

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the meeting to ensure water security in PyinOoLwin Township yesterday.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered a speech at the meeting to ensure water security in PyinOoLwin Township of Mandalay Region at the hall of National Landmarks Park yesterday morning.

In his speech, the Senior General stressed the need to adopt long-term plans for sustaining water sources in order to supply drinking water and agricultural water for residents and farmlands as population of PyinOoLwin is on the rise year by year.

These plans must be intended to benefit not only current population but those in the future in PyinOoLwin.

The Director of the Mandalay Region Irrigation and Water Utilization Management

Long-term water supply plan to benefit PyinOoLwin Township

Watershed forests near dams must be conserved not to lose water sources.

Department, the Mandalay Region Minister for Development Affairs and the Mandalay Region Chief Minister reported on future water sources for PyinOoLwin Township, supply of drinking water and agricultural water from dams, water supply

process, supply of water to people in PyinOoLwin, water sources and storage capacity, and future plans to extend supply of water for dwellers.

After hearing the reports, the Senior General underscored that it is necessary to

conduct research on annual water storage of dams, adding watershed forests near dams must be conserved not to lose water sources.

He noted that officials need to manage sufficient supply of water to PyinOoLwin Township,

and build dams with minimizing waste of water.

He instructed officials to conduct research and make field trips for work process to sufficiently supply water to PyinOoLwin Township.

Also present at the meeting were Council member General Nyo Saw, the commander of Central Command, district and township-level departmental personnel and officials.

The Senior General and party viewed round National Kandawgyi Garden by car and left necessary guidance. — MNA/TTA

Article
Call well done to foreign and local well-wishers and other helpers

By Mya Thae (Research) **PAGE 8-9**

NATIONAL **PAGE 2**

Yunnan Overseas Chinese Charity Foundation donates medical supplies to Myanmar earthquake victims

NATIONAL **PAGE 7**

MoE prepares for upcoming academic year following earthquake impact

NATIONAL **PAGE 10**

Cement imports keep flowing into Yangon

NATIONAL

From Sitting to Walking: The Journey of Reading

- ❖ Those who do not read books are like sitting.
- ❖ Literates who do not read are like standing.
- ❖ Literates who read books are like walking.
- ❖ We must encourage everyone, especially the youth, to read.
- ❖ We need to create environments that promote reading.

(Excerpt from the speech given by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the ceremony to donate books and publications to libraries across the nation and libraries of military headquarters, regiments, and units on 3 April 2024)

China’s 7th batch of emergency humanitarian aid arrives in Myanmar



The acceptance ceremony for China-aided humanitarian materials is underway at the airport.



Arrival of the humanitarian aids from China at Yangon International Airport.

FOR the Mandalay earthquake-stricken areas, emergency humanitarian aid in the 7th batch dispatched by China arrived at Yangon International Airport yesterday. A cargo flight of Air China airlines carrying 6,030 boxes of medications weighing 93,235 kilogrammes arrived at the airport. The shipment was welcomed by

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, regional ministers, officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Mr Ouyang Daobing, Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy to Myanmar, along with other embassy staff.

Tatmadaw members, Yangon City Development Committee staff and local freight workers loaded the relief items onto vehicles. Under the supervision of the Yangon Region government, the supplies were sent to Nay Pyi Taw to be delivered to the earthquake-affected areas. — MNA/KZL

Myanmar quake: 3,735 dead amid ongoing rescue and relief efforts

THE strong earthquake that struck Myanmar on 28 March claimed 3,735 lives as of 20 April, with 5,108 injured and 120 missing across six severely affected regions and states. Myanmar Fire Brigade and both local and international rescue teams are conducting search and rescue operations promptly in affected areas. They have managed to rescue 653 survivors trapped under collapsed buildings and recover the bodies of 762 deceased persons. Local donors also provided financial aid and relief supplies to affected people, while inter-

national organizations, foreign countries, and charitable donors also offered their support. Between 7 pm on 19 April and 5 pm on 20 April, medical aid from Kunming, China weighing a total of 5.309 tonnes and medical aids weighing 93.235 tonnes from Chinese government and 0.771 tonne of medical aids from Yunnan Oversea Chinese Charity Foundation arrived at Yangon International Airport. The relief items donated by both local and international contributors are swiftly distributed to the affected people to ensure timely support. — MNA/KZL

Yunnan Overseas Chinese Charity Foundation donates medical supplies to Myanmar earthquake victims

DUE to the powerful earthquake that struck several regions of Myanmar on 28 March 2025, there have reports of damage and casualties, especially in areas close to the epicentre. Many people, including government employees, affected by the disaster, are now in urgent need of assistance. As part of the humanitarian response and to support the victims, the Yunnan Overseas Chinese Charity Foundation from Yunnan Province, China, donated emergency medical supplies worth 658,320 yuan to assist those affected by the earthquake in Myanmar. These relief supplies were transported from Kunming, China, to Yangon, Myanmar, arriving on 20 April. Responsible personnel of the China-Myanmar Cooperation and



Donations of Chinese organizations arrive at Yangon International Airport yesterday.

Communications Centre handed over the medical supplies to the Ministry of Health. — MNA/KNK

NATIONAL

Residents Urged to Prioritize Public Safety Amid Armed Terrorist Threats

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

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

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla look into health conditions of earthquake-affected Tatmadaw members, families and police members at Tatmadaw hospital in PyinOoLwin

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla and officials comforted Tatmadaw members, families and members of Myanmar Police Force who are receiving medical treatment for their injuries caused by the recent earthquake at the Tatmadaw Hospital in PyinOoLwin yesterday morning.

The Senior General, his wife and party asked about injuries and progress of health conditions of members of the Sangha who sustained injuries in the Mandalay earthquake receiving treatment at the hospital and donated nutritious foods and cash for nine prerequisites.

The Senior General and his wife warmly comforted injured Tatmadaw members families and MPF members and presented foodstuffs.

The Senior General individually asked about injuries and progress of health conditions of Tatmadaw members who sustained injuries in serving defence and security duties of the State, receiving medical treatment at



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla comfort a quake-affected injured nuns at the maternity and child ward of Tatmadaw hospital in PyinOoLwin yesterday.

the hospital and fulfilled their requirements and presented cash support and gifts to those patients. The Senior General and his wife comforted a venerable Sayadaw and two civilians receiving medical treatment for their

injuries at the special intensive care unit of the hospital and provide nutritious foods and cash for nine prerequisites.

The Senior General and his wife also comforted two quake-affected injured nuns at the mater-

nity and child ward and donated foods and financial support.

Tatmadaw hospitals in relevant regions provide healthcare services to 15 members of the Sangha, staff and families as well as 5,016 civilians as outpatients

for their injuries. So far, these hospitals are giving medical treatment to 51 members of the Sangha, staff, families and 476 civilians for their serious injuries with healthcare services until their injuries heal. — MNA/TTA

Daily newspapers available online

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

NATIONAL



National Disaster Management Committee Chairman State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win inspects six-storey building which are under construction in Naypyitaw State Academy yesterday.



