

# State Fund to Boost MSME Investment Capital

Regional raw material-based value-added manufacturing is the most reliable production method.

If efforts are made with good intentions and a strong commitment to working for the development of the country, the national economy will inevitably improve and grow, said President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing, who chairs the MSME Development Central Committee, at the central committee meeting at the Ministry of Industry and MSME Development in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

In his speech, the President underscored that MSME businesses can be operated with a small amount of capital



President U Min Aung Hlaing presides over the MSME Development Central Committee meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

**Salient points from the speech delivered by the President at the MSME Central Committee meeting**

- 1. Domestic consumption can be sufficiently met, and products can also be exported abroad by developing MSME businesses and increasing production.
- 2. MSME production businesses can also achieve significant success through the co-operative system.
- 3. Each citizen will also develop greater trust and confidence in their country by improving the economy.
- 4. If efforts are executed with good intentions and a strong commitment to improving the country, the national economy will undoubtedly improve and develop.

to produce a large number of products. If basic requirements can be met, they can make a significant contribution to the country's economy.

He noted that MSME activities are being carried out with the objectives of strengthening the national economy, increasing domestic production, substituting im-

ports, and generating higher foreign exchange earnings through the production of value-added goods for export.

He highlighted that domestic consumption can be sufficiently met, and products can also be exported abroad by developing MSME businesses and increasing production. Therefore, it is necessary to produce goods that meet market demand for good quality.

He stressed that each citizen will also develop greater trust and confidence in their country by improving the economy, as well as a stronger sense of patriotism and a willingness to defend the nation.

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## Structural reconstruction of Inwa tooth relic building fully completed

THE reconstruction of the Inwa tooth relic tower, which is being rebuilt to its original design as depicted in ancient palm-leaf manuscripts, has reached 100 per cent completion regarding its main structure, with only the traditional artistic details remaining to be completed, Inwa historian and author Bo Shake (Ratanapura)

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A view of the Inwa tooth relic building reconstruction.

## Mt Zwegabin Enacts Strict Litter Ban to Enforce Cleanliness

LITTERING will be strictly prohibited at Mount Zwegabin, a historically important and famous tourist destination in Kayin State, to keep the mountain clean and green, said the Tourism Hpa-an.

Mount Zwegabin is a precious natural heritage site that attracts both local and foreign tourists every year. Sadly, there has been an increase in littering along the trekking paths



Trekkers at the Mount Zwegabin.

and the surrounding area at the foot of the mountain, impacting the environment and the beauty of the destination and the state's tourism, it stated.

To be clean and green, Mount Zwegabin, the Kayin State Department of General Administration has issued a local order 3/2026, and according to it, a K50,000 fine is being imposed for littering,

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# NATIONAL

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

President's Office

Order 58/2026

11<sup>th</sup> Waxing of First Waso 1388 ME  
25 June 2026

Appointment and Assignment of Chief Justice for  
Taninthayi Region High Court

UNDER Clause iv of Section 308(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Section 82(b) of the Union Government Law, Section 44 of the Union Judiciary Law, and Section 17(d) of the Region or State Government Law, Daw Aye Aye Than is hereby appointed and assigned as Chief Justice of the Taninthayi Region High Court.

Sd/ Min Aung Hlaing  
President  
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

President's Office

Order 59/2026

11<sup>th</sup> Waxing of First Waso 1388 ME  
25 June 2026

Appointment and Assignment of Judge for  
Taninthayi Region High Court

UNDER Clause iv of Section 308(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Section 82(d) of the Union Government Law, Section 45 of the Union Judiciary Law, and Section 18(d) of the Region or State Government Law, Daw Htwe Htwe is hereby appointed and assigned as a Judge of the Taninthayi Region High Court.

Sd/ Min Aung Hlaing  
President  
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Official Message by Union Minister for Home Affairs  
Lt-Gen Nyunt Win Swe on occasion of International Day  
Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

DISTINGUISHED citizens of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar,

I extend my warmest greetings and sincere wishes for peace, prosperity, and well-being to all nationals of our beloved country.

Today, as we mark another International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, we are reminded that the global community continues to face a persistent and evolving drug crisis. For decades, nations across the world have struggled to contain this menace, and its far-reaching consequences — social disintegration, economic loss, public health emergencies, and threats to national stability and development remain profound. Myanmar is no exception. We are confronting the complex realities of opium poppy cultivation, the large-scale production of synthetic narcotics, and the rampant abuse and trafficking that fuel instability within our borders.

To address these challenges decisively, the Government has established the Central Com-

mittee for Drug Abuse Control, which has formulated clear policies and mobilized eleven specialized task forces to execute comprehensive enforcement, prevention, and rehabilitation measures. The country has designated the fight against narcotics as a national priority and has accelerated operations with unwavering resolve.

However, we must acknowledge a grave reality. Certain ethnic armed organizations and PDF terrorist groups have exploited periods of political uncertainty to expand their involvement in the illicit drug trade. They have intensified the production, transportation, and sale of narcotics, using the profits as their primary source of revenue. These funds are systematically channelled into the recruitment of new fighters, the procurement of weapons and ammunition, and the sustainment of violent campaigns that directly undermine national security, public safety, and long-term development. This is not a mere alle-

gation; it is corroborated by the mounting evidence of arrests and seizures conducted by our law enforcement agencies.

As the Head of State has clearly articulated, those who refuse to abandon the armed path under the pretext of federalism, democracy, or ethnic rights are, in truth, financing their operations through the narcotics trade, as well as engaging in transnational crimes including online fraud and online gambling. These activities not only prolong the existence of insurgent groups but also pose a persistent danger to the stability of our nation. In response, the country is conducting special counter-insurgency operations on a nationwide scale, while simultaneously strengthening cooperative frameworks with neighbouring countries and international organizations.

In the execution of our anti-narcotics strategy, the Government has implemented a series of special operation plans. To date, forty-one such operations have been

conducted, and a further operation is currently being planned for this year. In the course of these efforts, members of the Defence Services and the Myanmar Police Force have made the ultimate sacrifice, laying down their lives for the sake of the nation and its people. Their courage and devotion will never be forgotten.

Our intensified enforcement actions have yielded significant results. During 2025 alone, authorities registered 5,370 drug-related cases, arrested seven thousand five hundred and sixty-two offenders, and seized narcotics, precursor chemicals, and related materials valued at over K1,761 billion. Furthermore, to strike at the very roots of the drug trade, we are pursuing not only the direct perpetrators but also accomplices and masterminds operating behind the scenes. Assets derived from drug offences are being confiscated under the Anti-Money Laundering Law, and during the same period, assets

worth over K4,285 million were forfeited to the State treasury.

In keeping with international practice, the contraband seized is destroyed each year on 26 June, on which we have destroyed narcotics and related materials valued at over one thousand K72 billion in 2025. As for this year, Myanmar will also commemorate its destruction ceremony as a national event in Yangon, Mandalay and Taunggyi by destroying narcotics and related materials valued at over K2,209 billion. Due to the intensified special operations for narcotics control and suppression, the number of apprehensions has risen significantly, necessitating the destruction of more than double the quantity seized compared to the previous year.

Beyond enforcement, the Government is equally committed to reducing the supply of drugs through sustainable alternative development. The Alternative Development Implementation Management Committee, together with

the Crop Substitution and Agriculture Sector and the Livestock Sector, is actively working to reduce opium poppy cultivation by providing viable economic alternatives. The second-phase pilot project, covering the period from 2024 to 2029, is also currently being implemented in sixty-five villages within Hopong and Hsihseng Townships. In addition, we are collaborating with Thailand's Office of the Narcotics Control Board in the Naungtayar region of Southern Shan State, and with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Taunggyi and Hopong areas. These partnerships have already borne fruit in 2024; over 153 tonnes of coffee from the Hopong and Loilem regions were exported to France, and that figure rose to over two hundred and five point five tons in 2025. Similarly, over six tonnes of dried coffee beans from the Naungtayar region were sent to Thailand for value-added processing last year.

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NATIONAL

Myanmar Targets to Cover 50% of Trees across Nation

CONSERVING and protecting forests and ecosystems is one of the most effective nature-based solutions in responding to climate change, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing said at the second national-level monsoon tree-growing ceremony for 2026 near Tawwin Yadana Road in Dekkhinathiri Township yesterday morning.

Speaking on the occasion, the President underlined that various countries around the world place emphasis on promoting a green and sustainable environment, renewable energy production, and the green economy, including initiatives such as the green revolution, green energy, and the green economy.

He recounted that Myanmar has established 1,337 forest reserves and protected public forests, accounting for 26.11 per cent of the total land area of the State as well as 62 natural conservation areas



President U Min Aung Hlaing overviews the second monsoon tree-growing activities.

covering 6.59 per cent of the land area.

He stressed the need to reach the 50 per cent coverage of forest across the nation, up from 42.15 per cent coverage in 2025.

The President noted that according to the 2026 climate risk index of some international climate monitoring organizations, Myanmar has been included among the countries likely to experi-

ence the hottest years in recorded history in 2026 and 2027. It is stated that climate change and the El Niño phenomenon may have adverse impacts on various sectors, and therefore, preparations are required in all aspects.

He stated that the international communities around the world are transforming their cities into more livable and climate-resilient urban are-

as through concepts and initiatives such as “Cool Cities”, “Healthy Cities”, “Green Infrastructure”, and “Green Space”.

As such, he continued that it is necessary to place emphasis on increasing Green Spaces in the country through the development of urban forests, greening of road sides, and expansion of urban parks, among other initiatives.

