

The
Global **NEW LIGHT** of **MYANMAR**

Four Objectives of the National Defence and Security Council

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

Tourism boosts jobs for NyaungU and Bagan communities

During the Christmas holidays, more than 200,000 local visitors arrived at the Bagan-NyaungU Ancient Cultural Heritage Area in NyaungU District, Mandalay Region, according to the Bagan Branch of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

The influx of visitors in the Bagan Ancient Cultural Heritage Zone has resulted in job development for some residents in Bagan-NyaungU Township.

In Bagan and NyaungU, people who make money from hiring ebikes and providing mini Oway service, horse carts, car rental service, restaurants, hand painting, Thanakha service and photo service, as well as local tour guides, have enjoyed more income.

Local tourist arrivals were distinctly large in Bagan during Christmas and the December holidays.

SEE PAGE 4

Holidaymakers were seen visiting Bagan-NyaungU.



Be Proud with "DAGON"

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STARMART MANDALAY Wholesale -Corner of 26th st and 66th st , Mandalay.Ph-09 661702244
STARMART Nay Pyi Taw -Yangon- Mandalay Highway Road, Ywar Gauk Ward, Pyinmanar.Ph- 09 685119077

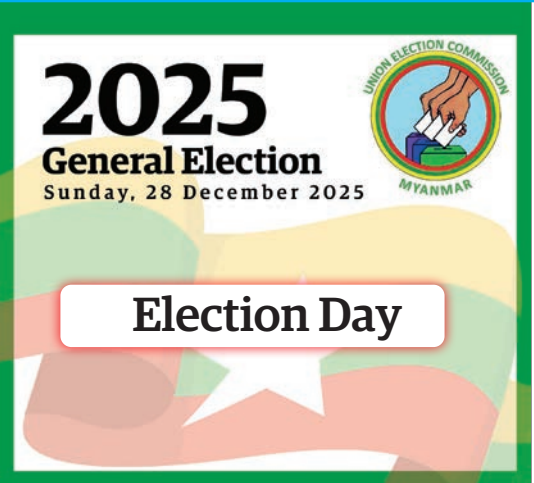
NATIONAL



2025 MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY GENERAL ELECTION

- Domestic election observers who wish to monitor the multiparty democratic general election, which will begin in phases on 28 December 2025, may apply for election observation permits at the Union Election Commission (UEC), as well as the relevant Region/State, District, and Township Election Subcommissions from today until 5 December 2025.
- The Union Election Commission announced on 16 September 2025 that domestic election observers must follow the Code of Conduct for Observers, issued under Notification 68/2025, and adhere to the procedures set out for their observation activities under Notification 69/2025. These notifications are available for viewing and can be downloaded from the Union Election Commission's official website <https://www.uec.gov.mm>.
- The Union Election Commission has also announced that international election observers will be allowed to monitor the multiparty democratic general election. Invitations will be extended directly to representatives of relevant countries and international organizations. In addition, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, invitations will be sent to representatives of foreign embassies, consulates, and permanent missions that maintain diplomatic relations with the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Union Election Commission



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

Four National Objectives for 78th Independence Day 2026

1. To safeguard the non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty by all citizens, as they are the most essential and suitable national objectives and national duties
2. To strive forward for national unity and Union peace to implement sustainable and balanced development
3. To establish a genuine, disciplined democratic system completely by exercising the freedom and justice in accordance with the laws and regulations
4. To advance other economic sectors and promote MSMEs based on regional products

BE Falls marks 3M visitors with special celebration



The three millionth visitor is seen along with other visitors at BE Falls Resort in PyinOoLwin, with commemorative gifts being offered to her.

BE Falls Pwekauk Waterfall Resort, located near the PyinOoLwin-Lashio highway, has recorded a milestone of three million visitors since its opening, resort officials said.

The international-standard resort, which opened in

December 2021, has attracted a steady flow of visitors from across the country. The three-millionth visitor was Daw Khin Mar Lwin from Taikkyi Township, Yangon Region.

To mark the occasion, BE Falls officials presented her

with commemorative gifts, including flower bouquets, a cash bouquet worth K500,000, a trophy, a one-year free entry Gold Card, and souvenir items. Her accompanying family members were also granted free access to the resort and

Glass Bridge, complimentary Sky Cable Car rides, and buggy tours.

