identified more than 110 new fish and invertebrate species from the deep waters of Australia's Coral Sea Marine Park.

Marine taxonomists said the number could exceed 200 as more cryptic species are identified in one of the region's largest deep-sea biodiversity surveys, said a statement on

Wednesday from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), Australia's national science agency.

The discoveries were made by scientists on board the CSIRO research vessel Investigator. Specimens were collected from depths of 200 to 3,000 metres across seamounts, at-

olls and unexplored deep reefs in the million-square-kilometre marine park.

Will White, CSIRO voyage chief scientist and shark expert, said the finds, which are "crucial for protecting Australia's marine biodiversity", include new species of rays, deepwater catsharks and chimaeras. — Xinhua

Volunteering: Small Actions, Big Change

FROM PAGE 9

Moreover, volunteering can inspire others to take action. When people witness acts of kindness and service, they are often encouraged to do the same. In this way, one volunteer effort can lead to many others, creating a ripple effect throughout the community. Over time, these small actions combine to produce significant social change.

In today's world, where many people are focused on personal success and busy schedules, volunteering reminds us of the importance of giving back. It shows that making a difference does not always require great wealth or power; sometimes, it simply requires time, dedication, and a caring heart.

Volunteering demonstrates how small actions can lead to big change. By helping others, strengthening communities, and inspiring compassion, volunteers play an essential role in building a better and more hopeful society.

Japan institute cancels survey due to ship fuel shortage amid Iran conflict

A national ocean research institute has decided to cancel a marine survey off Japan, citing concerns it may not be able to secure enough fuel for its two vessels due to supply disruptions caused by the war in Iran, according to an official.

The Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology had planned to survey waters off Tohoku, an area hit by the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami, as well as the Nankai Trough, where a megaquake is feared, among other areas.

The launch in late February of US-Israeli attacks on Iran has led to the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a critical wa-

terway for energy transport.

"We've secured the necessary fuel for our vessels to use in March, but it's uncertain whether we can obtain supplies beyond that," a JAMSTEC official said.

It is the first time the institute, under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, has decided to cancel a survey due to fuel shortage concerns.

The two vessels -- the support ship Yokosuka, which carries a submersible for deep-sea research, and the Shinsei Maru, capable of surveying seafloor and ocean conditions -- were scheduled for deployment. — Kyodo



The Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology had planned to survey waters off Tohoku, an area hit by the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami, as well as the Nankai Trough, where a megaquake is feared, among other areas. **PHOTO: JAMSTEC**

From relics to daily sanctuary: inside South Korea's museum boom

ON a crisp morning in Seoul, long queues form outside the National Museum of Korea even before the doors open, signalling how it has transformed from a traditional relic store into a vibrant cultural and social hub. The museum drew a record 6.5 million visitors in 2025 — more than four times its first relocation year figure in 2005 — landing it among the world's most visited art and history institutions, alongside the Louvre and the British Museum. Around 97 per cent of its visitors are South Koreans who treat the museum like a park or café, dropping in for walks, study breaks, or casual dates.

This shift grew from a deliberate strategy by the museum's Future Strategy Division, which reframed visitors as "users" who engage with architecture, digital content, and open recreational spaces rather than merely viewing exhibits. The move to Yongsan

two decades ago gave it a park like setting, while free admission since 2008 lowered psychological barriers to entry. However, the resulting crowds have pushed the museum to plan admission fees by 2027, not to profit but to manage data, customize services, and renew aging facilities.

The museum's modern approach to tradition is evident in the "Room of Quiet Contemplation", where visitors can sit near national treasure Pensive Bodhisattva statues without glass barriers, fostering personal reflection. Its in house MU:DS brand has turned ancient motifs into lifestyle products, posting 41.3 billion won (\$27.4 million) in sales last year by reinterpreting heritage through contemporary design. Targeting mainly 30 and 40 something consumers who value meaning and quality, the line sells mugs, tableware, and accessories that blend history with everyday use. — Kyodo

The museum's modern approach to tradition is evident in the "Room of Quiet Contemplation".