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Structural reconstruction of Inwa tooth relic ...

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told The Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

Following approval from the Department of Archaeology and National Museum, December’s excavations uncovered original early Konbaung-era foundations and Amara-pura-era artefacts, both of which are now incorporated into the reconstruction.

“The structural body of the tower is 100 per cent complete. We have reused discovered items in their original locations. Lion statues that were found in good condition are currently being kept in the museum. We are preserv-

ing the original pieces we found and using them as templates to create replicas,” he explained.

He added that they are now proceeding with the traditional artistic finishing touches. It is estimated to be completed in five months, with a total cost of over K700 million. The reconstructed building stands 70 feet and six inches tall with a 33-foot base. Donated by Dr Hla Myint, Lin Yaung Win Company, the project is being led by architect U Win Maung (Tampawady), engineer U Zaw Win, and Bo Shake (Ratanapura). — MT/ZN

Mt Zwegabin Enacts Strict Litter Ban to ...

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and 50 per cent will be rewarded to the person who can catch the litterer, and the rest will be used for funding the destination’s management team.

Those who violate the rule will be taken action under Section 188 of

the Penal Code and prevailing laws, the Tourism Hpa-an mentioned in the announcement on 25 June.

Visitors were also requested to use designated litter sites and adhere to the “take back your trash” policy. — MT/ZS

UN Women Representative to Myanmar presents Credentials to MoFA Union Minister

MS Geeta Kuttiparambil, Representative of the UN Women to Myanmar, paid a courtesy call and presented her Credentials to Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Tin Maung Swe at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Also present at the meeting were respective officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. — MNA



Union Minister U Tin Maung Swe receives the UN Women Representative to Myanmar yesterday.

MoE Union Minister meets Asia-Pacific university leaders

A Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister for Education Dr Chaw Chaw Sein attended the third day of the 2026 Global Sustainable Development Congress in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The delegation visited the Education Exhibition held alongside the congress, where they viewed displays by international universities and educational institutions and discussed research findings on sustainable development, educational in-



Union Minister Dr Chaw Chaw Sein meets the representative of leading universities from the Asia-Pacific region.

novations and curriculum reforms.

The Union minister also met representatives of leading universities from the Asia-Pacific region to explore cooperation with Myanmar universities. Discussions

focused on academic and research collaboration, staff and student exchange programmes, joint research projects, and the development of frameworks for technological cooperation. — MNA/MKKS

# NATIONAL

## Nay Pyi Taw Archway to Become Smart City Landmark, Says President



President U Min Aung Hlaing hears the report on the Nay Pyi Taw Archway construction plan.

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing has directed that bypasses be systematically constructed during the development of the Nay Pyi Taw Archway to prevent disruption to traffic, while also calling for the structure to be built in a grand and

systematic manner featuring Myanmar architectural designs.

The President gave guidance yesterday in response to briefings by Union Minister for Construction U Myo Thant during a visit to the city entryway construction site, which is being developed as an

iconic landmark at the city entrance to extend an auspicious welcome to visitors entering the capital, elevate the country's urban prestige and standards, and preserve and showcase Myanmar's culture and history.

He further instructed that the road layout

include as few sharp turns as possible, that the structure be earthquake-resistant, durable, beautiful, and orderly, and that public recreation areas, parking facilities, and pedestrian underpasses be systematically incorporated as necessary.

The President toured and inspected the ongoing work at the construction site and provided necessary guidance following briefings by responsible officials.

The Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory is being comprehensively developed into a green city, a clean city, and a technology-based smart city as part of its urban development, according to reports.

Also accompanying the tour were Vice-Presidents U Nyo Saw and Nan Ni Ni Aye, as well as responsible officials. — MNA/TH

## MoFA UM addresses officers and staff designated for overseas posts

UNION Minister for Foreign Affairs U Tin Maung Swe delivered an address to officers and staff members who will serve at Myanmar embassies, permanent missions, and consulates-general abroad yesterday at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Ministers U Ko Ko Kyaw and U Naing Min Kyaw, the Permanent Secretary, responsible officials, and the officers and staff members departing for overseas duties.

At the meeting, the Union minister stated that he wished to emphasize that loyalty to the State is the most important attribute of a diplomat. He noted that every foreign service officer needs to possess political and diplomatic insight, and that having qualified diplomatic staff with strong political foresight and experience is invaluable to both the nation and the ministry. He added that it is vital for staff to perform their duties faithfully, honestly, and with a sense of responsibility and accountability towards the country and the ministry.

Afterwards, the officers and staff members slated for duties at embassies, permanent missions, and consulates-general introduced themselves individually, stating the countries where they had previously served and their current postings. The Union minister then outlined the objectives to be implemented and the precautions to be observed in each respective host country. — MNA/TH



Union Minister U Tin Maung Swe addresses the meeting with diplomats to be stationed overseas.

## State Fund to Boost MSME Investment Capital

### FROM PAGE 1

The President identified regional raw material-based value-added manufacturing as the most reliable production method.

He spotted that investment capital will be raised for MSME development through the State economic promotion fund.

He emphasized the necessity of developing human resources for agriculture and livestock, the state's primary industries.

The President urged all to manage the production of quality products from cotton, bamboo, rubber, coffee and other crops.

Chairman of the MSME Development Work Committee Vice-President (1) U Nyo Saw reported that the difficulties faced in MSME businesses, such as access to financial capital, technology, markets, human resources, and information, as well as the creation of adequate infra-

structure and a favourable business environment, are being addressed through the MSME Agency and regional agencies established at various levels.

Union Minister for Industry and MSME Development Dr Charlie Than, who is also Central Committee Secretary, detailed the central committee's formation, functions, meetings, developmental activities, and Union-level exhibitions.

Union ministers, the Central Bank of Myanmar

Governor, the UMFCI President, the Patron of Federation of Myanmar Engineering Societies and officials participated in discussions on the development of MSMEs with support in relevant sectors and the production of human resources.

In concluding remarks, the President pointed out that regarding financial investment, banks should support national economic development by allocating more funds to production and

business sectors rather than making large-scale investments in real estate markets.

He underlined that, as collective action can create strength, MSME production businesses can also achieve significant success through the cooperative system.

He noted that Myanmar possesses abundant natural resources, favourable land and water conditions, and a strong foundation in many areas. People have to work actually in

unity. If efforts are carried out with good intentions and a strong commitment to improving the country, the national economy will undoubtedly improve and develop.

Also present at the meeting were Vice-President (2) Nan Ni Ni Aye, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services General Ye Win Oo, Union ministers, the Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, chief ministers of regions and states and officials. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL

Pyithu Hluttaw session tackles governance, infrastructure, and education

THE 14<sup>th</sup> day of the second regular session of the Third Pyithu Hluttaw commenced in Nay Pyi Taw at 10:30 am yesterday, presided over by Deputy Speaker U Maung Maung Ohn. During the session, Union ministers and deputy ministers responded to eight questions raised by Hluttaw representatives concerning citizenship documentation, fuel supply, healthcare education, and school infrastructure.

Daw Nang Tin Oo from the Kehsi Constituency raised concerns over delays and extortion in the citizenship card application process in Kehsi and Mongkaing townships. In response, U Myint Kyaing, Union Minister for Immigration and Population, assured



The 14<sup>th</sup>-day meeting of the second regular session of the Third Pyithu Hluttaw is underway yesterday, presided over by Deputy Speaker U Maung Maung Ohn.

that directives mandate same-day issuance for eligible natural-born citizens with complete documentation. He noted that while fieldwork can occasionally delay township officers, the ministry strictly penalizes misconduct, citing recent disciplinary actions against 12 staff members and the prosecution of 30

brokers in Shan State.

Regarding border access, U Aung Zaw Moe (aka) Aung Zaw Moe Tun from the Muse Constituency requested a streamlined process for obtaining Border Pass (BP) booklets for locals entering Ruili, China. Union Minister U Myint Kyaing explained that BPs

are strictly vetted alongside the Myanmar Police Force to cross-reference blacklists.

He added that displaced residents from Kutkai now residing in Muse could smoothly obtain BPs provided they officially transfer their household registration to Muse.

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He revealed that the Union Territory of Nay Pyi Taw is being developed as a Green City, Clean City, and Smart City, with primary emphasis placed on environmental greening and sustainability efforts.

The President underscored that it is also necessary to successfully plant a total of 21.36 million trees planned for this year in various areas, including the 13 districts of the tropical region, railway lines, the verges along ASEAN highways and roadsides, the Bagan ancient cultural zone, areas around Inlay Lake and coastal regions, designated green areas within cities, and village fuelwood plantations for rural communities.

At the ceremony, the President planted a

gum-kilo sapling at the designated location.

Vice-Presidents U Nyo Saw and Nan Ni Ni Aye, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Aung Lin Dwe, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services General Ye Win Oo, Union-level dignitaries, Union ministers, the Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, chief ministers of regions and states, deputy ministers, Hluttaw representatives, departmental personnel, teachers and students participated in the tree-growing activities.

The President and party viewed round the participation of attendees in growing saplings.

They planted 3,000 saplings of 14 species including Mesua ferrea, starflower, gum-kino, teak, ironwood, mahogany and so on. — MNA/TTA

MSWRR UM receives UNHCR Representative to Myanmar



The UNHCR Representative calls on Union Minister Dr Soe Win yesterday.

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Soe Win received Mr Barnaby Jones, Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Myanmar, at the Ministry's meeting hall yesterday afternoon.