BE Falls management said the resort continues to prioritize visitor safety, comfort, and enjoyment by strengthening security measures, preparing

for natural disaster response, and carrying out continuous upgrades. The resort aims to further enhance its services in line with international leisure destinations to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for all visitors. — MNA/KZL

NATIONAL

Call for Unity, Steadfastness
Amid Attempts To Divide

All citizens must stand orderly and united through thick and thin. We must never lose sight of our main goal and persevere it without deviation regardless of any attempt by the detractors to divide, incite and provoke us.

(Excerpt from the speech delivered by General Aung San at 7:40 pm on 1 January 1947)



NDSC Office Executive Chief receives
Nicaraguan Ambassador

NATIONAL Defence and Security Council Office Executive Chief U Aung Lin Dwe received the Ambassador of the Republic of Nicaragua to Myanmar Mr Mario Jose Armengol Campos, who is based in Hanoi at the guest hall of the National Defence and Security Council Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Both sides held cordial and

open discussions on further strengthening bilateral friendship and diplomatic relations, expanding cooperation across multiple sectors, including trade and investment, and accelerating positive cooperation at the international level.

The meeting also saw Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Ko Ko Kyaw and officials concerned. — MNA/KZL



National Defence and Security Council Office Executive Chief U Aung Lin Dwe meets Nicaraguan Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Mario Jose Armengol Campos in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

MoFA Union Minister receives Chinese Special Envoy for Asian Affairs

UNION Minister for Foreign Affairs U Than Swe received Special Envoy for Asian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China Mr Deng Xijun at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The discussion focused on further enhancement of the existing Pauk-Phaw relation, building a community of shared future between the two countries, and accelerating mutually beneficial cooperation. In addition, they discussed continued cooperation for maintaining peace and stability along the Myanmar-China border; the current developments on the peace process and national



reconciliation, the continued constructive support of China on the efforts of Myanmar to achieve lasting peace and socioeconomic development for its people, and to continue cooperation in combating online scamming and other illegal activities in border areas. Both sides reaffirmed their mutual support at the regional and multilateral levels and exchanged views on matters of mutual interest. — MNA

Union Minister U Than Swe meets Special Envoy for Asian Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China Mr Deng Xijun in Nay Pyi Taw on 27 December 2025.

NATIONAL

Residents Urged to Prioritize Public Safety Amid Armed Terrorist Threats

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

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

UEC Chairman receives Russian CEC member

UNION Election Commission Chairman U Than Soe received Mr Igor Borisov, a member of the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, yesterday at the Bagan Hall of the Jasmine Nay Pyi Taw Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, the Russian Central Election Commission member expressed Russia's belief that Myanmar can hold a successful election and conveyed his special gratitude for the invitation to observe the election.

The Union Election Commission chairman then stated that Myanmar and Russia have enjoyed 77 years of diplomatic relations since 1948 and expressed special gratitude to the government and people of

the Russian Federation for the friendship between the leaders of the two countries, Russia's continuous support, the systematic implementation of democratic standards through laws and regulations to hold free and fair elections, and the participation of international election observers.

The two sides discussed the status of international and local media access to news, cooperation between the two election commissions through the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU), plans for election observation, and measures taken to ensure the successful conduct of the election, and exchanged views on future cooperation in a friendly and open manner, followed by an exchange of souve-



Union Election Commission Chairman U Than Soe meets Member of the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation Mr Igor Borisov in the Jasmine Nay Pyi Taw Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

nirs.

The meeting was also at-

tended by Union Election Commission Member U Myo Hlaing,

and officials from the commission office. — MNA/MKKS

UEC specifies areas not covered in election's Phase III

THE Union Election Commission of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar issued eight announcements from 172/2025 to 179/2025 under Section 10 (f) of the Union Election Commission Law on 27 December 2025.

These announcements stated that, as there is no situation to hold the free and fair election, the list of areas where Phase III of the election will not be held on 25 January 2026 has been released.

These areas are some wards and village-tracts of Bhamo, Mansi, Momauk, Shwegu and Phakant townships in Kachin

State; Kawkareik and Kya-in-Seikkyi townships in Kayin State; Kani and Salingyi townships in Sagaing Region; Launglon, Thayetchaung and Palaw townships in Taninthayi Region; Kyaukkyi, Kyauktaga, Pyu, Ottwin, Thaegon, Waw, Gyobingauk and Okpo townships in Bago Region; Ngazun, Mahlaing, Taungtha, Myingyan and Thabeikkyin townships in Mandalay Region; Metmung, Pekhon, Kyaukme and Hsipaw townships in Shan State; and Yekyi and Lemyethna townships in Ayeyawady Region. — GNLM/TTA

Tourism boosts jobs ...