Visitors see an exhibition at the National Museum of Korea in Seoul on 9 March 2026. PHOTO: KYODO

AI gives Japan's voice actors new commercial clout, rights protections

JAPAN is moving fast to harness dubbing artists' voices for global anime and AI driven services, while trying to protect their rights in an era when voices can easily be copied. In Tokyo last November, the Voice Integrity and Dubbing Advancement

Association (VIDA) showed how AI from US firm ElevenLabs can translate a voice actor's line — such as Mika Kanai's spoken Japanese — into over 30 languages while keeping her original tone intact. The system also adds digital watermarks so

creators can track usage, verify ownership, and deter unauthorized copying.

VIDA, backed by voice actor agencies, wants to use this technology to let Japanese anime retain its native voices abroad, helping fan bases grow. Meanwhile, Itochu Corp. and the Japan Actors Union created the J Vox Pro voice database, designed to store and license performers' voices securely, including AI generated derivatives, so actors can earn when their voices are used. Today voice itself is not protected by Japanese copyright, so AI can mimic actors without breaking the law, and many voice talent earn less than three million yen a year. Legal experts say private certification helps, but Japan will ultimately need stronger laws and tougher enforcement to stop unlawful voice cloning. — Kyodo



File photo shows an anime-related event being held in India in September 2025. PHOTO: KYODO

NEWS IN BRIEF

Nutrica launches new healthy yellow mustard oil

NUTRICA, the lifestyle & wellness brand of BN Agritech Limited, has announced the launch of Nutrica Yellow Mustard Oil, further strengthening its portfolio of natural cooking essentials, offering families and home cooks a pure and authentic kitchen staple that supports everyday cooking without compromising on taste or quality.

With consumers increasingly moving towards cleaner and more natural cooking ingredients, Nutrica Yellow Mustard Oil unrefined to retain its natural antioxidants and full-bodied nutrition caters to health-conscious families, fitness enthusiasts, and home cooks who seek authentic flavours without compromise.

It preserves the natural aroma, taste, and nutritional value of yellow mustard seeds, making it a dependable choice for everyday Indian cooking, from tadkas and sauteing to curries, marinades, and traditional recipes.

Nutrica Yellow Mustard Oil stays close to tradition by bringing the rich taste and natural character of mustard without chemical processing, making it a trusted choice for families seeking real and reliable kitchen staples. The product is available in two convenient pack sizes, a 1 Litre PET bottle and a 5 Litre tin container, catering to both nuclear and joint family needs. It will be available across general trade stores and retail outlets in Delhi NCR.

Commenting on the launch, Sparsh Sachar, Director and Business Head - FMCG, Nutrica, said, "At Nutrica, we believe that everyday cooking should be both wholesome and flavourful. — ANI

ECONOMY WORLD

China's high-tech industries record robust growth in Q1



An aerial drone photo taken on 28 July 2025 shows a 1GW solar thermal and photovoltaic integrated project in Shanshan County, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. **PHOTO: XU ZIPENG/XINHUA**

The sales revenue of integrated circuit design and manufacturing also saw a sharp increase.

LATEST tax data show that the Chinese economy has continued to perform steadily, with innovation momentum strengthening, as evidenced by robust revenue growth in high-tech industries in the first quarter of 2026.

Data released Wednesday by the State Taxation Administration showed that sales revenue of high-tech industries for the period from 1 January to 25 March increased by 14.6 per cent year on year. High-tech manufacturing and services saw revenues grow 12.7 per cent and 15.8 per cent, respectively.

Driven by the demand of artificial intelligence and computing power centres, the sales revenue of integrated circuit design and manufacturing also saw a sharp increase, the data showed.

During the same period, the sales revenue of the manufacturing sector grew 5.4 per cent while the sales revenue of machinery and equipment manufacturing grew 6.3 per cent, the data showed.