They discussed UNHCR assistance,

the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry and UNHCR, and future cooperation.

The meeting was attended by the director-general, the deputy permanent secretary, relevant officials and representatives from the UNHCR office. — MNA/MKKS

Myanmar, India to deepen payment system interoperability

TO make digital payment systems between Myanmar and India faster and more convenient, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), the Central Bank of Myanmar MMQR Consortium, and the Myanmar Payment Union (MPU) are collaborating to enable interoperability between India's UPI QR and RuPay systems and Myanmar's MMQR infrastructure.

Central Bank of Myanmar Governor Dr Khin Naing Oo and Indian Ambassador Mr Abhay Thakur met and discussed in detail the establishment of a bilateral currency

arrangement between the Indian rupee and Myanmar kyat. The discussion also included the effective measures to promote the current Indian rupee-Myanmar kyat direct payment system for trade and investment.

Currently, the RBI and CBM are drafting the Bilateral Currency Swap Arrangement to promote bilateral trade and investment.

Myanmar's uab Bank and CB Bank, alongside India's Punjab National Bank, have been designated to process rupee-kyat trade payments.

The direct rupee-kyat payment system was launched in 2024. The



Indian rupee notes.

system has helped reduce currency exchange costs and has significantly facilitated not only border trade but also normal trade activities between the two countries. The proposed Currency Swap Arrangement currently under discussion is expected to become another important step toward boosting bilateral trade and economic cooperation between Myanmar and India. — ASH/KTZH

Ballot draw fixed for Thukha Dagon Rental Housing on 28 June

A ballot draw for newly completed apartment units and units reposessed due to breaches of tenancy regulations at the Thukha Dagon Public Rental Housing Project, which was built for low-in-

come residents and civil servants facing housing difficulties in Yangon Region, will be held on 28 June.

This round will include 48 units from three newly completed apart-

ment blocks, as well as units reposessed from previous tenants who failed to comply with housing regulations.

The Thukha Dagon Public Rental Housing Project is located in Dagon

Myothit (Seikkan) Township, Yangon Region, and was established to provide affordable accommodation for low-income families, retired civil servants and serving government employees. — TWA/KNN

NATIONAL

Deputy ministers reply to queries raised by Hluttaw representatives

THE Amyotha Hluttaw continued for the 10<sup>th</sup> day at its convention hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the meeting, Deputy Minister for Health Dr Aye Tun replied to the queries raised by Sai Win Khaing from the Shan State Constituency 10, saying that currently, there is no plan to upgrade the Tangyan Township People's Hospital (25-bed) to the 50-bed facility.

Deputy Minister for Transport U Tun Lu responded to the questions submitted by U Aung Hla Htwe from the Magway Region Constituency 1. He said that due to the current waterway conditions, it is not possible to operate



The 10<sup>th</sup>-day meeting of the second regular session of the Third Amyotha Hluttaw is in progress yesterday, presided over by Speaker U Aung Lin Dwe.

a river transport port in Yenangyoung Township but a river transport port has been set up at Yonseik Port, seven miles downstream Yenangyoung.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock

and Irrigation Dr Ye Tint Tun answered the question raised by U Chit Swe from the Ayeyawady Region Constituency 10, stating that the departments under the ministry are conducting research

at relevant research centres and performing the knowledge-sharing activities. Regional Development and Research Centre-RDRC indicated by the Hluttaw representative should be established

through the surveys conducted by stakeholders.

Regarding the question presented by U Aung Kyaw Min from the Ayeyawady Region Constituency 4, the deputy minister also explained matters relate to plans to provide agricultural inputs and technological assistance for farmers to improve their socioeconomic life.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker U Aung Lin Dwe explained the formation of the Banks, Monetary Affairs, Planning, Finance, Economic and Trade Development Committee, the Communications, Digital and Science Technology Committee and the Rule of Law, Peace and Stability Committee.

U Yan Naing Oo from the Yangon Region Constituency 9 submitted a motion, urging the Union government to ease restrictions on the recruitment of youths who have graduated from universities across the nation by reviewing the qualification criteria for their future. U Aye Paing from the Yangon Region Constituency 6 seconded the motion.

The Speaker announced that any representatives wishing to discuss the motion can list at the director-general of the Amyotha Hluttaw Office.

The Amyotha Hluttaw's 11<sup>th</sup>-day meeting will continue on 29 June. — MNA/TTA

Kehsi's VDP water supply project handed over

THE Department of Rural Development, under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development, held a presentation and handover ceremony for the completion of Village Development Project (VDP) activities implemented in Wanphun Village, Kehsi Township, Shan State (South), yesterday.

Kehsi Township Department of Rural De-

velopment Head U Aye Naing delivered opening remarks at the ceremony. The project officer then explained the objectives of the project handover and presented the implementation status of the completed project activities, featuring a gravity-fed water supply system extending three furlongs from the water source to the village and a 3,000-gallon water storage tank.

Afterwards, the township head and members of the village development committee formally handed over the completed VDP activities to Wanphun Village by presenting the handover record, and a village elder gave words of appreciation on behalf of the residents. The project was implemented for the 2026-2027 financial year, utilizing K15 million from the Village Development Project (VDP) fund and K3 million contributed by residents. Executed by local residents themselves, all project activities have now been completed in full and officially handed over to the village. — Cho Than Nyunt (Rural)



A handover ceremony for the completed water supply project is underway yesterday in Shan State (South).

Pyithu Hluttaw session tackles governance, infrastructure, ...

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Addressing fuel shortages and pricing, U Kyaw Myint Naing from the Nawnghkio Constituency enquired about petrol distribution in northern Shan State. U Kyaw Naing Win, Deputy Minister for Electricity and Energy, stated that allocations to towns like Kyaukme and Hsipaw were temporarily suspended after August 2024 due to regional instability and transport bottlenecks, but plans are underway to resume distribution once routes are secure.

On broader energy strategies, U Ko Ko Thin from the Kamayut Constituency asked about establishing a Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Deputy Minister U Kyaw Naing Win explained that the government is exploring long-term supply agreements with neighbouring countries to diversify away from a single trading hub,

whilst utilizing digital tracking tools like GPS and QR codes to monitor the supply chain in real time.

Regarding medical school admissions, Sai Sein Win from the Laihka Constituency called for regional quotas to train local doctors. Dr Zaw Myint, Deputy Minister for Education, explained that while strict district quotas are unfeasible, matriculated students from remote areas and six self-administered zones already receive lower entry-score thresholds to encourage local medical graduation.

U Win Myint Maung from the Kyaukpadaung Constituency suggested changing the term "old pagodas" to "ancient monuments" in Grade 11 English textbooks. Deputy Minister Dr Zaw Myint responded that the National Curriculum Committee and academic experts would carefully review and edit

the terminology as part of current curriculum revisions.

U Thet Pon from the Sagaing Constituency raised standards disparity in private and monastic schools. Deputy Minister U Nay Myo Hlaing stated that the ministry is strictly supervising operations for the 2026-2027 academic year to prevent over-enrolment and phantom registrations.

Finally, U Win Myint from the Ottwin Constituency enquired about halted school construction projects in Ottwin. Deputy Minister U Nay Myo Hlaing replied that contracts with failing companies had been terminated, and their deposits forfeited. The ministry is recalculating project values to secure capital funds for completion in the upcoming financial years.

The session was subsequently adjourned, with the 15<sup>th</sup> day scheduled for 29 June. — MNA/ST

The people are urged to receive vaccination of COVID-19 without fail as full-time vaccination of COVID-19 and receiving booster shots can effectively mitigate infection of the virus, severe suffering from the disease and increase of death rate due to the disease.

NATIONAL

Defence Services Dy C-in-C meets officers, other ranks, families in Mawlamyine

DEPUTY Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army) General Kyaw Swa Lin delivered a speech in meeting with officers, other ranks and their families from Mawlamyine Station of South-East Command yesterday morning.

During the visit, he emphasized the Tatmadaw's role in performing defence duties under the guidance of the government and combating terrorism, online fraud and illegal activities. He also called for stronger military capabilities, unity, effective leadership and continuous training to meet future challenges.

After the meeting, the General presented food-



Defence Services Deputy Commander-in-Chief General Kyaw Swa Lin warmly greets Tatmadaw personnel and family members in Mawlamyine.

stuffs, books and journals for the Tatmadaw members and families to the Commander. Daw Nang Kue Ku, the wife of the General also presented cash awards for maternal and child welfare association to the wife of the Commander.

The General and party also cordially greeted

Tatmadaw members and families.

The General and party visited the local Tatmadaw Hospital in Mawlamyine, asked about the health conditions of injured Tatmadaw members in individuals, and presented cash awards and foodstuffs to them.

Daw Nang Kue Ku,

the wife of the General comforted the patients at the Maternal and Child Care Ward and presented cash awards and foodstuffs to them.

The General and party also observed the regiments and units of the station and cordially greeted the Tatmadaw families. — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar marks 2026 International Day of the Seafarer in Yangon

THE 2026 International Day of the Seafarer commemorative ceremony was held on 25 June at the Wyndham Grand Hotel in Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon.

The national flag was saluted, followed by opening remarks from Director-General Dr Ko Ko Naing of the Department of Marine Administration, and the deputy

director-general from the Department of Labour. Myanmar Seafarers' Federation President Captain Soe Min Aung then briefed attendees on the 2026 Seafarers' Day activities.