FROM PAGE 1

"Most visited tourist destinations in Bagan-NyaungU are Swetaw Thonezu (three Buddha tooth relic pagodas), Tantkyitaung Swetaw Pagoda, Maha Hngetpyittaung Pagoda, Htilominlo Pagoda, Ananda Temple, Mahabodhi Temple, Bupaya, Gawdawpalin Temple, Khayminga Pagoda compound, Thakypone Pagoda, Shwe Late-tu Pagoda, Thatbyinnyu Pagoda, Ngakywenadaung Pagoda, Pah-tothamya Temple, Sinmyashin Temple, Manuha Temple, Dhammayazika Pagoda, Shin Izza Gaw-na Temple, Dhammayangyi Tem-

ple and Sulamuni Pagoda," said a mini Oway driver.

In Bagan-NyaungU, the visitor arrival hasn't stopped, even though it is not a festive season, and almost all hotels and guesthouses are now occupied by loads of December vacationers, with many day trippers and pilgrims.

During the Christmas holidays, the local visitor arrival has reached more than 200,000 at Bagan-NyaungU ancient cultural area in Mandalay Region's NyaungU District, according to the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism, Bagan Branch. — Htun Htun/ZS

Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

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

NATIONAL

General Aung San Declares Firm Stand Against Election Disruption

“Our Government shall not permit any disruption of the forthcoming election. The electoral process shall remain free and fair, and no interference shall be exercised upon those who participate in it. Yet, let it be firmly declared that any attempt to disturb or sabotage the election shall be met with the full weight of authority”.

(An excerpt from the radio address regarding the election, delivered by General Aung San on 13 March 1947)



UEC Chairman leads briefing session for international election observers

A ceremony to make a welcome address by the Chairman of the Union Election Commission and a briefing session for international election observers were held at the Jasmine Nay Pyi Taw hotel yesterday.

It was attended by Union Election Commission Chairman U Than Soe, commission member U Myo Hlaing, deputy ministers, international election observers from Russia, China, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Cambodia, Vietnam, Nicaragua, India, and Myanmar-Japan Assosiation.

Speaking at the event, the UEC Chairman said Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, paid working visits to China, Russia and Kazakhstan and met with the leaders of these countries. During the meeting, the Senior General received constructive support for the successful holding of the election, and he also engaged in broad discussions regarding the participation of international election observation missions.

The UEC Chairman also added that the presence at the event today as international observers reflects the international community’s support for Myanmar’s commitment to hold the elections in a free, fair, transparent, and credible manner. It is also a time for the voters to apply their fundamental right to vote and to help determine the future path of the nation.

He then briefed the event with three parts, saying the first part was the electoral system. he added that since the adoption of the 2008 Constitution, Myanmar held three general elections and



Union Election Commission officials demonstrate the use of MEVMs to international election observers during the welcome briefing in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

three interim elections with First Past the Post (FPTP System) for three Hluttaws. But now, the FPTP system will be adopted for Pyithu Hluttaw, while the Mixed Member Proportional System (MMP) for Amyotha Hluttaw and Region or State Hluttaw.

The MMP system combines two different electoral methods- FPTP and Proportional Representation (PR). Under an FPTP system, the majority of seats tend to go to the largest parties with the most votes. By integrating PR, smaller parties will also receive seats proportional to their vote share, allowing them to be represented in the Hluttaw. In other words, the good points of FPTP and the benefits of PR will be received.

The second point is the voting system. In this election, except for advance voting, polling stations will use the Myanmar Electronic Voting Machine (MEVM). The Myanmar experts developed the MEVMs to be

suitable for the country after studying international voting technologies. Using MEVMs offers several benefits, such as saving voting time, elimination of invalid ballots, and faster result announcements, and there would be no voting fraud. The machines are designed to prevent tampering, and they are also safe as they contain no USB ports, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, or internet connectivity.