Wednesday's data also revealed China's accelerating pace in green transition. — Xinhua

Japan, France agree on road map for critical minerals supply

JAPANESE Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and French President Emmanuel Macron agreed Wednesday to design a road map for critical minerals supply as they seek to deepen

cooperation in the sector.

The two leaders also affirmed that Japan and France will maintain close communication in support of efforts to de-escalate tensions in the

Middle East and establish a high-level dialogue on artificial intelligence, Takaichi said at a joint press appearance after their meeting in Tokyo. — Kyodo

India's Auto sector set for strong growth despite export headwinds: Report

INDIA'S export growth shall remain positive for most OEMs despite a hit on Middle East exports and container availability issues, as per a report by Nuvama Institutional Equities.

The wholesale uptrend is

expected to continue in March despite production constraints. This momentum is largely driven by enduring positive customer sentiments spurred by "better affordability, new products and adequate finance

availability".

The two-wheeler industry is expected to witness domestic volumes growing in double digits.

Meanwhile, Hero Moto-Corp is anticipated to grow by nine per cent to 600,000 units and Eicher-RE to see an eight per cent rise to 109,000 units.

In the passenger vehicle segment, volumes are likely to rise in double digits during March 2026.

The report estimated total volume growth to be 22 per cent for Tata Motors PV to 63,800 units and 18 per cent for Mahindra & Mahindra Auto to 99,000 units. Maruti Suzuki is expected to expand by 11 per cent to 215,000 units, while Hyundai may see a marginal 1 per cent increase to 68,000 units. — ANI



The report estimated total volume growth to be 22 per cent for Tata Motors PV to 63,800 units. **PHOTO: ANI/FILE**

Sri Lanka Customs to digitize container release process from Colombo Port



Photo taken on 6 October 2021 shows the world's largest container vessel "Ever Ace" at the Colombo Port in the Sri Lankan capital. **PHOTO: AJITH PERERA/XINHUA/FILE**

SRI Lanka will begin releasing containers from the Port of Colombo to three external container inspection yards through an online system from 3 April a senior Customs officer said on Tuesday.

Director General of Customs Seevali Arukgoda said the new system would improve transparency and accountability in the container release process.

He said imported containers selected for inspection are handled at three container yards located outside the port. Until now, the release process from the Colombo Port to these yards

has been carried out manually, requiring clearing agents to visit the gate, show their passes, and register details in person.

Arukgoda said the manual process had drawn criticism over inefficiency and alleged irregularities. In response, Sri Lanka Customs decided to digitalize the system.

He said the department's Information and Communication Technology Division developed a dedicated application to move the process online, aiming to prevent fraud and corruption and ensure a more transparent release procedure. — Xinhua

France's Dassault says 'weeks' left to save Europe warplane project

THE head of France's Dassault Aviation said on Wednesday he was giving his company "two to three weeks" to see if the multibillion-euro warplane programme with Germany could work as the government tries to salvage the project.

He spoke after French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz voiced determination to rescue the programme. Merz said last week that two mediators had been tasked with making a proposal by the end of April.

The Future Combat Air System (FCAS) pro-

gramme is a flagship joint effort to build a next-generation combat aircraft between France, Germany and Spain.

But it has faltered as disagreements persist between Dassault and Airbus, which represents Germany and Spain.

On Wednesday, Eric Trappier said he was "not a man for co-management".

"We're giving ourselves a little more time — two to three weeks — to try to reach an agreement between the French and Germans, between Dassault and Airbus," he said at a forum in Paris. — AFP

Intl tourists to Cambodia's famed Angkor down 32% in Q1

CAMBODIA'S renowned Angkor Archaeological Park recorded a total of 270,911 international visitors in the first quarter of 2026, a year-on-year decrease of 32 percent, said a press release on Wednesday.