The event was held in line with the global observance of the International Day of the Seafarer under the International Maritime Organization. — Myo Min Thura/KZL



This image shows a ceremony to honour the Day of the Seafarer 2026.

Official Message by Union Minister for Home Affairs  
Lt-Gen Nyunt Win Swe on occasion of International Day  
Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

FROM PAGE 2

The Crop Substitution and Agriculture Sector has carried out extensive work across fifty-five project townships with a budget exceeding K4,431 million. These activities include agricultural education, distribution of short-term seeds and perennial saplings, provision of fertilizers and pesticides, establishment of model plots, and the expansion of both seasonal and perennial crop cultivation. Meanwhile, the Livestock Sector has provided livestock support, organized vocational training and awareness sessions, conducted bee-keeping courses, and administered vaccinations to over 500,000 animals while treating more than 10,000 others.

On the prevention and demand-reduction front, we are actively raising public awareness through talks, talk shows, and the distribution of educational materials, utilizing all available information channels. Drug prevention education has been accelerated across higher education, teacher training, basic education, and non-formal education sectors. Within the seven School-Based Education processes, the eradication of drug hazards has been designated as the first priority process.

For those already affected by substance abuse, we have established twenty-nine major and fifty-seven minor drug treatment centres, complemented by 36 methadone maintenance clinics

and five buprenorphine treatment clinics. To support the reintegration of recovered individuals into society, fourteen rehabilitation camps have been opened, and we are actively working to expand these facilities across regions.

The Government recognizes that international cooperation is indispensable in this fight. Myanmar is a signatory to all three United Nations drug control conventions, and we are actively collaborating with UN agencies, regional and extra-regional partners, ASEAN member states, BIMSTEC members, the UNODC, the US Drug Enforcement Administration, the National Narcotics Control Commission of China, and the Office of the Nar-

cotics Control Board of Thailand. We regularly participate in the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters and the Senior Officials Meeting on Drug Matters, as well as in the Ministerial and Senior Officials meetings of the signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on Drug Control in the Mekong Region. Our Safe Mekong Cooperation Centre office in Taunggyi serves as a vital hub for intelligence sharing and joint operational coordination.

The theme for this year's commemoration, as conveyed by the UNOD "World Drug Problem: Persisting Issues, New Challenges, Innovative Responses", reminds us that the nature of the drug threat is constant-

ly evolving, and so too must our responses. The Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control is continuously reviewing the changing landscape and adjusting its strategies to ensure that our enforcement, prevention, and rehabilitation efforts remain effective and forward-looking.

Yet we must be clear that the drug problem is not a challenge which can be overcome by the Government alone. No single individual, no single agency, and no single organization can succeed in isolation. It is only through the collective vigilance, active participation, and shared responsibility of the entire populace that we can hope to uproot this menace. Every citizen has a role to play in reporting

suspicious activities, in refusing to be complicit, in supporting rehabilitation, and in building a drug-free future for our children and grandchildren.

Therefore, I call upon all people living within the Union of Myanmar, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or background, to unite as one and to join hands with the State in this noble and necessary struggle. The stability and development of our nation depend on it. Our future depends on it.

Let us stand together, with courage and determination, to protect our society, our youth, and our national sovereignty from the scourge of narcotics.

Thank you, and may you all be blessed with safety, health, and prosperity.

### Combat the danger of drugs through united strength of people

WORLD Drug Day, officially known as the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, is observed globally on 26 June. World Drug Day, set by the United Nations on 7 December 1987, aims to raise awareness about the destructive impacts of illicit drugs and to promote global action toward a society free of drug abuse.

Growing poppy and heroin production were a major issue for Myanmar in the past. Currently, the country has been facing challenges of synthetic drug production, trafficking and trading similar to other countries across the world. On the other hand, the number of sown acres of poppy rises in the areas controlled by ethnic armed groups again. As synthetic drugs can be produced

Narcotic drugs have already caused numerous social and economic problems for Myanmar citizens across multiple generations. Learning from the painful experiences of the past, efforts must be made to build a drug-free nation for future generations. The entire population in all parts of the nation must join hands and collectively work together to combat the danger of narcotic drugs without exception as a national duty.

Myanmar treats the eradication of narcotic drugs as a vital national duty. To support this mission, the government allocates substantial annual budget funds to drive regional development and establish alternative livelihoods in poppy-cultivating areas.

The Management Committee for the Implementation of Alternative Development is separately carrying out the second phase of a five-year pilot project from 2024-2025 to 2028-2029 in 65 villages in Hopong and Hsihseng townships of Shan State (South). The project covers various sectors, including agriculture, livestock breeding, education, healthcare, access to water, roads and bridges, electricity supply, livelihood development, religious affairs, communications, public awareness, trade, and microfinance activities.

Narcotic drugs have already caused numerous social and economic problems for Myanmar citizens across multiple generations. Learning from the painful experiences of the past, efforts must be made to build a drug-free nation for future generations. The entire population in all parts of the nation must join hands and collectively work together to combat the danger of narcotic drugs without exception as a national duty.

AS Myanmar prepares to celebrate MSME Day later this month, it is timely to reflect on the important role of micro, small and medium enterprises in the national economy and on the conditions required for their continued development.

MSMEs are not merely small business units. They are productive forces of the nation. Across regions and states, MSME owners and entrepreneurs create employment, support families, produce goods and services needed by local communities, preserve traditional skills, introduce new ideas, and contribute to the circulation of income within the domestic economy. In this sense, MSME development is closely connected with national economic development, poverty reduction, employment creation and the strengthening of domestic production.

MSME development has been prioritized at the highest level of the State, with the President and the Government emphasizing the need to strengthen MSMEs, promote domestic production, improve product quality, offer fair prices, create employment opportunities and support the broader development of the national economy. These objectives are important not only for individual businesses, but also for the productive capacity and economic resilience of the State.

MSME Day should therefore be regarded not only as a ceremonial occasion, but also as a

## MSMEs, Fair Competition and the Path to Inclusive Economic Growth

By Dr Thuta Aung



reminder of the need to build an enabling business environment where capable MSMEs can survive, improve and grow.

From the perspective of competition policy, MSME development depends on more than hard work alone. MSME owners and entrepreneurs may be innovative, disciplined and determined, but they also need fair access to markets. They need the opportunity to reach customers, distribute their products, obtain inputs, offer services and compete on merit. When markets are open and competitive, MSMEs can grow through better quality, reasonable prices, improved service, creativity and local knowledge.

However, when markets are restricted by unfair practices, even capable MSMEs may face unnecessary obstacles. This is why competition policy is directly relevant to MSME development.

Fair competition does not mean opposing large enterprises. Large enterprises are also important for investment, employment, technology, logistics, infrastructure and export capacity. A strong national economy needs enterprises of different sizes. But fair competition means that market strength should not be used in a way that unfairly blocks the path

of smaller players. Business success should come from efficiency, innovation, quality and service, not from preventing others from entering or competing in the market.

One practical issue in this regard is the practice of forced bundling or tying. In ordinary commercial life, some forms of package sales may be reasonable and beneficial to consumers. However,

where a powerful market player requires customers to buy one product or service as a condition for obtaining another, and where such practice restricts customer choice, excludes competitors or prevents smaller businesses from accessing the market, it may become a competition concern.

For MSMEs, this issue can be significant. A small or medi-

um enterprise may have a good product, reasonable prices and strong local demand. Yet it may still find difficulty if customers are effectively locked into a package controlled by a much larger player. In such a situation, the problem is not necessarily the weakness of the MSME. The problem may be that the market itself is not sufficiently open for fair, merit-based

competition.

Preventing unfair bundling, restrictive arrangements and abuse of market power is therefore not separate from MSME development. It is part of creating a fair business environment. When larger market players compete responsibly, MSMEs are given more space to improve, innovate and grow. Consumers also benefit because they receive more choice, better quality and fairer prices.

The Myanmar Competition Commission, in accordance with the objectives of the Competition Law, has an important role in promoting fair competition, preventing anti-competitive conduct and supporting a business environment where enterprises can compete fairly. This role should be understood as complementary to national MSME development efforts. Competition policy does not replace training, financing, technology support or market promotion. Rather, it strengthens these efforts by helping to ensure that MSMEs can actually use their capabilities in the marketplace.

For example, if MSMEs receive training but cannot access markets, their potential remains limited. If they obtain financing but face exclusionary practices, their growth remains constrained.

If they improve product quality but customers are tied to restrictive arrangements, the economy loses the benefit of their productivity. Therefore, MSME support and fair competition must move together.

A whole-of-economy approach is needed. Government departments, regulatory bodies, financial institutions, chambers of commerce, large enterprises, training providers and MSME associations all have important roles. Financial institutions can design products suited to the realities of MSMEs. Training providers can help MSME owners improve business planning, accounting, quality control, branding and digital capability. Large enterprises can support MSMEs through fair procurement, responsible distribution practices and partnership models. Regulators can promote clarity, fairness and predictability.

MSME owners and entrepreneurs also have their own responsibilities. They should continue to improve quality, maintain fair prices, adopt better management practices, use technology where possible, and build trust with customers. Fair competition protects opportunity, but long-term success still depends on discipline, productivity and continuous improvement.

The aim is not to protect inefficient businesses from competition. The aim is to ensure that competition itself is fair: A fair market rewards better products, better services, better prices and better management. It encourages

businesses to improve. It gives consumers more choice. It allows capable MSMEs to grow into strong local enterprises, regional businesses, national brands and future exporters.