Braille-enabled MEVM has been developed to allow visually impaired voters to cast their ballots in secrecy. Voters with physical, visual, or hearing impairments may vote independently or with the assistance of a person of their choosing. The MEVM has been certified by the Myanmar National Standards Council for its quality and compliance.

He continued that the third point is holding elections in phases. In previous elections, the election day was designated as

a nationwide public holiday, and the election was held across the country on that one day. For this upcoming election, to carry out the security and management activities effectively, the election will be conducted in three phases- Phase I with 102 townships on 28 December 2025, Phase II with 100 townships on 11 January 2026 and Phase III with 63 townships on 25 January 2026.

The commission systematically worked with the Ministry of Immigration and Population and the General Administrative Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs to ensure the perfect and accurate voter lists. The local experts developed the Central Voter List Management System (CVLMS) and Admin, as well as DEO Software, to prevent duplication of voters. The voter lists are also displayed three times. In order to ensure the participation of all citizens, awareness-raising activities were carried out for

first-time young voters, temporarily displaced persons, and persons with disabilities, and amendments and supplementary measures were made to election-related laws, rules, and procedures.

He added that for the upcoming election, there are 57 political parties and 4,863 candidates will compete in it. The equal campaigning rights were granted to all political parties and Hluttaw candidates in accordance with the relevant laws and rules. There are a total of 21,517 polling stations across the nation, and each polling station is staffed with systematically trained polling officers and members. Arrangements have been made at polling stations to ensure that voters can cast their votes freely, transparently, conveniently, and with ease. To ensure the safety and security of voters, candidates, and election officials, the relevant ministries responsible for security are carrying out necessary measures to maintain protection and prevent risks. The government has also enacted a Law on the Protection of Multiparty Democratic General Elections from Obstruction, Disruption, and Destruction, prescribing effective offences and penalties, and has taken measures to ensure the security of all participants in the election process.

He then expressed gratitude to the attendees and observers, and the UEC officials demonstrated the use of MEVMs.

In the evening, the international election observers visited Maravijaya Buddha Image, Up-patasanti Pagoda and Maniyadana Jade Hall. — MNA/KTZH

NATIONAL

Announcement of Constituencies, Wards, and Village-tracts Where Elections Will Not Be Held

Nay Pyi Taw
27 December 2025

1. The Union Election Commission announced the list of 102 townships participating in Phase I of the Multiparty Democratic General Election to be held on 28 December 2025, through Announcement 56/2025 dated 20 August 2025. The list of 100 townships participating in Phase II was announced on 28 October 2025 by Announcement No 141/2025. In addition, the list of 121 constituencies (across 56 townships) of various Hluttaw that do not meet the conditions for holding free and fair elections was announced on 14 September 2025 through Announcement No 103/2025. The list of 63 townships participating in Phase III of the election was announced on 25 December 2025 by Announcement No 170/2025.
2. On 27 December 2025, the Union Election Commission announced that 20 constituencies across nine townships of each Hluttaw are not in a position to hold free and fair elections and that 62 wards and 1,002 village-tracts, totalling 1,064, in the townships where Phase III of the election will be held are unable to conduct elections, with the announcements to be published in daily newspapers and on the Union Election Commission’s website www.uec.gov.mm.

Union Election Commission

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Union Election Commission
Announcement 171/2025

9th Waxing of Pyatho 1378 ME
27 December 2025

Announcement of the list of Pyithu Hluttaw constituencies, Amyotha Hluttaw FPTP constituencies and Region or State FPTP constituencies where the election will not be held

1. The elections will not be held in nine constituencies of the Pyithu Hluttaw, two constituencies of the Amyotha Hluttaw under the First-Past-the-Post (FPTP) system and nine constituencies of Region or State Hluttaw under the FPTP system without the proper condition to hold the free and fair multiparty democratic general election which will start on 28 December 2025 under Section 10 (f) of the Union Election Commission Law. These constituencies are as follows: -

(A) Nine constituencies of the Pyithu Hluttaw where the elections will not be held