The UNESCO-listed world heritage site made 13.1 million US dollars in revenue from ticket sales during the January-March period this year, also down 30 percent year-on-year, said the press release from the state-owned Angkor Enterprise.

Located in northwest Siem Reap province, the 401-square-kilometres Angkor Archaeological Park, the kingdom's most popular tourist destination, is home to 91 ancient



Tourists visit the Angkor Wat Temple at the UNESCO-listed Angkor Archaeological Park in Siem Reap province, Cambodia, 29 January 2025. PHOTO: SAO KHUTH/XINHUA/FILE

temples, which were built from the ninth to the 13th centuries.

Thong Mengdavid, deputy director at the

China-ASEAN Studies Center of the Cambodia University of Technology and Science, told Xinhua that the decline was likely

due to regional economic slowdowns, online scam issues, border conflicts, and rising global fuel prices. — Xinhua

Construction begins on major poultry production complex in N Afghanistan

CONSTRUCTION has begun on a major poultry production complex in northern Afghanistan's Balkh province, a project aimed at expanding domestic output and reducing reliance on imports, local media

outlet TOLONews reported on Wednesday.

The large-scale facility, developed in partnership with Uzbek investors, will produce eggs, day-old chicks, poultry meat and animal feed, said the re-

port, adding that the US\$60 million project will be built in three phases on more than 400 acres of plot in Mazar-i-Sharif city, the provincial capital, and will be completed within the next three years.

Once fully operational, the complex is expected to yield up to 30 million chickens, 330 million eggs, 45,000 tonnes of poultry meat and 33,000 tonnes of poultry feed annually, said the report. — Xinhua

Vietnam's agro-forestry-fishery exports up 5.9% in Q1

VIETNAM'S agro-forestry-fishery export revenue reached US\$16.69 billion in the first quarter of 2026, up 5.9 per cent year on year, the Vietnam News Agency reported Wednesday, citing data released by the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment. Notably, pepper exports totaled 64,600 tonnes and were worth \$417.5 million, up 36.8 per cent in volume and 28.8 per cent in value from the same period of 2025, despite a 5.9 per cent decline in average export prices.

China, the United States and Japan were Vietnam's three largest export markets, accounting for 22.1 per cent, 18.3 per cent and 7.1 per cent of the total, respectively, the report added. Meanwhile, the Southeast Asian country's agro-forestry-fishery imports in the first three months totaled \$11.91 billion, up 3.6 per cent year on year, according to the ministry — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (281N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (281N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **2-4-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (170N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (170N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **2-4-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

ROLLING UPDATES WORLD

War in the Middle East: latest developments

Here are the latest developments in the Middle East war:

Iran's supreme leader pledges support for Hezbollah

Iran's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei has sent a message to Hezbollah chief Naim Qassem, pledging continued support for the resistance against the United States and Israel, the semi-official Fars news agency reported early Wednesday.

In his message, Iran's supreme leader appreciated Qassem's condolences and sympathy for the "martyrdom" of his father, Iran's former Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in a US-Israeli airstrike in Tehran on 28 February.

Khamenei said steadfastness and resistance against the Muslim world's "most stubborn enemies," namely, the United States and Israel, were among the most prominent characteristics of Iran's former supreme leader.

Israel strikes Iranian factory tied to chemical weapons

The Israel Defence Forces (IDF) on Wednesday said it struck a factory that transferred chemical substances to an Iranian facility designated for developing chemical weapons.



Vehicles wait in line to refuel at a gas station in Surakarta, Central Java, Indonesia, 31 March 2026. Indonesia is pushing a series of energy-saving measures to reduce fuel consumption and strengthen fiscal resilience amid rising global uncertainty triggered by the ongoing Middle East conflict, Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Airlangga Hartarto said on Tuesday. **PHOTO: BRAM SELO/XINHUA**

The IDF said in a statement that it struck the factory, owned by the Tofiq Daru Company, on Tuesday. The factory, presenting itself as a civilian business, functions as a main supplier of fentanyl to the Organization of Defense Innovation and Research (SPND), which is responsible for the development of chemical weapons in Iran.