As Myanmar celebrates MSME Day, we should honour the contribution of MSME owners and entrepreneurs throughout the country. Their businesses may begin on a small scale, but their collective contribution to employment, domestic production and national economic resilience is significant.

MSMEs do not ask for markets to be made easy. They ask for markets to be made fair.

If the country can continue building an environment where MSMEs receive support, where larger enterprises compete responsibly, where consumers enjoy fair prices and wider choice, and where anti-competitive practices are properly addressed, MSME development will become a stronger foundation for inclusive economic growth.

MSME Day is therefore more than a celebration of small businesses. It is a national reminder that productive enterprises, fair competition and inclusive growth must advance together for the benefit of the State and the people.

**Dr Thuta Aung is Vice-Chairman of the Myanmar Competition Commission. (The views expressed in this article are personal and do not necessarily reflect the views of organizations the author is affiliated with.)**

POVERTY is one of the biggest problems faced by many countries around the world. It affects not only individuals but also families and communities. A person is considered poor when they cannot afford basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, healthcare, and education. Living in poverty makes daily life difficult and reduces the quality of life.

There are two main types of poverty: absolute poverty and relative poverty. Absolute poverty occurs when people do not have enough resources to survive their most basic needs. For example, they may not have enough food, clean water, or access to healthcare. Relative poverty, on the other hand, refers to a condition where people are poor in comparison with others in the same society.

Even if a person can survive, they may still be considered poor if their income and opportunities are far below the average standard of living in their community.

Poverty is caused by many different factors. One major reason is unemployment or unstable jobs. Without a stable income, people cannot support themselves or their families properly. Lack of education is another important cause because people with limited education often struggle to find well-paid jobs. Economic problems such as inflation and financial crises can also push families into poverty. In addition, rapid population growth, natural disasters, and political instability can worsen the situation. Corruption and social inequality may prevent resources from being shared fairly, which increases the gap between rich and poor people.

## If You Want to Escape Poverty

By Than Zaw (Homalin)

The effects of poverty can be seen in many areas of society. Children from poor families may not have the chance to continue their education, while poor health and malnutrition can reduce people's ability to work. As a result, poverty often continues from one generation to another: This is why poverty is often described as a vicious cycle. When people lack education and healthcare, it becomes harder for them to improve their future and escape poverty.

Different methods are used to measure poverty. One common method is income-based measure-

ment, which looks at how much money a person earns or spends each day. International organizations often set a poverty line to identify people living in poverty. Another important method is the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which measures not only income but also living conditions, education, health, sanitation, and access to clean water. The Human Development Index (HDI) is also used to evaluate poverty by combining indicators such as life expectancy, education, and income levels.

Several factors are consid-

ered when measuring poverty. Income and expenditure are important because they show whether families can afford daily necessities. Education levels, literacy rates, and school attendance are also examined because education strongly affects future opportunities. Health conditions such as life expectancy, infant mortality, and nutrition are also included. In addition, housing quality, electricity, clean water, sanitation, and employment opportunities are used to better understand living standards. Income inequality, often measured by the Gini Coefficient, is another important indicator because large gaps between rich and poor people usu-

ally reflect deeper poverty issues.

Reducing poverty requires long-term planning and cooperation. Education plays a very important role because it provides people with the skills and knowledge needed to find better jobs. Governments should also create more employment opportunities.



ment opportunities by supporting businesses, improving infrastructure, and encouraging economic growth. Healthcare services must be improved so that people can stay healthy and continue working. Social support programs such as food assistance and financial aid can also help poor families survive difficult situations.

In rural areas,

agricultural development is especially important. Farmers need access to technology, financial support, and better market opportunities to increase their income. At the same time, governments must reduce corruption and promote fairness in society. When resources and opportunities are shared equally, more people will have the chance to improve their lives.

In conclusion, poverty is a serious issue that affects both individuals and national development. Escaping poverty is not easy, but it is possible through education, employment, healthcare, and strong social support systems. If governments and communities work together effectively, poverty can gradually be reduced, and people can achieve a better future.

NATIONAL

Value-added food manufacturing training launched across capital and 5 states

UNION Minister for Cooperatives and Rural Development, U Myo Zaw Thein, stated that value-added food production training based on local crops has been conducted in Nay Pyi Taw and five other regions and states to foster the emergence of small-scale manufacturing businesses, and that equipment has been provided to outstanding trainees.

He made these remarks during the Workshop on the Development of Crop-Based Value-Added Food Industries, implemented under the Mekong-Lan-



Workshop on value-added food production implemented under the MLC Special Fund (2024).

cang Cooperation (MLC) Special Fund (2024), held at the Horizon Lake View Resort in Nay Pyi Taw on 24 June.

The Union minister added that, in line with the ministry's vision to

contribute to national development by systematically fostering the cooperative sector and small-scale industries, the ministry has conducted two "Training of Trainers" sessions, as

well as others on bakery and snack, bamboo shoot-based production, ice cream and various beverage production in Nay Pyi Taw, Magway, Mandalay, Yangon, Shan, and Ayeyawady. Five outstanding individuals per training course — totalling 75 trainees — were selected and provided with business-use equipment for their start-ups.

He also urged business owners to collaborate and discuss how to adopt new technologies, improve product quality, connect with markets, and export products. — MT/ZN

YR AG oversees legal training for law officers, inspects pilot law offices



The Yangon Region advocate-general inspects the legal training. PHOTO: ZWE MARN

THE training-of-trainers (TOT) legal courses organized by the Yangon Region Advocate-General's Office for law officers at General Administration Department offices across the region entered their fourth day yesterday.

Twelve legal subjects were taught in all 14 dis-

tricts. Yangon Region Advocate-General Daw Phyu Mar Wai, Yangon Region Law Officer U Nyunt Lwin and officials from the Region Advocate-General's Office inspected training sessions in Kyauktan, Khayan, Thongwa, Twantay and Shwepyitha townships.

SEE PAGE 11

Minbu's completed concrete bridge reconstruction inspected

OFFICIALS conducted a field inspection yesterday morning to review the 100 per cent completion of the concrete bridge reconstruction project on the Gugyi Tawya Monastery access road in Ward 1, Sagu, Minbu Township, Magway Region. The project was implemented for the 2026-2027 financial year, funded by the regional government budget through the Department of Rural Development under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development.

U Kyaw Zaw Hein, Head of the Magway Region Department of Rural Development, District Head U Khin Maung Kyaw of the Minbu District Department of Rural Development, and Township Head U Kyaw Min Tun of the Minbu Township Department



Officials inspect the completed concrete bridge in Minbu (Sagu) Township.

of Rural Development, along with other responsible officials, inspected the completed concrete bridge. They emphasized the need for collective efforts among stakeholders to maintain the bridge for long-term sustainability.

According to the Magway Region Department of Rural Development, the concrete bridge measures 40 feet in length, 14 feet in width, and 10 feet in height. The reconstruction work began in the fourth week of

April this year, utilizing K88.80 million from the regional government's allocated budget for the 2026-2027 financial year. The project was executed by the engineering team of the Department of Rural Development. With the project now 100 per cent completed, it successfully facilitates all-weather transport and accessibility, benefiting 4,279 residents from 1,058 households in the area. — Nyein Thu (Rural)

Nyaunglebin's completed rural development projects inspected

THE Department of Rural Development under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development, Bago Region, has successfully completed all regional development projects implemented in three villages under the Village Development Project (VDP) fund during the 2026-2027 financial year. The project was aimed at improving the socioeconomic conditions and transport sector of rural communities, and the inspection was conducted by responsible officials.

Nyaunglebin Township Department of Rural Development Head Daw Mi Mi Aung and project staff first explained that the regional development projects were being implemented with the objectives of improving the socioeconomic conditions and transport sector of rural communities. She met village elders and residents, handed over project com-



This image illustrates one of the completed rural development projects in Bago Region.

pletion records, and urged them to form village-level committees to ensure the long-term sustainability and maintenance of the completed road facilities. Afterwards, the projects were reviewed in full by the engineering staff.

The project was implemented for the 2026-2027 financial year, utilizing K15 million from the Village Development Project (VDP) fund for each village and K13.54 million contributed by residents. Jointly executed by township DRD

staff and local villagers, the projects included the construction of a 443-foot-long, three-foot-wide and six-inch-thick concrete bicycle lane in Letpangon Village, a 673-foot-long, 12-foot-wide and six-inch-thick gravel road in Ziphyukhin Village, and a 681-foot-long, 12-foot-wide and six-inch-thick gravel road in Letpanbo (West) Village, which have now been fully completed in compliance with the prescribed standards and specifications. — Sein Lwin (Rural)

NATIONAL

Crackdown flattens more illicit Shwe Kokko buildings



Images show the update before and after the demolition of the seven-storey scam hub.

JOINT authorities have continued the systematic removal of structures linked to online scams and illegal gambling in the Shwe Kokko area, with a further seven-storey illegal building demolished by controlled blasting.

Officials said the

building was among those identified for demolition as part of the ongoing clearance of facilities used for illicit operations in KK Park and surrounding areas.

Of the 77 identified buildings, 57 are being dismantled using machinery, while 20 are being

demolished by controlled blasting. With the latest demolition, a total of 64 buildings have now been removed.

Authorities added that 13 illegal structures remain and will be systematically demolished in the next phase of the operation. — MNA/KZL

7 Chinese nationals linked to telecom fraud detained in Muse

THE Myanmar Government emphasizes the elimination of online scams and gambling, which harm not only the international community but also the wider world, as a national duty.