No	Constituency	Designated Area
	Chin State	
(1)	Tonzang Township Pyithu Hluttaw constituency	Entire Tonzang Township
(2)	Falam Township Pyithu Hluttaw constituency	Entire Falam Township
(3)	Thantlang Township Pyithu Hluttaw constituency	Entire Thantlang Township
	Sagaing Region	
(4)	Kawlin Township Pyithu Hluttaw constituency	Entire Kawlin Township
(5)	Bamauk Township Pyithu Hluttaw constituency	Entire Bamauk Township
	Rakhine State	
(6)	An Township Pyithu Hluttaw constituency	Entire An Township
(7)	Thandwe Township Pyithu Hluttaw constituency	Entire Thandwe Township
(8)	Gwa Township Pyithu Hluttaw constituency	Entire Gwa Township
(9)	Taungup Township Pyithu Hluttaw constituency	Entire Taungup Township

(B) Two constituencies of the Amyotha Hluttaw under the FPTP system, where the elections will not be held

No	Constituency	Designated Area
	Chin State Amyotha Hluttaw (FPTP System)	
(1)	No 3 Constituency	Entire Falam District

	Rakhine State Amyotha Hluttaw (FPTP System)	
(2)	No 6 Constituency	Entire An District

(C) Nine constituencies of the Region or State Hluttaw under the FPTP system where the elections will not be held

No	Constituency	Designated Area
	Chin State Hluttaw (FPTP System)	
(1)	Tonzang Township constituency	Entire Tonzang Township
(2)	Falam Township constituency	Entire Falam Township
(3)	Thantlang Township constituency	Entire Thantlang Township
	Sagaing Region Hluttaw (FPTP System)	
(4)	Kawlin Township constituency	Entire Kawlin Township
(5)	Bamauk Township constituency	Entire Bamauk Township
	Rakhine State Hluttaw (FPTP System)	
(6)	An Township constituency	Entire An Township
(7)	Thandwe Township constituency	Entire Thandwe Township
(8)	Gwa Township constituency	Entire Gwa Township
(9)	Taungup Township constituency	Entire Taungup Township

2. As such, the multiparty democratic general election will be held on 28 December 2025 for 265 constituencies of the Pyithu Hluttaw, 73 constituencies under the FPTP system and 26 constituencies under the Proportional Representation (PR) system of the Amyotha Hluttaw, and 257 constituencies under FPTP system and 42 constituencies under PR system of Region or State Hluttaw, and 29 ethnic constituencies of the Region or State Hluttaw.

Sd/Than Soe
Chairman
Union Election Commission

NATIONAL

Educated human resources must drive development efforts

❖ It is necessary to have an abundant and capable pool of human resources who can serve the duties for regional development. The educated and skilled individuals emerging from the region must be capable of actively promoting progress in the social, economic, administrative, and agricultural sectors of the relevant regions.

(An excerpt from the speech delivered by State Administration Council Chairman, Prime Minister, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with state-level departmental officials and town elders in Kengtung of Shan State (East) to talk about regional development measures on 24 May 2025)

Weekly Roundup

21 December

Head of State meets residents in Minbu

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing held a meeting with departmental officials, town elders, and businesspersons of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) at Minbu U Obhasa Hall of Sasana Beikman in Minbu to discuss regional development measures.

Head of State visits Shwehsandaw Pagoda in Pyay

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing paid homage to Shwehsandaw Pagoda in Pyay, Bago Region.

22 December

Head of State discusses regional development in Pyay

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered a speech at a meeting with departmental officials, town elders, and businesspersons of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) from Pyay District at Thiri Khittaya Yadana City Hall in Pyay and discussed regional

development measures.

Defence Services C-in-C meets Tatmadaw members in Pyay

Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission and Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing met Tatmadaw members and families at Mya Ayeya Hall in Pyay Station under the Southern Command.

24 December

Head of State enjoys Christmas thanksgiving and fellowship luncheon

A Christmas thanksgiving and fellowship luncheon ceremony, organized by federations of Christian churches in Myanmar, was held at Saint Mary's Cathedral Catholic Church in Botahtaung Township, Yangon Region. The event was attended by Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and State Security and Peace Commission Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

25 December

Energy Museum opens at Thanlyin Refinery

An Energy Museum was officially opened, in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the Ministry of Energy and the centenary of the Thanlyin Oil Refinery, at the Thanlyin Oil Refinery compound in Thanlyin Township, Yangon Region. The museum was inaugurated personally by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Acting

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission.

Head of State attends commemorative ceremonies

Acting President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended the 40th Ruby Jubilee of the Ministry of Energy, the 100th anniversary of the Thanlyin Oil Refinery, and the opening ceremony of the Energy Museum, which were held at the No 1 Oil Refinery (Thanlyin) in Thanlyin, Yangon Region.