He coordinated with officials to completely repair these buildings before opening of the university. He also inspected the convocation hall and a six-storey building which are under construction.

According to the inspection of experts from the Federation of Myanmar Engineering Societies, and Myanmar Engineering Council as well as earthquake experts, there is no damage at the buildings.

The Ministry of Construction built the completed buildings and other buildings underway on the campus of Naypyitaw State Academy in accordance with international standard SOPs 2020, following a design capable of withstanding a magnitude 7 on the Richter scale.

The Vice-Senior General gave instructions that the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Construction have to coordinate for construction of buildings in accordance with the newly revised design by the Ministry of Construction, which can withstand up to magnitude 8 on the Richter scale.—MNA/TTA

Buildings must withstand up to magnitude 8 on Richter scale in accordance with newly revised design by Construction Ministry

Chairman of the National Disaster Management Committee Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win,

accompanied Vice-Chairs of the NDMC Union ministers, inspected loss and damage to Naypyitaw State Academy yesterday afternoon.

He viewed round damage to

the post-graduate and management main building, the medical lecture hall, the economics lecture hall, two arts and science lecture halls and the economic and social lecture hall. Accord-

ing to the inspection, the main columns and beams are completely undamaged, with only some cracks and separations in the plaster of certain partition brick walls.

Yangon-Mandalay Expressway under repair after earthquake damage

UNION Minister for Construction U Myo Thant yesterday inspected repair works being carried out along the Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon section on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway, which had suffered damage due to a recent earthquake. The inspection aimed to ensure road and bridge safety and to maintain uninterrupted transportation.

At the Swa Creek Bridge near Milepost 165/1 on the expressway, the Union Minister assessed reports of officials from the Department of Bridges on damage to two Swa Creek bridges on the northbound and southbound lanes due to the quake including lowered piers, leaning supports and cracks at the base. Strengthening works using bailey frames underneath the bridge had been carried out to stabilize the structure.

The Union minister further inspected the bridge deck, which had collapsed, and a temporary Bailey bridge currently allowing safe vehicle passage. He closely checked the piers, which had sunk and tilted and cracks caused by changes in the water course from the Swachaung Dam, leading to erosion at the bridge base. The approach roads also showed signs of cracking and sinking. The Union minister instructed officials to address these issues with the necessary actions.

The Mandalay earthquake caused damage to 283 points on the concrete sections of the expressway. Although some sections did not suffer structural failure, 185 areas developed surface waves requiring levelling. Temporary repairs were completed to maintain traffic flow, except



Union Minister for Construction U Myo Thant looks into two Swa Creek bridges' repair works on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway yesterday.

at the severely damaged Dokhtawady Bridge near Milepost 358/2. Speed limits of vehicles have been reduced on temporarily repaired sections for safety. At Milepost 183/7, where a cracked concrete section was under repair, officials briefed the Union minister on the repairing process.

The inspection continued at the Thaik

Creek Bridge on Nay Pyi Taw's Pobbathiri Township ring road, where two 90-foot bridge spans and approach roads had been reconstructed. Asphalt concrete paving was underway on the approach roads. The Union minister inspected the works and gave necessary instructions to officials.

— MNA/KZL

Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

www.gnlm.com.mm



CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

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

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

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

Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.
gnlmnews@gmail.com,
newsroom@gnlm.com.mm
www.gnlm.com.mm

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

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

NATIONAL

MoI Union Minister visits Max Myanmar Cement
Factory to fulfill post-earthquake requirements

UNION Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than inspected the cement production process at the Max Myanmar Cement Factory in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory yesterday afternoon.

During the tour, the Union minister addressed the extensive need for cement for reconstruction due to loss and damage caused by the earthquake, urging full-capacity production to expedite rehabilitation, advance stocking of spare parts for continuous operation, increased cement output to aid the population and stabilize prices, enhanced research for disaster-resistant products, and prioritized distribution of factory-produced cement to earthquake-affected areas. The Union minister stated that any needs or difficulties in operating the factory and maintaining continuous production should be



Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than looks into the cement production process at the Max Myanmar Cement Factory in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory yesterday.

openly reported, and efforts will be made to address them.
The Max Myanmar Cement

Factory experienced slight tilting of the kiln, transformer oil leakage, and damage to rollers due to

the strong earthquake. However, inspection and repair work were carried out promptly, and cement

distribution has continued since 3 April, with a total of 10,150 tonnes sold to date.

The Union minister then visited the Paper Mill (Yeni) in Yeni, Bago Region, and inspected the construction of facilities there to provide shelter for employees from Nay Pyi Taw.

The Union minister then met with staff cleaning the building intended to house employees from Nay Pyi Taw, acknowledged their efforts to ensure a comfortable living environment, and highlighted the solidarity among employees. He also emphasized the need for teamwork to quickly complete building, utility, and toilet renovations, arrange the timely relocation of employees from Nay Pyi Taw to completed buildings, and provide them with necessary subsidies. — MNA/TH

Authorities detain 14 more
foreign illegal entrants



Myanmar Immigration and officials processing undocumented foreign entrants.

A total of 14 foreigners who illegally entered the Shwe Kokko and KK Park areas in Myawady via border routes through neighbouring countries, including Thailand, were arrested yesterday for allegedly engaging in online gambling, telecom fraud, and other criminal activities.

Authorities collected the personal data and records just in one day to transfer them to their respective countries as quickly as possible.

From 30 January to 20 April 2025, the government arrested 9,032 foreigners who illegally entered the country, and 7,288 of them were transferred to their respective countries via Thailand, and the remaining 1,743 are also ready to be transferred and

are being well cared for.

The 9,032 detainees are from China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Pakistan, India, Uganda, Ethiopia, Nepal, Thailand, Rwanda, Kenya, Kazakhstan, Cambodia, Ghana, Bangladesh, Japan, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Tunisia, Algeria, Congo, Cameroon, Uzbekistan, Nigeria, Kyrgyzstan, Namibia, Madagascar, Romania, Liberia, Russia, the Philippines, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Burundi and Chinese Taipei. The combined departmental teams will continue efforts to identify foreign nationals who entered through illegal channels and deport them to their respective countries as soon as possible. — MNA/TH

Illegal timber, industrial
goods, consumer products,
and vehicles used for
smuggling seized

ACCORDING to the Illegal Trade Eradication Leading Committee, effective measures are being taken in accordance with the law to prevent and take action against illegal trading activities.

On 20 April, combined inspection teams, managed by the Customs Department, conducted inspections and, near Aung Soe Moe Petrol Station in Nyaungkhashay Village, intercepted two vehicles travelling from Mawlamyine to Yangon. The vehicles were found to be carrying five types of industrial goods and five types of consumer goods without any official documentation (estimated value of K79.738 million). Moreover, one Yutong bus, one Volvo tractor head, and one trailer (estimated value of K190 million), used for transporting the items, were also seized. Action is being taken in accordance with customs procedures.

Similarly, under the management of the Bago Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force, combined inspec-



Confiscated illegal items in Nyaungkhashay Village, Bago Region.

tion teams carried out operations in Bago, Toungoo and Thayawady districts. As a result, illegal timber comprising 1.63 tonnes of teak, 1.178 tonnes of hardwood, and 0.648 tonne of other timber — with a total estimated value of K1.9 million — was seized. Legal action is being taken in accordance with the Forest Law.