Fentanyl in high doses is considered a highly lethal substance. The Tofiq Daru Company knowingly and systematically supplied the substance to the SPND organization, said the IDF, noting the strike impaired the Iranian government's chemical weapons production capabilities.

Iran-launched missile hits

tanker in Qatar's waters

A missile, launched from Iran, struck a fuel tanker chartered by QatarEnergy in Qatar's territorial waters early Wednesday, the Ministry of Defence said.

In a statement, the ministry said Qatar was targeted by three cruise missiles launched from Iran, noting that two were successfully intercepted, while one

hit the tanker.

The ministry added that the tanker was carrying 21 crew members, all of whom were safely evacuated following coordinated emergency procedures.

Kuwait reports drone strikes on airport

Kuwait International Airport was targeted by drone attacks early Wednesday, the country's Civil Aviation Authority said in a statement, attributing the incident to Iran and affiliated armed groups.

According to the statement, the attacks struck fuel storage tanks operated by the Kuwait Aviation Fuelling Company, causing a large fire, said Abdullah Al-Rajhi, spokesman for the authority.

Emergency response teams were immediately dispatched to the scene to contain the blaze and secure the area, and preliminary reports indicated no injuries, with the damage limited to material losses.

The latest incident follows a number of similar attacks targeting the same facility in recent weeks. Kuwait's civil aviation authorities said on Saturday that multiple drone strikes had hit Kuwait International Airport, causing significant damage to its radar system. — Xinhua

US President said military operation against Iran is likely to last for another 2-3 weeks

"We're finishing the job. And I think within maybe two weeks, maybe a couple of days longer to do the job, but we want to knock out every single thing they have. Now, it's possible that we'll make a deal before that, because we'll hit bridges," Trump told reporters.

The US president warned other countries that they will have to "be able to fend for themselves" in the Strait of Hormuz.

"What happens in the strait—we aren't going to have anything to do with it. There is no reason for us to do it," he told reporters. — SPUTNIK

Indian Govt issues guidelines on GLP-1 Drugs' use

THE Government of India on Thursday released details on the GLP-1 Drugs' use, risks, and regulation, according to an official press release.

Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs when the pancreas does not produce adequate insulin, or when the body cannot effectively use the insulin it produces, leading to high blood sugar.

If left untreated, it can lead to complications like blindness, kidney failure, heart attacks, stroke and lower limb amputation.

Insulin and glucagon are hormones produced by the pancreas that regulate blood

sugar (glucose) levels. Insulin helps convert food into energy and lowers blood sugar by enabling cells to absorb glucose, while glucagon raises blood sugar when levels drop too low.

Together, the two hormones keep blood sugar within a healthy range. In patients with type 2 diabetes, however, this balance breaks down.

The body's cells become resistant to insulin, or the pancreas does not produce enough of it, or both - while glucagon continues to drive blood sugar higher. It is this dual dysfunction that GLP-1 drugs are designed to address, the release stated. — ANI



It is this dual dysfunction that GLP-1 drugs are designed to address. **PHOTO: ANI/FILE**

SPORTS



Myanmar to face Vietnam first in ASEAN Futsal Championship

THE Myanmar national futsal team will compete in the 2026 ASEAN Futsal Championship to be hosted by Thailand, and will open their campaign against Vietnam.

Myanmar futsal players are seen in a training session in preparation for taking part in the ASEAN futsal championship. **PHOTO: MFF**

The tournament will be held from 6 to 12 April in Nakhon Ratchasima. Group A comprises Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar and Timor-Leste, while Group B includes Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia and Brunei. Group matches will take place from 6 to 9 April. Myanmar will play Vietnam on 6 April, Thailand on 7

April, and Timor-Leste on 9 April.