Defence Services C-in-C joins 78th Navy Day

Chairman of the State Security and Peace Commission and Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended the ceremony to mark the 78th Anniversary of Tatmadaw (Navy) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at Thiri Maha Zeya Kyaw Htin Hall of the Naval Training Command Headquarters in Thanlyin Station.

26 December

UEC issues announcement 170/2025

The Union Election Commission issued Announcement 170/2025 to hold the third phase of the Multiparty Democratic General Election on the 8th waxing of Tabodwe 1387 ME (Sunday, 25 January 2026). A total of 63 townships will participate in this phase, as designated and announced according to the attached table, organized by Region/State. — GNLMT/TTA

International election observers for 2025 Multiparty Democratic General Election arrive at Nay Pyi Taw



International election observers are seen being welcomed by officials at the Nay Pyi Taw Airport yesterday.

INTERNATIONAL election observers for the 2025 Multiparty Democratic General Election, to be held on 28 December 2025, arrived in Nay Pyi Taw by air at 11:00 am yesterday. They were welcomed at Nay Pyi Taw Airport by Union Election Commission Member U Myo Hlaing, Nay Pyi Taw Council Member Col Ye Moe, chairman and members of the Union Territory and District Election Subcommissions, officials from the Union Election Commission, and departmental officials.

The delegation that arrived in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday included a delegation led by Mr Sholban Kara-Ool, Deputy Chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation; a delegation led by Mr Igor Borisov, Member of the Central Election

Commission of the Russian Federation; a delegation led by Mr Deng Xi Jun, Special Envoy for Asia Affairs of the People's Republic of China; a delegation led by Mr Yerman Mukhtar, Deputy Chairman of the Election Commission of Kazakhstan; a delegation led by Mr Yich Samethy, Member of the Election Commission of Cambodia; a delegation led by Mr Nguyen Duc Thinh, Head of International Relations of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam; a delegation led by retired Indian General Mr Arun Kumar Sahni; a delegation led by Mr Alexei Bashan, Deputy Chairman of the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Belarus; and a delegation led by Mr Mario Jose Armengol Campos from Nicaragua. — MNA/MKKS

Create a better future through elections

THE multiparty democratic general election starts its phase I on 28 December 2025 as part of opening the new chapter of Myanmar’s political landscape. The Union Election Commission has announced that the first phase of the election will be held in 102 townships on 28 December 2025, the second phase in 100 townships on 11 January 2026, and the third phase in 63 townships on 25 January 2026.

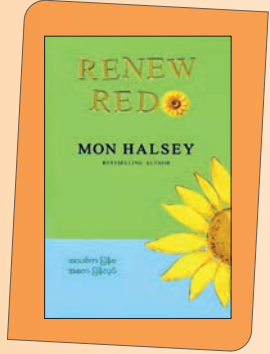
More than 5,000 candidates from 57 political parties will participate in the elections for an estimated 950 seats in three types of Hluttaw, such as the Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House), Amyotha Hluttaw (Upper House), and State and Region Hluttaws. The Union Election Commission has announced that the Mixed-Member Proportional (MMP) system, including First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) and Proportional Representation (PR) systems, will be exercised to elect candidates for the Amyotha Hluttaw and State and Region Hluttaws. Moreover, the First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) electoral system will be used for the Pyithu Hluttaw and ethnic constituencies.

Building a disciplined, stable, and strong democratic nation is both a matter of national responsibility and political engagement. All citizens must participate in national affairs, collectively shaping a political path that prioritizes the interests of the state. Therefore, understanding the distinction between politics and national matters is crucial. In the upcoming election, it is essential that voters make informed choices and that all citizens included in the voter list, who support the multiparty democratic system promoted by the state, cast their votes.

lots, prevent any irregularities in voting, and ensure all required arrangements are in place.

Building a disciplined, stable, and strong democratic nation is both a matter of national responsibility and political engagement. All citizens must participate in national affairs, collectively shaping a political path that prioritizes the interests of the state. Therefore, understanding the distinction between politics and national matters is crucial. In the upcoming election, it is essential that voters make informed choices and that all citizens included in the voter list, who support the multiparty democratic system promoted by the state, cast their votes.