In total, on 20 April, seven cases of illegal activity were recorded, with seizures amounting to an estimated value of K271.64 million. — MNA/KNN

NATIONAL

Earthquake rescue efforts see in hardest-hit areas



Chief Minister U Myat Kyaw and Lt-Gen Thet Pon visit Malaysian medical team's temporary hospital built in Parami Ward in Sagaing.



Lt-Gen Soe Tint Naing visits the site of quake-stricken Yadanasan monastery cleanup in Mandalay.

RESCUE and relief operations are actively carried out in affected areas where roads, bridges and buildings were damaged following the powerful earthquake that struck Myanmar on 28 March.

Tatmadaw members, Myanmar Police Force members, firefighters, international rescue teams, departmental staff, social welfare groups and locals are cooperating in these ongoing efforts.

Sagaing Region Chief Minister U Myat Kyaw, Lt-Gen Thet Pon of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) and officials visited several damaged sites in Sagaing, including religious build-



Maj-Gen Zaw Min Latt inspects the machinery sent by the Directorate of Military Engineers for being used in rehabilitation works in Inlay area.

ings, schools and residential areas. They inspected ongoing rescue and coordinated support.

They also visited a temporary hospital built

in Parami Ward by a Malaysian medical team, as well as several earthquake-damaged pagodas and shelters in NanOo Myothit. They observed

Tatmadaw mobile medical units providing healthcare and coordinated necessary arrangements.

Meanwhile, Lt-Gen Myo Moe Aung of the

Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) and officials visited earthquake-damaged sites in Mandalay Region, including the Ingyin Condominium, Ayeyawady River View Hotel, and several pagodas. They reviewed rescue operations with international groups and distributed food and coordinated support. They also visited monasteries to offer donations and inspected the damage.

Similarly, Lt-Gen Soe Tint Naing of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) and officials visited Candamuni Pagoda and other religious sites in Mandalay to inspect damage and give instructions for reconstruction.

Also, Lt-Gen Myo Thant Naing of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) and officials visited hospitals in Kyaukse and Singaing townships. They met patients and observed cleanup efforts carried out by Tatmadaw members, police, firefighters and civil staff.

Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Zaw Min Latt and officials viewed round operation of sheet piles and cement grouting at reconstruction of the Inlay PhaungdawOo Pagoda in Nyaungshwe Township and provided family kits and foodstuffs to earthquake victims at the relief camp of Thalay Village Basic Education High School. — MNA/KZL

Quake-fundraising Myanmar-Thai Lethwei tournament postponed

THE Myanmar-Thai Lethwei match, with all proceeds aimed to donate to the Myanmar earthquake relief fund, has been postponed, the MFC Myanmar Lethwei Club announced.

It was originally scheduled to be held on 27 April, but due to the recent earthquake, fans, players and other general arrangements have been affected, so the match will be postponed for a few days, it said.

Main event will be set between Veenut, a fighter from

Thailand with 50 wins, 25 losses and five draws, and Tun Min Aung, who has won a gold medal at the state tournament and is eligible to fight in One Championship after competing in Muay Thai in Thailand for three years. The fight is the first match for Tun Min Aung after a few years away from Lethwei, so it is attracting a lot of interest from fans, but the date has not been announced yet.

The remaining events in the fight are also among fans' favour-

ites and will be held in accordance with the guidelines of the Myanmar Lethwei Federation. All proceeds, including ticket fees and advertising revenue, will be donated to the people in the earthquake-affected areas. — Htet Oo Maung/ZN

Some advertisements for the MFC Myanmar-Thai Lethwei Tournament, which was initially released.



NATIONAL

Maintaining parts of Bagan's Meenyeingon Temple not damaged in Mandalay earthquake

THE Mandalay earthquake did not damage maintaining parts of Meenyeingon Temple located in Bagan cultural heritage zone.

It is No 1499 ancient building, south of the wall of ancient Bagan city. The one-storey temple, which is 130 feet high, has been identified as a grade-1 work in AD 12th Century. The temple is included in the maintenance list for phase II by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

A crack occurred at the southwest corner wall of the temple in the earthquake in 2016. So, officials monitor situation of the temple. After the Mandalay earthquake struck, officials of the Department of Archaeology and National Museum (Bagan Branch) checked the temple and found the original crack not larger.

Before undertaking the structural works by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), the department installed the



The crack caused by the earthquake in 2016 seen at Meenyeingon Temple in Bagan.

scaffolding to maintain the temple not to infiltration of rainwater and carry out consolidation of the mortar with the use of chemicals. Moreover, the department is working its functions with grouting at the crack with the use of poz-zolan, pointing work and installation of three crack monitors under the preservation procedures.

The top of pyramidal spire was damaged by the Bagan earthquake in 1975. So, maintenance was carried out at the temple in 1976-78 and 2004-2005. Again, as the temple suffered impacts of the earthquake in 2016, maintenance was undertaken in 2017. Necessary maintenance was also conducted at the temple in 2020. — ASH/TTA



Mongphone Sayadaw seen during his donation tour.

Mongphone Sayadaw, devotees launch donation tour for earthquake victims

THE Mongphone Sayadaw and a group of charitable donors will be carrying out donations in areas affected by the recent powerful earthquake, including Shan State, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, Mandalay Region, and Sagaing Region.

To carry out these charitable acts, a motorcade consisting of 38 vehicles and 94 donors accompanying the Sayadaw departed from Mongphone on 19 April. This information was confirmed by one of the participating donors, U Aik La.

He said, “As part of the Sayadaw’s donation journey, over 2,000 pre-packed relief packages containing rice, cooking oil, instant noodles, and medicines will be donated to earthquake victims in Taunggyi, Mandalay,

Nay Pyi Taw, and Sagaing. The Sayadaw and his disciples also plan to disperse loving-kindness in each of these towns”

During the journey, the donation convoy will stop overnight in Mongpan, Taunggyi, and Mandalay. After donations are made in Mandalay, the group will continue to PyinOoLwin for an overnight stop.

From PyinOoLwin, the convoy will return to Mandalay before proceeding to Nay Pyi Taw, where donations will be made and an overnight stay is planned. The vehicles will then head to Yangon, where they will remain for around three days. During the Yangon visit, the Sayadaw will conduct loving-kindness sessions before returning to Taunggyi. — ASH/KNN

Gold Market Rate as of 20 April 2025

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K5,630,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.



MoE prepares for upcoming academic year following earthquake impact

THE Ministry of Education says that efforts will be made to prepare universities, colleges, and basic education schools damaged by the Mandalay

earthquake for the start of the 2025–2026 academic year.

To ensure preparedness, the government will systematically clear dangerous school buildings that have collapsed due to the earthquake as soon as possible. Damaged schools and buildings in the regions and states will be systematically categorized according to three criteria: minor repairs, major repairs, and new construction.