As part of preparations, Myanmar began training in Bangkok on 29 March and has been playing friendly matches. The team travelled with 17 players and will finalize a 14-player squad after the friendlies, then depart for Nakhon Ratchasima on 5 April. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

MFF to nurture outstanding referees from Basic Referee Course 1/2026

THE Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) has announced that it will continue to nurture and support outstanding referees from the MFF Basic Referee Course 1/2026 to enhance their professional quality further.

The seven-day course, held from 24 to 30 March, was organized to aim at producing a new generation of high-quality referees for the Myanmar football industry. According to MFF, a total of 29 participants attended, including education

staff, personnel from the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, and young football enthusiasts from the Yangon, Ayeyawady and Bago regions and Kayin State. The winding-up ceremony took place on 30 March at Thuwunna Stadium. During the event, officials presented completion certificates to the trainees who excelled in both the theoretical and practical examinations conducted throughout the course.

During the training period, participants had the opportuni-

ty to fully study the latest laws of the game, the code of ethics for referees, and the fundamentals of on-field positioning and decision-making.

MFF further stated that top-performing referees from this batch will be assigned officiating duties in age-group competitions and domestic tournaments organized by the federation. This initiative aims to provide them with the necessary experience to elevate their skills to a professional level. — MT/ZN



The closing ceremony of the MFF Basic Referee Course 1/2026.

Japan beat England for 1st time with Mitoma winner at Wembley

KAORU Mitoma scored the winner as Japan beat England for the first time in men's football on Tuesday, securing a memorable 1-0 victory at London's Wembley Stadium in an international friendly.

In the final match before

their squad announcement for this summer's World Cup, the 18th-ranked Samurai Blue stunned England, one of the tournament favourites who sit fourth in the FIFA rankings, at the iconic venue in front of 79,233.

"England are a strong team and we had to persevere for a long period. But the players were tenacious and put into practice how to play with patience when things aren't going our way," manager Hajime Moriyasu said. — Kyodo

Myanmar Fight 31 held to mark Shwemawdaw Pagoda festival



Nga Ye (Smart Fight) and Than Tun Aung (Pyay Kyaw/Mandalay) compete in a three-round bout.

THE Myanmar Fight 31 traditional boxing tournament, held in commemoration of the Shwemawdaw Pagoda festival, took place yesterday morning at the Bago Region Indoor Stadium.

The event was organized under the auspices of the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs and the Traditional Myanmar Lethwei Federation, in cooperation with the Bago Region Traditional Lethwei Subcommittee, local well-wishers, enthusiasts, and the Department of Sports and Physical Education.

A total of 37 bouts were held, comprising 22 two-round contests, 12 three-round contests and three four-round challenge matches.

In the four-round challenge bouts, Myint Myat Maung (Bago Club) defeated Khun Min Min (Shwe Bar Lar/Thaton), forcing his opponent to retire in the third round after sustained punches. Arka Bo (Bago Club) knocked out Ye Yint Mahn (Taung Zalap) in the second round, while Kyaw Naying Tun (Aphyu Yaung Thway Thit) and Kaung Htet Hein (Lone Chaw Club) fought to a draw.

After the matches, Federation President U Wunna of the federation presented cash awards to the athletes, while Chairman U Min Htut of the Bago Region Traditional Lethwei Subcommittee awarded certificates of honour. — Bala/KZL



Putin, UAE leader express concern about deteriorating situation in Middle East: Kremlin

The leaders emphasized the importance of early cessation of hostilities in the Middle East.

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin held a phone call with his UAE counterpart, Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, during which they expressed serious concern about the degradation of the military-political situation in the Middle East and the death of people, the Kremlin said on Tuesday.

“During a telephone conversation, Russian President Vladimir Putin and UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan expressed serious concern about the ongoing deterioration of the military-political situation in the Middle East, the loss of civilian lives, and the destruction of energy, industrial, and other civilian infrastructure,” the Kremlin said in a statement.