In fact, the election will serve as a bridge for the people of Myanmar to reach a prosperous future. People have to create their own fortune through their own strength. That is why everyone needs to keep a motto: “The strength of the nation lies within” in mind for their better future.



Book Title - Renew Redo

Author - Mon Halsey

Publishing House - Pann Satt Lann

Publication Date - November 2025 (Upgraded Version)

Price - K15,000

RENEW REDO

THIS week, we bring a book that is published as an X-Mas & New Year Special Edition. The author also said, “This book, Renew Redo, is intended for those who want to transform themselves and take on new challenges at the beginning of the coming 2026 New Year. It is truly a beneficial book, and I would sincerely recommend that readers read it.”

As the final month of the year arrives, many young people and adults usually enter a period in which they make advance plans, saying what they will do and what they will change in the coming year. However, for those who are weak in self-reflection, they often feel lost and unsure about what they should actually do. For one’s precious future, it is an important vision to decide what should be restarted a new and what should be redone from the beginning.

This book by bestselling author Sayama Mon Halsey, which has been reprinted many times, is a work that shares guidance on letting go of unnecessary things and confusing things from daily life and starting something new.

Regarding this book, the writer states... when something comes to an end, the powers to Renew and to Redo often exist like hidden secrets. However, many people are unaware of these hidden secrets in life. Although we cannot change the past that has already ended, we can revive our minds anew. We can rebuild our life path.

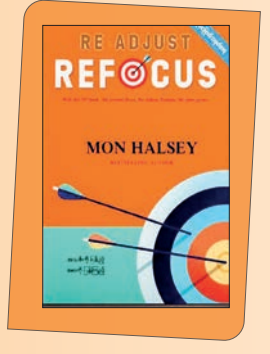
In the preface, it reads that

the book is intended as a guide-book in which readers read one of the 30 passages each day and practice changing their mindset. The book includes many practices introduced by the writer that are simple for anyone, regardless of race, religion, or social status. She advises readers to practice the exercises little by little each day, emphasizing that if they consistently follow and put them into practice, they will begin to see real changes.

Moreover, she added that... no one is perfect. Things do not always go smoothly. We are incomplete and have needs. Instead of thinking, ‘Why does this always happen to me?’ we should accept that life often requires us to keep going even when we are unhappy.

With the mindset of doing our best, we must move on with our mindset and life. Without purpose and direction, life becomes meaningless. Sometimes, behind what looks like strength, there are moments when we collapse so deeply that we no longer want to get back up, want to stop, want to rest, or want to cry our hearts out. At the end of it all, we feel like giving up completely. In reality, these are the mental fatigue, anxiety, and stress that almost everyone experiences in life. If we can be content with what we already have, appreciate its value, and let go of constant worry, then instead of looking back at the past, we can focus on doing our best in the present. This is one of our key points for moving forward.

In conclusion, if readers can express gratitude and appreciate even the smallest things in life, they will learn to live more lightly and peacefully amid the hardships. It is the secret of happiness and the secret of true prosperity. With 132 pages, Renew Redo is a book that introduces 30 days of practices for renewal and rebuilding. It also includes practical exercises and reflection prompts that help readers connect more deeply with their inner selves.



Book Title - Re-adjust Refocus

Author - Mon Halsey

Publishing House - Pann Satt Lann

Publication Date - November 2025 (Upgraded Version)

Price - K17,000

Re-adjust Refocus

RE-ADJUST Refocus is the 30th book of the bestselling author Mon Halsey and the revised and updated edition of Renew Redo. Renew, Redo sheds light on actions focused on making changes, in which Renew implies restoring something to a better state, and Redo means to do something from scratch. This book guides reflection practices and encourages readers to participate in journaling challenges and self-reflection prompts to unlock full potential and create positive change in their lives. This “Re-adjust Refocus” book illustrates how to realign and revise oneself.

This book will lead one not to dwell on the past and to start a new chapter without regret, resetting oneself after a difficult year. The book contains try-on activities and self-reflection prompts to validate one’s feelings, shape resilience and identify areas for growth. Furthermore, psychological perspectives are incorporated into the book for those interested in coaching, making the content beneficial for readers.

As the new year is drawing near, this book will help one get rid of negative feelings, unhelpful emotional ties and past events and allow one to

refocus on what truly matters in life. This book is like a companion or a good friend that stays with you every day by helping you achieve inner peace, serenity, mind control, emotional alignment and life balance for the new year.