In addition, temporary classrooms and housing will be systematically provided in areas where schools need to reopen in early June. The Ministry of Education, along with education staff, teachers, and parents, will work together to ensure that all school-age children can continue their education in the coming academic year. — ASH/TH

This photo captures a school that collapsed and was damaged by the earthquake.

OPINION

Promote freedom of creativity and innovation for all

CREATIVITY and innovation are at the heart of societal progress. Across all communities, regardless of religion, nationality and colour, it is the efforts of individuals striving to improve themselves and the world around them that drive development. These creative and innovative actions benefit not just humans, but all living beings.

Artistic expression plays a central role in this process. Artistic works naturally capture attention, making them powerful tools for spreading ideas and inspiring change. Through art, creators and innovators produce more advanced and meaningful contributions that enhance lives. These individuals serve as true benefactors of society.

The 2025 theme for World Creativity and Innovation Day is “Think Different, Do Different for Better”. Creators and innovators have chances to think differently as well as do different things without anxiety to produce different kinds of masterpieces for society. That is why everybody needs to encourage individuals everywhere to embrace creativity and innovation as tools for personal growth and societal transformation. Supporting creative initiatives can lead to a more inclusive, prosperous, and sustainable world for all.

knowledge, and technology. At its core, it involves knowledge-based activities that form the foundation of creative industries.

These industries, which span audiovisual media, design, new media, performing arts, publishing, and visual arts, are transformative drivers of the global economy. They generate income, create jobs, and boost exports. Culture is not only vital for economic reasons but also serves as a key part of sustainable development, identity, and innovation. It adds non-monetary value as well, fostering social inclusion, dialogue, and mutual understanding.

The United Nations highlights creative industries as among the most dynamic sectors globally. They offer developing nations the chance to leap ahead into high-growth areas, creating new opportunities and solutions for their future.

The 2025 theme for World Creativity and Innovation Day is “Think Different, Do Different for Better”. Creators and innovators have chances to think differently as well as do different things without anxiety to produce different kinds of masterpieces for society. That is why everybody needs to encourage individuals everywhere to embrace creativity and innovation as tools for personal growth and societal transformation. Supporting creative initiatives can lead to a more inclusive, prosperous, and sustainable world for all.

Creativity also plays a crucial role in addressing global challenges, from economic to social to environmental. Recognizing its importance, the United Nations designated 21 April every year as World Creativity and Innovation Day to raise awareness of how creativity and innovation influence every aspect of human development.

Creativity reflects our values and identity. It enriches cultural diversity and fuels both social progress and economic growth. UNESCO, through its 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, supports countries in strengthening their creative sectors and promoting artistic freedom.

The concept of the “creative economy” is broad and evolving. It is centred on the interplay between human creativity, intellectual property,

Call well done to foreign and local well-wishers and other helpers

By Mya Thae (Research)

A STRONG earthquake hit central Myanmar at 12:51 pm on 28 March 2025. It was a Sabbath day. My sister and I observed the Nine Precepts. My sister was telling beads, and I listened to a sermon on TV. We did not notice that the earthquake had hit. A few minutes later, Ma Thawdar from my street phoned me to say that the earthquake had hit. Our house is on the ground floor, so we did not notice the earthquake. It was a powerful earthquake that struck, causing significant tremors. As a result, residents suffered injuries and

fatalities, and numerous homes and buildings were destroyed. The earthquake hit Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway and Bago regions, as well as the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and northern Shan State. The National Disaster Management Committee declared the affected areas an emergency zone.

A lot of buildings, including the old Sagaing Bridge across the Ayeyawady River, were damaged, leaving casualties. Hospitals in the Mandalay and Sagaing Regions are full of patients. These hospitals urgently need blood

for patients. Authorities have urged volunteers to donate blood to help save lives and treat the injured in time. Hence, people have to lend a helping hand to each other.

Such an earthquake jolted not only parts of Myanmar but also some areas of China, Thailand, Laos, Bangladesh, and India, among others. Hence, local and global donors need to provide necessary aid to the earthquake victims of Myanmar to help their lives. Help to create a safe and stable environment for the people.

Rescue teams from India, Singapore, Russia, China, Thailand, Vietnam as well and Malaysia arrived in Myanmar and distributed relief supplies to the victims. So, the Myanmar people will never forget their good neighbourliness and ASEAN spirit at an important time to ease the tension of the earthquake in Myanmar.

The State Administration Council expressed its deep gratitude for the support and assistance provided in response to the earthquake disasters in Myanmar. This includes expressions



Operation Brahma is a disaster relief and rescue operation undertaken by the Indian government in response to the 2025 Myanmar earthquake. PHOTO: ANISS

of sympathy, the deployment of emergency rescue teams, the provision of relief supplies and aid messages of condolence, words of encouragement and

solidarity actions. The council also appreciates active participation in rescue and relief efforts. It firmly believes and expects continuous cooperation until

Myanmar’s recovery and reconstruction efforts are complete. It is very pleasing to see foreign and local well-wishers and other helpers deeply helping the

earthquake victims. I also call them well done with thankfully. It is the best time to donate from the heart.

Ref: The GNLm.

Functional Language of Reading

By Hu Wo (Cuckoo’s Song)



Ultimately, cultivating a daily reading habit enriches individuals and fosters a deeper understanding of the world, making it an essential practice for personal and intellectual growth. ILLUSTRATION: PIXABAY

en by books are never forgettable to readers rather unlike those by small talk and informal speaking. In great books, ethics are usually explained with conspicuous examples and logical, critical or

acceptable thoughts for readers. Not only that, aesthetics is always described with beautiful words, colourful expressions, subject matter of interest and attractive style of writing. Also, books have

been bought and read until now. Some people think that reading is just for fun or pleasure. That is not wrong at all, but the real functions of reading are more than that, we should be-

lieve. Some begin their reading habit with the help of cartoons, comics and novels. Usually, these cartoons, comics and novels are light reading, to wit, reading them only because of doing nothing im-

portant for the moment. Despite this, the birthplace of the very reading habit may be cartoons, comics, novels and something like these. The longer the time to read cartoons, comics or novels lasts, the more bored a person will be with this light reading. Here, there is one important thing that should be noticed. Older, though a reader of cartoons, comics or novels grows, he will never forget the reading matter by any means. As usual, heavy reading goes after light reading. This is one of the functions reading does, I suppose.

Figuratively, booksellers, book collectors, good speakers and great writers are also born to read. Just as there are still book readers in the world, booksellers can do their part quite well. This, too, makes them earn a good living. And most readers like to collect as many books as possible. The feeling of reading with books is best for them as well as in itself, seeing the arrangement of books in order on bookshelves can be another kind of their feeling. Sometimes, the thicker, the better. Such many readers become good public speakers. Having

read well, they are always ready to talk about whatever they wish as needed. Also, teachers who read a lot and those who do not are completely different, especially language teachers. Teachers who do much extracurricular reading will be able to explain the subject matter to students precisely and intricately. What is more, the beginning of a writer’s life is simply reading. From reading, future writers are getting to envy authors’ works of art. They begin to imitate their writing style and choice of words. Then later, they turn out to be writers to the core.