To ensure such activities gain no foothold in the country, it is actively conducting suppression operations in coordination not only with domestic forces but also with the governments of neighbouring countries.

Security forces detained seven Chinese



This photo shows seven online scam suspects detained in northern Shan State.

nationals involved in online scams and gambling operations, and seized 50 mobile phones, two all-in-one computers, one laptop, two motorbikes and related items from a house

in Kaunghmutong Ward, Muse Township, Shan State (North), yesterday.

Those involved will face legal action following a thorough investigation. — MNA/MKKS

Myanmar Labour Attaché assists injured migrant worker in Thailand

A Myanmar migrant worker was injured by an electric shock accident at a workplace in Thailand, and the Myanmar Labour Attaché and his team visited him and provided assistance.

U Sitt Thway, a worker, fell off the building after being electrocuted while doing roof repairs in Samut Sakhon, Thailand, and he has been hospitalized due to severe injuries.

The labour attaché went to the Samut Sakhon social security office to negotiate the worker's medical expenses and compensation. Following his mediation, the social security officials visited the hospital and the workplace and told the worker

that they would help him receive compensation.

The office will continue cooperating with the respective Thai labour authorities to help the worker obtain the full benefits to which he is entitled.

Myanmar migrant workers are advised to contact the telephone numbers of the Labour Offices during office hours if their rights are violated. More information can be obtained from its call centre: 020030015, Labour Attaché (Bangkok): 06 1810845, Labour Officer (Bangkok): 06 52206952, Labour Attaché (Maesot): 06 52206953. Labour Officer (Chang Mai): 09 45866607 and Labour Officer (Ranong): 06 34818121. — MT/ZS

Laihka's Mya Sein Yaung Project activities inspected

THE Department of Rural Development, under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development conducted a field inspection to review the progress of income-generating activities being expanded through revolving funds provided under the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project in Nawngmein Village, Laihka Township, yesterday.

Laihka Township Department of Rural Development Head U Aung Naing Win and responsible officials first explained that the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project funds were being utilized with the objectives of enabling rural



households to expand their income-generating activities and implementing village development work with the increased revolving funds. He met members of the village-level Mya Sein Yaung Village Project committee, reviewed the completeness and accuracy of monthly financial records, and urged them to systematically manage the revolving funds to prevent losses and ensure long-term sustainability. Afterwards, the projects were reviewed in full by the engineering staff.

The project was first implemented for the 2015-2016 financial year,

utilizing a total revolving fund of K64.2 million from the Mya Sein Yaung Village Project fund. Jointly executed by township DRD staff and local villagers, the funds benefit 153 project members under the ongoing disbursement process. Of the total amount, K64.2 million was provided to members of Nawngmein Village, including 42 members engaged in agriculture, 40 members engaged in livestock breeding, and 71 members engaged in trading, all of whom are successfully operating income-generating businesses with support from the project funds. — Karan (Rural)

YR AG oversees legal training for law officers, inspects .....

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The courses aim to enable law officers to promote legal awareness among ward and village administrators. Topics include the Constitution

of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and laws relating to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The training runs until 26 June.

In the afternoon, the

Advocate-General and her team inspected pilot law office activities at the Thanlyin District Law Office and the Shwepyitha Township Law Office. — Thitsa (MNA)/MKKS



The Myanmar Labour Attaché visits the injured worker at Vichaivej Hospital

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# Domestic rice market sluggish in monsoon season



A rice depot in the Bayintnaung Wholesale Market.

THE domestic rice market is experiencing a slowdown during the rainy season, according to the Bayintnaung Commodity Wholesale Market in Mayangon Township, Yangon Region. It is usual that the trading of various rice, including premium quality and non-premium rice, is sluggish in the monsoon season. “The domestic market faces a slump. Prices of non-premium rice varieties, including Aemah-ta, Manawthukha, and 90-day matured, are surging. Price hike slows down the demand of exporters,” said a rice trader engaged in Bayintnaung Wholesale Market. Supply chain to the Bay-intnaung Commodity Depot is interconnected with the produc-tion circle, transportation and FOB orders. Rice and broken rice from Bago, Ayeyawady and Mandalay regions primarily flow to the Bayintnaung Wholesale Market. — ASH/KK

## CBM continues injection in edible oil import sector

THE Central Bank of My-anmar (CBM) pumped over US\$909,000 on 24 June and \$2.59 million to edible oil-importing com-panies on 23 June. CBM sold \$890,500 to edible oil-importing com-panies and over \$130,000 to CMP companies on 22 June, over \$2.88 million to edible oil importing companies and \$84,000 to CMP companies on 19 June, over \$26,000 to CMP companies on 18 June, \$1.13 to edible oil-importing companies and over \$170,000 to CMP companies on 17 June, over \$24,600 to CMP com-panies on 16 June and \$3.37 million to edible oil-importing companies and over \$6,300 to CMP companies on 15 June, along with over \$10,200 worth of non-trade trans-actions. CBM has been in-jecting US dollars to the edible oil-importing com-panies, with \$1.62 million on 12 June, \$286,000 on 11 June, \$1.38 million on 10 June, \$2.6 million on 9 June, \$3.6 million on 8 June, over \$2.9 million on 4 June, over \$2.89 million on 3 June, \$1.79 million on 2 June and over \$646,800 on 1 June, respectively. CBM injects foreign currencies into the for-ign exchange market and the edible oil and fuel oil import sector, with a view to curbing the in-stability in the foreign exchange market and currency devaluation and maintaining market stability. 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 ma-nipulate the currency market under the exist-ing laws. CBM allowed authorized dealers (pri-vate banks) to operate online foreign exchange trading freely as per the market rate, depending on supply and demand, starting from 5 Decem-ber 2023. — NN/KK

## Urban housing projects launched across 4 YGN townships

THE Department of Ur-ban and Housing Develop-ment under the Ministry of Construction will invite private developers to im-plement urban housing projects through a joint venture system in four townships in Yangon Re-gion. The DUHD has in- vited interested domes-tic entrepreneurs to submit tender proposals for urban development housing projects on four vacant plots located in Botahtaung, Hline, Da-gon Myothit (Seikkan), and Dagon Myothit (East) townships. Tender documents are available at the DUHD in Nay Pyi Taw by 24 July. The deadline for submit-ting tender proposals is 4 pm on 7 August. Interested business entities can enquire for further details by dialling 067 3407701, according to the Tender Accepting and Evaluation Committee. — NN/KK

## IRD issues annual tax compliance deadline ahead of 30 June

THE Internal Revenue Department has notified taxpayers to submit their income tax return, annu-al salary statement, and annual commercial tax return by 30 June. The income year and sales revenue, and receipt year (accounting period) for returns are deter-mined from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. Existing taxpayers must submit returns to their respective desig-nated tax office. For a new company, they must register electronically by getting access to the e-Registration System on the Internal Revenue Department’s website homepage. After securing a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN), taxpayers will be able to use the electronic tax return fil-ing system and electronic tax payment system. The new individual taxpayer must submit a return at the respective township tax office. Returns can be sub-mitted through three methods: in-person submission (the date of submission is consid-ered to be the date the department stamps the receipt), submission by post (the date of submis-sion is considered to be the postmark date on the sending post office stamp) and electronic submission (the date of submission is considered to be the date the department receives it electronically). If the deadline falls on a public holiday, the next consecutive working day will be considered as re-ceived. User Guide Video Files on how to register an account and how to file returns step by step are available on the Internal Revenue Department’s website at www.ird.gov.mm. Those taxpayers un-der Large Taxpayer Off-ices and Medium Taxpayer Offices are required to file their returns electronical-ly only. When filling out the return, taxpayers must use the prescribed forms set by the Internal Re-venue Department. Pre-scribed forms are avail-able at www.ird.gov.mm or at respective tax offices. The taxpayer is re-sponsible for the accuracy and completeness of the tax returns, so prescribed forms must be fully com-pleted. The taxpayer must personally sign the return form. Anyone who pre-pares for all of the return or substantially must also co-sign the return. New corporate tax-payers using the electron-ic filing system to submit returns must ensure that the original signature re-cord of the taxpayer is sent in advance to the relevant tax office by an appropriate means with-out fail. If a taxpayer fails to submit their tax returns on time, the penalties are set at five per cent of the tax due, plus one per cent of the tax due for each month or part of a month the return remains outstanding, from the pre-scribed submission date until the Director General imposes the assessment and K100,000. If a taxpayer faces dif-ficulty in submitting the return on time within the specified period, they can apply in advance to the relevant tax office for an extension of the deadline. Taxpayers can con-tact their respective tax offices for enquiries at the Taxpayer Service Office (Head Office), 128/132, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Floors on Panso-dan Street (Middle Block), Kyauktada Township, Yangon via 01 8389311, 01 8389322, the Taxpayer Service Office (Nay Pyi Taw) at 067 3430522, 067 3430544, and the Taxpay-er Service Office (Man-dalay) on 65<sup>th</sup> Street, between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Streets, Aungmyethazan Township, Mandalay, at 02 4030192, 02 4030637, 02 4030638, and 02 4030639. — NN/KK

## Vietnam’s rice exports expected to hit 5M tonnes in H1

VIETNAM is expected to export about five million tons of rice in the first six months of 2026, generating US\$2.36 billion in revenue, the Vietnam News Agency reported Thursday, citing the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment.

During the period, the export volume is projected to increase 5.7 per cent year on year, while export value is expected to decline 3.3 per cent due to lower prices, the

report said. The ministry said the global rice market continues to be affected by geopolitical factors, putting pressure on supply and demand and prompting cautious trading.