The leaders also emphasized the importance of early cessation of hostilities in the Middle East, the statement said, adding that the presidents noted a high level of cooperation and contacts between states that successfully develop. — SPUTNIK



UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Russian President Vladimir Putin attend a welcoming ceremony before a meeting at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia on 29 January 2026. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK/FILE**

India has sufficient crude supplies for two months; no fuel shortage: Govt

INDIA'S crude oil inventories remain adequate, with the government securing sufficient supplies for the next two months, said Sujata Sharma, Joint

Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, on Wednesday during an inter-ministerial briefing amid the ongoing West Asia crisis.

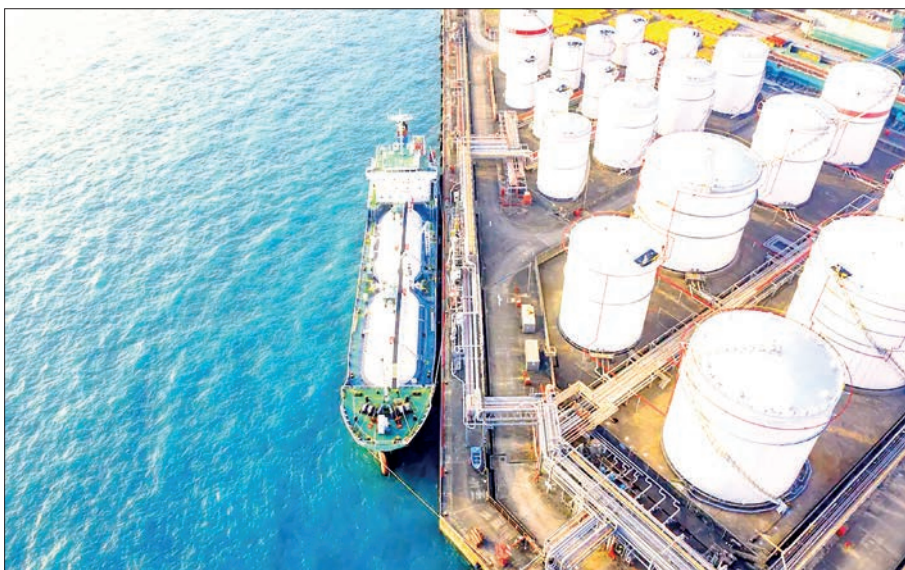
Assuring stability in fuel supply, Sharma said, “Our refineries are operating at the highest levels. There have been no reports of any dry-out at retail outlets.

“Highlighting global price trends, she noted, “Around two months ago, Brent crude was trading in the range of \$70 per barrel, and today it has crossed \$100 per barrel.”

Despite this sharp rise, she emphasised, “No increase has been made in petrol and diesel prices for domestic consumers.

“She added, “Petrol and diesel prices have not been increased since 6 April 2022, and in March 2024, prices were reduced by Rs2, which continues to remain in effect.”

On government measures, Sharma said, “To protect domestic consumers from international price volatility, the Government of India reduced excise duty to ensure that there is no increase in prices.” — ANI



To protect domestic consumers from international price volatility, the Government of India reduced excise duty to ensure that there is no increase in prices. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ANI/FILE**

Sri Lanka set to offer free tourist visas

Sri Lanka is set to introduce a six-month programme granting free tourist visas to passport holders from 39 countries, with draft regulations to be submitted to the parliament following cabinet approval, a government official has said.

The initiative, aimed at supporting the recovery and growth of the tourism sector, was initially approved at a cabinet meeting on 21 July 2025. Under the programme, eligible visitors will be issued tourist visas free of charge, cabinet spokesman Nalinda Jayatissa said at a press briefing on Tuesday.

Draft regulations for the scheme have been prepared by the Legal Draftsman's Department in line with the provisions of the Immigration and Emigration Act. These regulations will now be presented to the parliament for approval. The proposal was submitted by the Minister of Public Security and Parliamentary Affairs and subsequently endorsed by the cabinet. — Xinhua