I am strongly of the opinion that the actual functions of reading will be more than mentioned above. And what I want to add here is that any literate person ought to read every day on end for himself and others. There is nothing worth reading. Is there any subject matter that we should not continue reading? All readers can overcome that case with their eyes shut as long as their reading time takes. Just read whatever to see near at hand. May reading be a daily routine. ■

NATIONAL

Cement imports keep flowing into Yangon



Bags of cement being unloaded from the vessel and bags of cement seen aboard the vessel at Shweme port in Shwepyitha Township on 18 April.

TO quickly meet domestic cement demand for construction projects nationwide during the earthquake rehabilitation process in this dry season, and to bolster local production, cement imports are being permitted.

Continuously arriving via the Kawthoung border trade station, a cement vessel carrying 3,010 tonnes reached Shweme Port in Shwepyitha Township, Yangon Region, on the evening of 18 April and is now being distributed in the market.

The import of cement required for domestic construction work has been allowed during this period, and in addition to this vessel, other vessels carrying cement will continue to arrive weekly. — MNA/MKKS

“Byawthan” Myanmar film set to hit cinemas in early May

THE Myanmar film Byawthan, directed by Academy award-winning director Awratha, is scheduled for cinema release in early May, according to sources close to the production.

The storyline for Byawthan was written by Thu Htet Zaw and Nay Soe Thaw, while Lwin Min Arnt worked on the screenplay. This marks the third production by Shwe Nadi Shwe Yi Film Production, with Awratha overseeing the direction.



A glimpse of some characters from Byawthan as featured in the film's promotional poster.

“Byawthan represents a symbolic essence of Myanmar’s traditional almsgiving ceremonies. The film centres around a novitiate ceremony and portrays the cultural beauty and traditions of Myanmar through a dramatic narrative,” the director stated.

The cast includes Academy winners Nay Win, Htun

Htun, Khin Wint Wah and Myo Thanda Htun, Phyo Ngwe Soe, Thuriya, Aye Wutt Yi Thaung, Zaw Win Naing (Mann), Sin Ma, Myo Myo Khine, Thuza Pwint, and many others. — ASH/KZL

Daily newspapers available online

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

News and Periodicals Enterprise

Public interests high in house and lower-floor apartment rent

IN Yangon’s property rent market, customer interests have expressed in houses and lower-floor apartments, according to estate agents.

Real estate rental has constantly risen at present due to increase in home moving and displaced people, and the rent market has begun larger after Thingyan festival, said an estate agent.

“There are many interests in house rent. Most of customers prefer lower-floor apartments. People moved from other regions and states are also interested in houses with land. But young people rent higher-floor apartment to live together with friends. Now it is post-Thingyan

period and monsoon will arrive soon, so the property rents have increased,” he said.

With increase in property rent, prices have been high too. It is now difficult to find apartments which are rented by monthly payment but most are by deposit or six-month contract.

“We sought a lower-priced apartment because my family has old people but the rent prices are too expensive. And three-month or four-month rent is difficult to find and most are six-month rent and monthly payment with deposit. Prices are high depending on location,” said a woman.

Currently, rent market



A real estate service page has put a house on sale.

has increased in all townships of Yangon as a result of surge in displaced families and home moving in pre-monsoon. — MT/ZS

STI to provide post-quake online counselling services

FOR those who were impacted mentally by the recent quake, STI (Myanmar College) and Myanmar Red Cross Society jointly hosted an online counselling session from 1 pm to 3 pm on 20 April.

The panellist was Daw Ya Min Khaing (mental health and psychosocial support officer from Myanmar Red Cross Society).

“It is certain that the powerful quake made our people hurt both physically and mentally. But we have to find a solution for how we can survive during this difficult time, so I organized this online counselling session,” said an organizer.

It aimed to create an environment built



This image depicts the STI Mandalay team donating necessary aid for 100 houses affected by the quake.

with love and encourage quake survivors to move forward with humanity. It was aired live. — Htun Htun/ZS

From Messi to Trump, AI action figures are the rage

The viral trend of AI-generated action figures of celebrities on social media, while entertaining and personalized, raises significant concerns regarding copyright infringement, privacy risks from sharing personal data, and environmental impacts due to high energy consumption.

THE latest social media craze involves AI-generated images of well-known figures packaged as action figures, thanks to ChatGPT's new image generator.

These "toys" feature celebrities like Lionel Messi and Donald Trump, often accompanied by relevant props, and have become a viral sensation across platforms like TikTok and Instagram.

While many users enjoy creating personalized versions of themselves as figurines, the

trend raises concerns about copyright infringement and the risks associated with sharing biometric data with generative AI companies.

Experts note that this boom is fueled by technological advancements in AI image rendering and taps into nostalgia, making it highly shareable.

However, the trend has sparked protests from human artists whose works are being replicated without compensation.

Additionally, the environ-



AI action figures go viral, spark debate over data privacy and creative rights. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/PIXABAY

mental impact of AI usage is significant, with each prompt consuming more electricity than a standard Google search. As users upload personal images, they risk compromising their privacy.

Despite its current popularity, experts predict that the AI action figure meme will eventually lose its appeal as saturation occurs in the market. — AFP

Climbers of Mt Fuji to be required to wear proper clothing



The new measures aim to address issues related to overcrowding and safety, especially after observing lightly dressed climbers last year. PHOTO: KYODO/FILE

PEOPLE planning to visit Mt Fuji will be required to wear appropriate climbing gear, the local government hosting the mountain's most popular trail said, as it begins accepting reservations next week.

As part of the online reservation process set to begin Thursday, visitors must agree to terms including wearing warm clothing and appropriate footwear, Yamanashi Prefecture said, adding that access to the Yoshida Trail may be denied

for noncompliance.

The new measure comes amid a rise in foreign visitors and growing concerns about overcrowding, with many lightly dressed climbers seen on the mountain last year. Local governments are seeking to address these issues ahead of the climbing season starting in early July.

Climbers of the 3,776-metre peak will also be required to agree to rules such as not littering and not straying from

designated trails, the prefecture said Thursday.

Reservations can be made on the official website with an advance payment of 4,000 yen (\$28). Shizuoka Prefecture, which manages the other three trails, will require climbers to review rules and etiquette through its registration system, with the process set to begin in early May. The local government will also start collecting a 4,000 yen fee this summer. — Kyodo

Sri Lanka's women-run hotel breaks down barriers

AT Sri Lanka's Hotel Amba Yaalu, a groundbreaking initiative is taking shape with an all-female staff, aiming to empower women in a tourism sector dominated by men.