The easing of tensions in the Middle East is expected to support the recovery of trade activities, while the global energy market is likely to take time to fully recover, the ministry added. — Xinhua



A farmer transplants rice in a field in Hanoi, Vietnam, 15 June 2026. PHOTO: XINHUA

## Power sector outlook in India remains positive on strong demand

THE power sector outlook in the country remains strong due to high electricity demand, continued policy support and a sustained capital expenditure cycle across generation and transmission infrastructure, highlighted a report by HDFC Securities.

According to the brokerage, the sector continues to benefit from resilient power demand despite concerns around the phased impact of El Nino. It said the strong demand environment is expected to support higher electricity generation, better realisations and improved financial

performance for power generation companies.

The report highlighted that the rapid expansion of power infrastructure, commissioning of transmission assets and capacity additions across renewable energy, thermal power, nuclear power and transmission networks are likely to remain key growth drivers for the sector. “We remain constructive on the Utilities, supported by sustained electricity demand, a strong policy thrust, and an ongoing CapEx upcycle across generation and transmission,” HDFC Securities said in its report. — ANI

## Chinese car brands accelerate rise in South Africa

CHINESE automotive brands continued to expand their presence in South Africa in the first quarter of 2026, recording strong sales growth and increasing their share of the country’s vehicle market amid rising consumer demand for technology-equipped and fuel-efficient vehicles.

According to South Africa’s Q1 2026 Mobility Insights Report released by credit report-



Visitors are seen at the booth of BYD during the Solar & Storage Live Africa 2024 in Johannesburg, South Africa, 18 March 2024. PHOTO: XINHUA

ing agency TransUnion on Wednesday, Chinese vehicle sales rose 75 per cent year on year in the first quarter, significantly outpacing the overall passenger and light commercial vehicle (LCV) market growth rate of 12.7 per cent and the roughly two per cent growth recorded by traditional vehicle manufacturers.

It showed that South Africa recorded 114,517 passenger and LCV sales

during the quarter, while Chinese manufacturers accounted for more than 19 per cent of total sales, meaning nearly one in every five new vehicles sold in the country came from a Chinese brand.

The report attributed the growth to factors beyond pricing, noting that consumers are placing greater emphasis on technology, fuel efficiency, driving range and warranty offerings. — Xinhua

## Thailand’s exports up 10.6% in May

THAILAND’S exports expanded for a 23<sup>rd</sup> successive month in May, up 10.6 per cent year-on-year, driven by global demand for advanced technology and front-loaded order hedging against potential supply-chain disruptions and

uncertainties surrounding trade measures, official data showed on Thursday.

Exports, a key driver of the South-East Asian country’s economic growth, jumped to US\$34.33 billion in May, slowing from a 23.1 per

cent surge in April, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The ongoing growth trajectory and structural transformation of the global technology sector into the artificial intelligence era, alongside demand

for seasonal agricultural products and high-potential food product groups, contributed to the uptrend, Nantapong Chiralerspong, director-general of the ministry’s trade policy and strategy office, told a news conference. — Xinhua

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PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTOR CHANGING

We, Anhui Byter Agriculture Technology Co.,Ltd, would like to change the Distributor of the following products, from Myanmar Kete Co.,Ltd to Northern Aung Power Agro Chemical Co.,Ltd. If any object or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, Yangon, from here to next (2) weeks.

| No | Trade Name | Active Ingredient                                          | Registration Type | Registration Number |
|----|------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1  | Niflo One  | Fluroxypyr-meptyl 8% + Mesotrione 10% + Nicosulfuron 4% OD | Provisional       | P2022-5103          |

Northern Aung Power Agro Chemical Co.,Ltd. Tel: 09-250406611

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE  
M.V ERASMUS ICON VOY.NO. (623W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ERASMUS ICON VOY.NO. (623W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-6-2026 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/MIP where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 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 MAERSK A/S

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE  
M.V MCL 9 VOY.NO. (28N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCL 9 VOY. NO. (28N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-6-2026 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/MIP where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 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 MAWLAMYINE CENTURY LOGISTICS  
COMPANY LIMITED

ROLLING UPDATES  
WORLD

Visit Brunei Year to be held in 2027

The pre-launch ceremony of Visit Brunei Year 2027 was held recently at Jerudong Park Garden near the capital.

BRUNEI plans to hold Visit Brunei Year 2027 to further boost the development of its tourism sector and promote economic diversification, according to local media reports on Wednesday. The pre-launch ceremony of Visit Brunei Year 2027 was held recently at Jerudong Park Garden near the capital, attended by Prince Abdul Mateen, Brunei’s minister of foreign affairs.

A key highlight was the unveiling of the official Visit Brunei Year 2027 logo and mascots “Awang” and “Dayang”, marking the



Water taxis at the Jetty in Bandar Seri Begawan. PHOTO: BRUNEI TOURISM

commencement of promotional efforts leading up to the national tourism campaign across domestic and international platforms.

Haji Abdul Manaf Haji Metussin, coordinating minister for economic policies and minister of economy, trade and industry, high-

lighted the significance of Visit Brunei Year 2027 as a whole-of-nation initiative aimed at strengthening the tourism sector, supporting economic diversification and showcasing Brunei’s unique identity to the world.

Visit Brunei Year 2027 reflects Brunei’s continued commitment to strengthening the tourism sector as a key contributor to economic diversification while enhancing the nation’s visibility and attractiveness on the global stage, the official said. — Xinhua

Lebanon demands full Israeli troop withdrawal

LEBANESE Prime Minister Nawaf Salam on Wednesday reaffirmed Lebanon’s demand for a full Israeli withdrawal from its territory, saying Beirut will not accept any continued Israeli military presence in southern Lebanon.

“We know exactly what we want from the negotiations, which is a full Israeli withdrawal,” Salam was quoted as saying by local news website Lebanon Debate.

“Lebanon will not accept the continued presence of Israeli forces at five points or even two points,” he said during a meeting with a delegation from the Lebanese Press Syndicate.

Salam noted that Lebanon is part of a mechanism established in Switzerland to help consolidate the ceasefire, while separate negotiations in Washington are “the least costly path for Lebanon”.

He said Lebanon is also seeking the release of detainees and the resolution of outstanding border issues with Israel.

On the issue of weapons, Salam stressed that extending state authority across all Lebanese territory is a national commitment under the 1989 Taif Agreement and UN Security Council Resolution 1701, rather than external pressure. — Xinhua

Singapore targets global leadership in AI solutions

SINGAPORE should position itself as a global hub for developing and deploying artificial intelligence (AI) solutions rather than competing to build the largest AI models or data centres, according to its Economic

Strategy Review (ESR) Committees’ final report released on Wednesday.

The report said AI is set to transform economies much like electricity and the internet did, and Singapore’s strength lies in its abil-

ity to bring together government agencies, businesses and research institutions to create an environment conducive to innovation.

The report recommended making Singapore a preferred location

for high-impact AI solutions by providing access to critical resources such as datasets, computing power and regulatory sandboxes, while strengthening AI governance and safety capabilities. — Xinhua

Baking heatwave gives Europe no respite

AT least 101 million Europeans were expected to experience temperatures of over 35C on Thursday, in a punishing and increasingly deadly heatwave hotter than weather in parts of Africa.

France and Spain, among the countries worst hit, began counting the toll from the extreme temperatures, including a three-year-old boy who was trapped in his family’s car.

AFP calculations based on forecasts from

the German weather service and 2025 population projections from the European Joint Research

Centre indicated that more than 380 million people would face temperatures of over 30C.



More than two-thirds of Europe is facing temperatures over more than 30C. PHOTO: AFP

The UN’s climate chief Simon Stiell said the heatwave — made worse by buildings and infrastructure unsuited to such temperatures — “has the fingerprints of the climate crisis all over it”.

“It’s the latest price to pay for fossil fuel pollution baking our planet. Until humanity stops burning colossal amounts of coal, oil and gas, extreme heat will keep getting worse,” he added. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Oman rules out future Hormuz fees

OMAN said Thursday that future arrangements related to the Strait of Hormuz would not involve the imposition of transit fees, reaffirming its commitment to ensuring free and secure navigation through the strategic waterway.

The remarks were made by Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Albusaidi during the joint ministerial meeting between the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and the United States, held in Bahrain, according to the Oman News Agency.

Albusaidi said Oman, as a littoral state of the Strait of Hormuz, bears a special responsibility in supporting international efforts to secure maritime navigation, in line with its obligations under international law and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. — Xinhua

Northern California quake causes injuries

A magnitude 5.6 earthquake struck near Willits city in Northern California’s Mendocino County on Wednesday, injuring some people and disrupting utilities and businesses, according to state officials and local media reports.

The quake also triggered advance alerts through California’s Earthquake Early Warning System to more than 1 million people before shaking began, the California governor’s office said. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) said the quake struck at 8:10 am local time (1510 GMT) about 11 km north of Redwood Valley, at a depth of about 8 kilometres. — Xinhua

SPORTS

Yangon dominates 2026 inter-State/Region swimming championships



Deputy Minister U Nyi Nyi presents the championship trophy to the Yangon Region team.