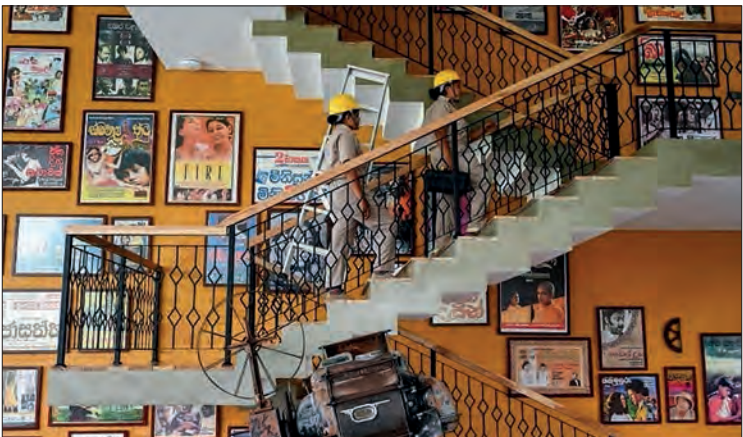
Opened in January, the hotel is the first of its kind in the country, where women hold only 10 per cent of hotel jobs. Manager Jeewanthi Adhikari emphasizes the need for gender equality, especially after the tourism industry faced severe setbacks from COVID-19 and political unrest. Owner Chandra Wickramasinghe, who leads the Thema Collection group, believes in show-

casing women's capabilities in various roles, from maintenance to security.

The hotel employs 75 women, each trained to handle tasks traditionally assigned to men, fostering a sense of confidence and competence among the staff.

The initiative has garnered positive feedback from clients and industry leaders, highlighting its potential to inspire future generations of women.

Activists view the hotel as a significant step toward improving women's rights in Sri Lanka, where cultural norms often limit their opportunities. — AFP



Hotel Amba Yaalu all-women staff is a first in the country, designed to promote women in a tourism sector where men hold up to 90 per cent of hotel jobs. PHOTO: AFP

India’s energy storage sector to expand fivefold between 2026 and 2032

INDIA’S energy storage sector will expand fivefold between 2026 and 2032, with sector receiving about Rs 479 thousand crore investment by 2032, according to an estimate by industry body India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA).

India’s energy storage sector has taken significant strides in the past few years, backed by government incentives such as the approval of Viability Gap Funding for 13,200 MWh of Battery Energy Storage Systems by 2030-31.

Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd. (SECI), NTPC, SJVN, and states like Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh have announced various tenders for standalone energy storage systems, dispatchable renewable energy, and peak power solutions.

Discussing the future of the industry at the 5th Edition of Gujarat’s Biggest International Conference on Stationary Energy

Experts emphasized the need for strategic investments to foster technological innovations and infrastructure for a robust energy storage ecosystem in the country.



Storage India (SESI) 2025. Industry experts stated that the strategic investment is the need of the hour to advance technological innovations and infrastructure required for a robust energy storage ecosystem in India.

While addressing the inaugural ceremony of the conference at Mahatma Mandir, Convention and Exhibition Center, Gandhinagar, S J Haider, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Gujarat said that the state has decided to set up for ourselves a target, an ambitious and aspirational target of 100 gigawatts.

— ANI

Significant advancements have been made in recent years, supported by government incentives like the approval of Viability Gap Funding for 13,200 MWh of Battery Energy Storage Systems by 2030-31. **PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ANI**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Nepal's foreign trade grows 16.89% in 9 months

NEPAL’S external trade increased by 16.89 per cent in the last nine months of the current 2024-25 fiscal year due to a rise in both imports and exports, the Department of Customs announced on Sunday.

The total trade of the South Asian country stood at 1.49 trillion Nepali rupees by 13 April up from 1.28 trillion rupees during the same period of the previous fiscal year, the department said in a report.

The imports rose by 12.18 per cent to 1.3 trillion rupees, while the exports grew by 65.16 per cent to 188.19 billion rupees, noted the report. (1 Nepali rupee equals US\$0.0073). — Xinhua

Mongolian banking sector's net external assets decreased by 46% at end of March

THE Mongolian banking sector's net external assets decreased by 46 per cent year-on-year to reach 5.3 trillion Mongolian tugriks (US\$1.48 billion), local media reported on Sunday, citing data from the National Statistics Office (NSO).

During the period, the net domestic assets of Mongolia's banks reached 36.2 trillion tugriks (\$10.16 billion), which represents an increase of 31 per cent compared to the same period of 2024.

Meanwhile, the cumulative savings within Mongolian commercial banks demonstrated a robust performance, reaching a total volume of 22.1 trillion tugriks (\$6.20 billion) by the end of March 2025.

It is noted that the Mongolian tugrik savings experienced a substantial uptick, surging by 22 per cent, while dollar savings exhibited a more modest increase of 10.4 per cent. — Xinhua

Maldives eyes medical tourism to expand economic footprint



This photo taken on 28 April 2024 shows the seaplane docking facility at Velana International Airport in Male, the Maldives. **PHOTO: WU YUE/XINHA**

THE Maldives is moving to expand its economic footprint by entering the medical tourism sector, which is poised for strategic growth, the Maldives’ state media PSM News reported on Saturday.

The government is actively evaluating proposals from foreign investors seeking to establish specialized hospitals catering to international patients, the report quoted Minister of Health Abdulla Nazim Ibrahim as saying.

He said the initiative is part of a broader effort to diversify the country’s tourism portfolio.

By capitalizing on the Maldives’ reputation for high-end travel and hospitality, the government aims to position the nation as a premier destination where medical expertise and luxury converge, the minister said. Proposals under review outline various approaches to medical tourism infrastructure. Some investors envision a comprehensive framework that integrates treatment facilities with educational institutions dedicated to training healthcare professionals, he said. Others propose incorporating medical establishments within existing resort properties, combining healthcare and leisure in a setting designed to attract travellers seeking both convalescence and exclusivity, he said. — Xinhua

“Flying taxis” poised to revolutionize urban commuting

EHang, a leader in urban air mobility (UAM), presented three unmanned aircraft at the event.

THE futuristic vision of gliding above traffic in an autonomous “flying taxi” is fast becoming a reality, thanks to the rise of low-altitude economy in China. At the 5th China International Consumer Products Expo, a dedi-



A visitor experiences a passenger-carrying drone at the booth of EHang at the 5th China International Consumer Products Expo (CICPE) in Haikou, South China’s Hainan province, 14 April 2025. PHOTO: XINHUA

cated exhibition zone for the low-altitude economy made its debut, featuring companies like EHang Holdings. Ehang, a global leader in urban air mobility (UAM), showed up at the event alongside three unmanned aircraft. These innovations highlight transformative solutions to urban congestion and offer a glimpse into the future of aerial consumption. Starring at the event was EHang’s flagship EH216-S, the world’s first and only electric vertical takeoff and landing

(eVTOL) aircraft to secure all four certifications required for commercial operation: Type Certificate (TC), Production Certificate (PC), Standard Airworthiness Certificate (AC), and Operational Permit. Having completed over 66,000 safe flights across 19 countries, including the United States, Japan, UAE and countries in Europe, the pilotless eVTOL is already driving real-world applications in passenger transport, aerial tourism, logistics, and emergency medical services. — Xinhua

Giant Evangelion appears in Hamamatsu city hall through early 2026

A roughly six-metre-tall Evangelion Unit 01 statue made its appearance in Hamamatsu, central Japan, on Sunday as part of a local government tourism campaign through next February in the hope of cashing in on the city’s connection to the popular anime film. The purple giant humanoid robot from the film “Evangelion: 3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon a Time” will tower over the lobby of Hamamatsu city hall in Shizuoka Prefecture until late January next year, including on weekends and public holidays. About 170 people lined up in front of the municipal headquarters to see the statue ahead of the public opening at 10:30 am. — Kyodo



Visitors take a look at the roughly six-meter-tall Evangelion Unit 01 statue at the Hamamatsu city hall in Shizuoka Prefecture on 20 April 2025. PHOTO: KYODO

Swiss watch exports to US soared ahead of Trump tariffs

SWISS watch exports to the key US market soared nearly 14 per cent in March, likely the result of retailers stocking up before US President Donald Trump announced his tariffs on countries worldwide. Analysts have warned that Switzerland’s storied watchmaking industry could be among the hardest hit by the 31-per-cent import levies for Swiss goods announced in ear-



The United States has been the top market for Swiss-made watches since 2021. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

ly April — though they have since been paused for 90 days. But a baseline 10-per-cent tariff on all US imports still took effect on 5 April. In March, Swiss watch exports to the United States jumped 13.7 per cent compared to a year earlier, rebounding after a 6.7 per cent drop the previous month, the country’s watchmakers’ federation said. — AFP

CAIT to host national conclave to oppose quick commerce and e-commerce business

AT a conclave to be held on Tuesday, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) said it is set to “expose the darker and exploitative side” of modern retail. The national conclave is titled ‘Cruel Face of Quick Commerce and E-Commerce’ to be held at Constitution Club, in association with All India Mobile Retailers Association (AIMRA), and All In-

dia Consumer Products Distributors Federation (AICPDF). According to CAIT, this conclave will bring together trade leaders, policy experts, economists, and stakeholders from across the country to highlight the unethical practices and long-term threats posed by digital commerce platforms to India’s traditional retail ecosystem. — ANI

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (150N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (150N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-4-2025 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon. Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel. No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day. Phone No: 2301185 Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority Agent For: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPPING LINE

ROLLING UPDATES
WORLD

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sri Lanka police probe photo of Buddha tooth relic

SRI Lanka police launched an investigation Sunday into a photo circulated on social media claiming to show a Buddha tooth relic, which has gone on display under tight security.

The Criminal Investigation Department was ordered to determine whether the widely-shared image was from the rare display of the relic, police said.

Photography is strictly prohibited during the public viewing of the highly venerated relic, which went on display this month for the first time since March 2009. — AFP

Recovering pope expected to delight crowds at Easter Sunday mass

POPE Francis is expected to deliver his Easter blessing at the Vatican on Sunday, just weeks after a life-threatening bout of pneumonia, in a rare Holy Week where the Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox calendars align.

Pope Francis is expected to delight Catholics all over the world during Easter celebrations at the Vatican on Sunday, just weeks after he was fighting for his life in hospital while suffering from pneumonia.

The ailing 88-year-old pontiff has been recovering from his health ordeal since leaving hospital on 23 March having spent 38 days receiving treatment. — AFP

Nepali royalists announce to break into restricted zone near parliament

NEPAL'S royalist party, the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), has announced to break into the restricted zone near the parliament as it calls for a protest on Sunday afternoon.

The RPP is staging a protest demanding the reinstatement of the monarchy and the release of their party leaders. "We are ready to be arrested by staging a demonstration in the restricted area. Rajendra Lingden is ready to be jailed," the party president Rajendra Lingden confirmed to ANI over the phone. The party is also planning to hold protest assemblies in all 77 districts on 22 April. Last week, the party president during the party's Executive Committee meeting had accused the government of infringing on citizens' fundamental rights by arbitrarily designating prohibited areas. "We are being pushed into a corner. That's why we've decided to protest in restricted zones," said Lingden. — ANI

Israeli PM says Hamas rejects deal to return half of living hostages

Hamas's demands included an end to the war and an Israeli military retreat from Gaza.



This handout picture released by the Israeli government press office (GPO) shows Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (centre) during a visit to the northern Gaza Strip, on 15 April 2025. **PHOTO: HANDOUT / GPO VIA AFP**

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Saturday evening that Hamas had rejected a proposal for the return of half of the living hostages in Gaza by demanding the end of the war and an Israeli military retreat from Gaza.

"If we capitulate to the dictates of Hamas now, all the great achievements of the war ... will disappear," said Netanyahu in a recorded video statement.

In the statement, the Israeli prime minister also dismissed the idea that Israel could deceive Hamas into freeing all the hostages and then resume the war, arguing that the international community would not accept such a move.

Earlier in the day, the Al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas, released a new video showing an Israeli hostage held in Gaza.

The four-minute video fea-

tures Israeli hostage Elkana Bohbot speaking on a landline phone, seemingly making a call to his family to continue their efforts for his release.

"My health is not good. I am screaming for death. Please, do this for me," he said at the end of the recording.

The Al-Qassam Brigades concluded the video with the message, "They will not return except in a capacity," in reference to the hostages. — Xinhua



Many demonstrators said they felt civil liberties were under threat. **PHOTO: AFP**

Thousands rally across US against Trump policies in renewed wave of protests

THOUSANDS of protestors across the United States rallied once again on Saturday (local time), voicing strong opposition to President Donald Trump's policies.

Nearly a fortnight after the first wave of demonstrations, protesters returned to the streets to express frustration over Trump's policies, including the imposition and threats of tar-

iffs, The New York Times reported.

However, turnout in cities like New York, Washington, and Chicago appeared smaller than the protests held on 5 April.

According to an organiser quoted by The New York Times, More than 700 events were planned nationwide, from Jacksonville, Fla., to Los Angeles.

Participants accused the president of trampling on civil liberties and the rule of law, citing concerns over immigration, federal job cuts, economic policies, and other issues.

The protestors gathered outside the White House, repeatedly chanting "shame!" to voice their dissatisfaction with the Trump administration. — ANI

SPORTS



South Korean Kim Si-woo eyes a shot on the way to the third-round lead in the US PGA Tour RBC Heritage. **PHOTO: AFP**

Kim takes one-shot lead over Thomas, Novak at RBC Heritage

SOUTH Korean Kim Si-woo fired a five-under par 66 on Saturday to seize a one-shot lead over two-time major champion Justin Thomas and Andrew Novak after 54 holes at the US PGA Tour's RBC Heritage in South Carolina.

Kim, a four-time PGA Tour winner, had six birdies through the first 15 holes, pushing his lead to as many as three before a bogey at the par-four 18th — where overnight leader Thomas birdied to pull within one.

"I played great," Kim said. "Only missed the last hole so that's not a big deal. I played pretty much 35 holes really decent, so I'm not going to worry about the last hole for tomorrow."

Kim — who says he's trying to use his failure to book a Masters berth for the first time since 2017 as motivation, had started the day two adrift and started motoring up the leaderboard with birdies at the first and second.

He added two more at the fifth and ninth — where he got up and down from a greenside bunker — and build his lead with birdies at 13 and 15 — where he rolled in a 19-foot putt that he called his most important shot of the day.

But he was poorly positioned in the 18th fairway, his second shot landing on the bank of the hazard. He fired out to six feet, but after Thomas drilled his 15-foot birdie putt Kim missed his par effort to finish with a 15-under par total of 198.