THE 2026 Inter-State Championship finals and Region Swimming prize presentation cere-

mony was held yesterday afternoon at the National Swimming Pool on U Wisara Road in Dagon Township. The event was attended by Deputy Minister for Sports U Nyi Nyi, Vice-Chair of the Myanmar Olympic Committee, along with officials, invited guests and athletes from various regions and states. Yangon Region won

the overall team titles in the men's, women's and combined categories, scoring 125 points in the men's category, 128 in the women's and 253 overall to secure all major team trophies. The competition was held on 24 and 25 June with 13 men's teams, 12 women's teams, and 214 athletes from across Myanmar. — MNA/KZL

Morocco overcome historic Haiti goals to roll into World Cup last 32

MOROCCO twice overcame the shock of conceding to Haiti to win a World Cup thriller 4-2 in Atlanta on Wednesday, but missed out on top spot in Group C to Brazil. Haiti bowed out with their first World Cup goals for 52 years as a Yassine Bounou own goal and Wilson Isidor's stunning strike twice gave them the lead. Achraf Hakimi and Ismael Saibari, with his third goal in as many games at the World Cup, levelled before half-time. Soufiane Rahimi was nearly brought to tears when the 30-year-old's de-



Substitutes Gessime Yassine and Soufiane Rahimi gave Morocco victory over Haiti. PHOTO: AFP

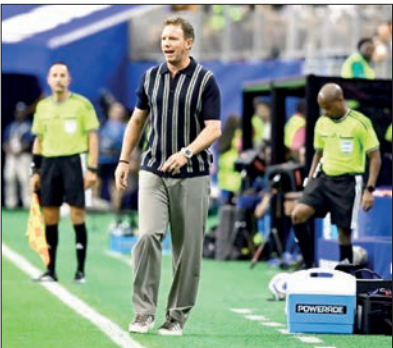
flected effort found the top corner to give Morocco the lead before Gessime Yassine rounded off the scoring. But by finishing second to Brazil on goal difference, Morocco will head to Monterrey for a likely meeting against the Netherlands or Japan in the last 32 on Monday. Despite bowing out

without a point, Haiti's performances at a first World Cup since 1974 have done a nation gripped by poverty proud. Les Grenadiers were already eliminated after losing to Scotland and Brazil, but the thousands of Haitian expats in the stands at Atlanta were undeterred as every attack was met with deafening cheers. "Today we scored two goals, we are really proud of it, the emotions were big, but it is still really frustrating because we didn't get a point," said Sunderland striker Isidor. — AFP

Nagelsmann feels Germany 'punished' for topping World Cup group

GERMANY coach Julian Nagelsmann said on Wednesday he believes his side are at a disadvantage as World Cup group winners due to reduced preparation time for their last-32 tie. The four-time world champions are assured of top spot going into their final Group E game against Ecuador on Thursday but will only learn their opponents for the next round less than 48 hours before the match. Germany, as with seven other group winners, must wait until the

end of the opening round late on Saturday to discover which of the eight best third-place sides will await them next Monday in Foxborough. "I think we are being punished as the group leader," Nagelsmann told reporters in New Jersey. "But if you look at all the algorithms and how everything plays together, it's extremely complex — and the more teams you have, the more complex it gets." Germany thrashed Curacao 7-1 in their first game and then came from behind to beat Ivory Coast 2-1,



Germany head coach Julian Nagelsmann said that his side's "intensity" against Curacao boded well for the rest of the World Cup. PHOTO: AFP ensuring they will progress beyond the group stage for the first time since winning the World Cup in 2014. — AFP

Yadanabon's Pin Myint Yan sets youngest-ever scorer record



Pin Myint Yan (Jersey 6) from the Yadanabon Women's Team in action during a match.

YADANABON Women's Football Club has officially confirmed that 16-year-old youngster Pin Myint Yan has become the club's youngest-ever goal scorer in its history during the Myanmar Women's League. The record was set on 23 June in a Matchday 2 fixture against Yangon City FC, where Yadanabon secured a 6-0 victory. Pin Myint Yan scored the fifth goal of the match, helping her team secure a dominant win. At the time of scoring, she was 16 years, eight months, and 22 days old, making her the youngest player to score for the club. Despite her age, she has already drawn attention for her sharp attacking ability and promising performances. Football observers believe she could become one of the key rising stars in Myanmar women's football in the coming years. — TWA/KZL

Clarke fears Scotland 'probably going home' after Brazil World Cup loss

SCOTLAND coach Steve Clarke accepted that his team may be heading home from the World Cup in a few days after completing the group stage with a comprehensive 3-0 loss to Brazil on Wednesday. "It was a disappointing performance, a poor result. If you give a team like Brazil the chances like we gave them, you expect to get punished," Clarke said after defensive errors helped Vinicius Junior net twice in the first half and Matheus Cunha completed the scoring. "That is what happened and as for our chances at the moment, I think we are probably going home." Scotland, who have been hoping to reach the knockout rounds at a World Cup for the first time after eight previous failed attempts, finish third in Group C with three points. Wednesday's defeat followed a 1-0 win over Haiti in their opening game and a 1-0 loss to Morocco. They must now wait to see if their record is good enough to finish as one of the eight best third-placed teams in the 12 groups — it is likely to be a very close call. "The first thing we have to do is go away and compute that performance and why we lost the game in the manner we did. We can worry about the rest later," Clarke said. — AFP



# WORLD

## India models global Universal Health Coverage

INDIA'S health sector reforms over the past decade have positioned the country as a notable example in the global pursuit of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), offering a potentially scalable model for low- and middle-income countries across the Global South.

At the heart of this transformation is the flagship health initiative, Ayushman Bharat, which integrates financial protection, strengthened primary healthcare, digital innovation, and pharmaceutical self-reliance into a comprehensive healthcare framework.

Designed as a rights-based approach rather than a conventional welfare programme, Ayushman Bharat seeks to redefine healthcare as a public good and an essential entitlement. The initiative combines expanded access to primary healthcare services through Health and Wellness Centres with health insurance coverage for vulnerable populations, reducing the financial burden of medical treatment on millions of households. — ANI

## China, US to discuss reciprocal tariff cuts under trade council

CHINA and the United States have agreed to establish a trade council under which the economic and trade teams of the two sides will discuss cooperation, including reciprocal tariff reductions, China's commerce ministry said Thursday.

The two economic and trade teams will conduct further consultations on the matter, He Yadong, spokesperson for the Ministry of Commerce, said at a regular media conference.

Trade cooperation between China and the United States in the aircraft and agricultural sectors is mutually beneficial and win-win, He said, adding that the two teams will continue to maintain communication, encourage and guide their respective enterprises to strengthen linkages and expand trade cooperation in relevant fields. — Xinhua



The US Soybean Export Council booth is pictured during the 4th China International Supply Chain Expo on 22 June 2026 in Beijing, China. PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ CHINA NEWS SERVICE

## Strongest earthquakes in century strike Venezuela

Venezuela's strongest earthquake since 1900 sent rescuers and locals clambering in the dark over flattened apartments.

A twin earthquake that was Venezuela's largest in over a century has killed at least 164 people and destroyed multiple buildings near the capital, where residents searched Thursday for missing relatives.

Venezuela's strongest earthquake since 1900 sent rescuers and locals clambering in the dark over flattened apartments, hunting for survivors and extracting people from under the ruins.

France, Spain and the US offered to urgently send rescuers after the magnitude 7.2 and 7.5 quakes the United States Geological Survey (USGS) said struck areas west of the capital on Wednesday evening.

The toll has climbed quickly, with interim president Delcy Rodriguez reporting at least 164 dead and over 970 hurt and noting the state of La Guaira north of Caracas was hit hard.

"We have nothing, right now we have nothing, not even the strength or the courage to go in there, just imagine," Larry Rojas, 49, told AFP, standing in front of a collapsed building where his family was trapped in the La Guaira



Rescuers searched rubble collapsed buildings for survivors in Caracas following massive twin earthquakes in Venezuela. PHOTO: AFP

city of Catia La Mar.

The coastal city was without electricity, and many residents spent the night in the streets or searching for their relatives, according to AFP reporters.

The 7.5-magnitude earthquake was Venezuela's most powerful since 29 October 1900, when a 7.7-magnitude tremor struck offshore.

Key information:

- The most affected areas include Venezuela's capital Caracas, as well as the states of Miranda, La Guaira, Aragua, Carabobo, and Falcon
- Infrastructure and disruptions to essential services such as gas, electricity, and water supply were damaged. Mobile communications and the internet are also experiencing disruptions
- Maiquetia International Airport was closed due to infrastructure damage
- The government has declared a state of emergency and suspended school classes and non-essential activities
- The General Emergency Staff, led by a designated military authority responsible for operations, has been activated to coordinate actions
- Various countries and international organizations, including the UN, the US, India, Mexico, and other countries in the region, have expressed their solidarity and offered support to Venezuela

Agencies

## Russia's Spectr-UV space telescope slated for launch in 2031

RUSSIA plans to launch its new Spectr-UV space telescope, designed to succeed the Hubble Space Telescope, on 24 October 2031, a senior official said Wednesday.

Speaking at the Ultraviolet Universe-2026 conference, held in Moscow from 24 to 26 June, Alexander Shakhnov, head of a department at the Lavochkin Association, part of Russia's state space corporation Roscosmos, said work on detailed engineering documentation for launch-related systems and ground infrastructure is expected to begin in January 2027.

"The launch vehicle has already been included in the national space project and is currently under production," Shakhnov said. The space observatory is scheduled to be carried into orbit by an Angara-A5M launch vehicle equipped with a Persei upper stage manufactured by Energia Rocket and Space Corporation, both part of Roscosmos. — Xinhua