"I'm in a good position," Kim said. "I've been playing good. Especially iron play is really good for this week. Yeah, just one more day left."

Thomas, chasing his first victory since he won his second PGA Championship crown in 2022, had four birdies, but two back-nine bogeys had him three back before his birdie at the last saw him complete a two-under 69 to join Novak on 199. — AFP

De Bruyne 'surprised' over Man City exit

DE Bruyne has revealed he was "a bit surprised" to be told his glittering Manchester City career will finish at the end of this season.

De Bruyne recently announced he will leave the Etihad Stadium once the current campaign is over, bringing the curtain down on a memorable era in Manchester for the Belgian midfielder.

The 33-year-old arrived from German club Wolfsburg in 2015 and has been instrumental in City's incredible success during boss Pep Guardiola's reign.

De Bruyne has won six Premier League titles, two FA Cups, five League Cups and the 2023 Champions League — which capped an incredible treble-winning season.

Guardiola hinted it was his decision to end De Bruyne's stay after the playmaker's struggles with injuries and inconsistent form over the last two seasons.

City have dipped dramatically this term, surrendering their four-year spell



Manchester City midfielder Kevin De Bruyne. **PHOTO: AFP**

as champions and were reduced to focussing on the battle to qualify for the Champions League.

But De Bruyne admitted he was shocked not to receive a new contract offer because he believes he can still shine at the highest level.

"I have not had any offer the whole

year, they just took a decision," he said after City's 2-0 win at Everton on Saturday.

"Obviously, I was a bit surprised but I just have to accept it. Honestly I still think I can perform at this level like I'm showing but I understand clubs have to make decisions. — AFP

Figure skating: US holds on to win World Team Trophy, Japan 2nd

THE United States held on to its overnight lead and lifted the season-ending World Team Trophy in figure skating on Saturday as Japan finished second and Italy third.

Women's world champion Alysa Liu and her American compatriot, Amber Glenn, both produced flawless performances for a one-two finish in their free skate at Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium, where Japan's Riku Miura and

Ryuichi Kihara topped the pairs' free skate earlier to give the host a glimmer of hope of a turnaround.

The United States scored 126 points during the three-day competition, winning the biennial trophy for the second straight time and the sixth time overall. Japan registered 110 and bettered the third-place finishes from the past two occasions, while Italy scored 86 to take the last spot on the podium.

After missing out on her fourth straight world championship in March, Japan's Kaori Sakamoto finished third with 145.00 points, behind Liu and Glenn, who 150.97 and 148.93, respectively.

Sakamoto made no significant errors during her intense four-minute performance on the rink and had her knees on the ice after fulfilling her duty as Japan's captain. — Kyodo

Lewandowski injury confirmed in blow to Barca quadruple bid

BARCELONA'S Robert Lewandowski was diagnosed with a hamstring injury on Sunday and is set to miss

the Copa del Rey final and Champions League semi-final according to Spanish media reports.



Barcelona's Polish forward Robert Lewandowski leaves the pitch injured against Celta Vigo. **PHOTO: AFP**

The 36-year-old Polish forward, Barcelona's top goalscorer with 40 goals across all competitions, came off during his team's 4-3 La Liga win over Celta Vigo on Saturday.

"Tests carried out on Sunday have confirmed that first-team player Robert Lewandowski has a semi-tendinosus injury in his left thigh," said Barcelona in a statement, without specifying how long he would be sidelined for.

Spanish media reported Lewandowski could be out

for three weeks, meaning he would not be available next Saturday as Barcelona face Real Madrid in the Copa final in Seville.

The La Liga leaders also host Inter Milan on 30 April in the Champions League semi-final first leg, and visit the Italians on 6 May.

Lewandowski is set to miss league games against Mallorca on Tuesday and Valladolid on 3 May, with a potential return against Real Madrid on 11 May, a match which could decide the title race. — AFP

Israeli PM says Hamas
rejects deal to return
half of living hostages

PAGE 14



WORLD

China-ASEAN economic, trade cooperation in fast lane

Together, China and ASEAN are the world's second and fifth-largest economies, representing a quarter of the global population.

FROM bustling ports brimming with goods to digital arenas buzzing with new opportunities, China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are increasingly coming together in a partnership that promises common prosperity and a shared future filled with boundless potential.

Since establishing a dialogue relationship more than three decades ago, China and ASEAN have stood together and supported each other through thick and thin, developing a model featuring the most dynamic and fruitful cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region and the world.

As the world's second and fifth-largest economies, respectively, China and ASEAN represent a quarter of the global population, and their commitment to win-win cooperation could offer stability and growth for a world overshadowed by rising economic uncertainty and frag-



Aerial photo taken on 29 December 2021 shows the Thai-Chinese Rayong Industrial Zone. PHOTO: WANG TENG/XINHUA/FILE

mentation.

Malaysian fresh durians can reach Chinese consumers in just 24 hours, thanks to a fast logistics network and quick inspection processes. This fruit, known as the “king of fruits,” has seen a huge increase in demand in China, with imports reaching 1.56 million tonnes in 2024.

The strong trade relationship be-

tween China and ASEAN has flourished, with bilateral trade growing from under \$8 billion in 1991 to nearly \$1 trillion in 2024. The China-ASEAN Free Trade Area (CAFTA) has been crucial in enhancing trade and investment, and negotiations for an upgraded version are nearly complete.

In Thailand, the Thai-Chinese Rayong industrial zone has attracted over

\$5.2 billion in investment and created more than 60,000 jobs.

Cooperation in infrastructure, like the China-Laos Railway, has improved connectivity and reduced logistics costs. Emerging fields such as digital economy and clean energy are also fostering collaboration, with projects like electric vehicles and agricultural drones benefiting both regions. — Xinhua

Iran, US conclude second round of high-stakes nuclear talks in Rome



This combination of pictures created on 9 April 2025 shows US Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff after a meeting with Russian officials at Diriyah Palace, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on 18 February 2025 (left); and Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi speaking to AFP during an interview at the Iranian consulate in Jeddah on 7 March 2025. PHOTOS / AFP

THE United States and Iran on Saturday concluded a second round of high-stakes talks on Tehran's nuclear programme, with Iranian media saying the discussions took place in a “constructive atmosphere”.

The Oman-mediated talks in Rome began at around 0930 GMT and ended around four hours later, according to Iranian state television.

Images broadcast by the state TV showed Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arriving in the Italian capital, with US Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff also expected to participate.

Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said the delegations were “in two different rooms” at the Omani ambassador's residence, with Oman's Foreign Minister Badr Albusaidi passing messages between them. — AFP

RIISING COMMERCIAL PLANE PRICES

Tariffs could lift Boeing and Airbus plane prices even higher

COMMERCIAL plane prices, already lifted in recent years due to pandemic supply chain shocks, are poised to climb further as Boeing and Airbus are buffeted by trade tariffs.

“Compared with 2018, prices for commercial jets have risen by around 30 per cent,” an aviation expert told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The American and European aerospace giants have grappled with higher expenses for primary materials such as titanium, components and energy, as well as overall labor cost pressures. — AFP