Excerpt from the book’s contents: “Reclaim your time before it is taken away”. Reclaiming your time is not selfish, and it is a necessary act. This self-awareness comes from realizing how limited and precious the days in your life are. One does not need to schedule their time. If you do not control your time, someone else will. Respect your

time, or no one else will. If you do not manage and protect your time, someone else will fill it with their own priorities. Would you really give away your precious time for things you don’t truly want to do?

The author explains how to undertake a “14-Day Social Media Detox Challenge”, which is described in detail in the book. These are not mere audiobook readings but feel like having a cheerful, light-hearted friend by your side, sharing daily lessons. Listening to these podcasts alongside doing the book’s “Try on Activities” and “Self-Reflection” exercises creates a more cohesive and impactful experience.

The author recommended a 30-day podcast series available on YouTube to listen to at 6 am. Those two books will help you let go of stress and unwanted feelings and make room for desired things in the new year. This book will act as a supportive companion on a healing journey. It is not a binge-read book. You can return to it whenever your life is in chaos in order to re-adjust and refocus time.



Take care of yourself to have a good life

By Mya Thae (Research)

If you love yourself.
Take care to do good for your health.
If you are healthy, you can carry out good deeds.
Good deeds can give you good needs.
Besides, avoid doing evil things and observe the Five Precepts.
So, our lives bloom with colour, and our luck is refreshed.

The Living Roots of Healing Light

By Min Min Zan



From ancient roots where wisdom grew,
Through ages past to futures new,
Traditional arts of healing stay,
To guard the health of people’s way.

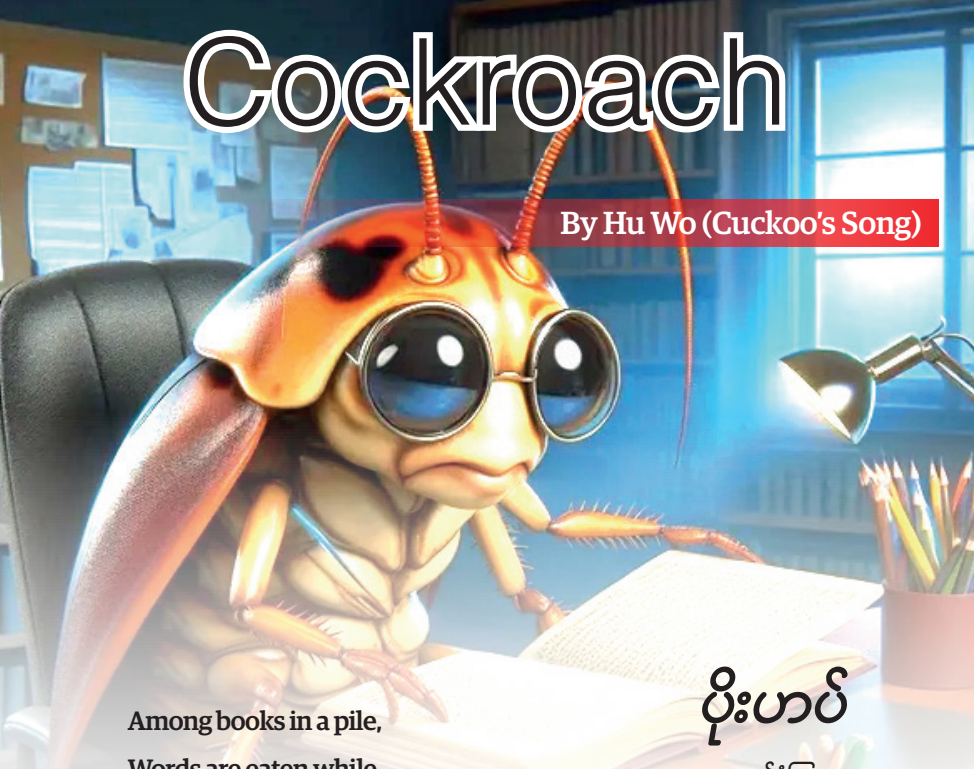
Year after year, the healers meet,
With shared resolve and purpose sweet,
To learn, to teach, to guard, restore,
The knowledge handed down before.

With herbs and skills from land and stream,
They blend tradition, modern dream,
For stronger care and wiser sight,
To heal with balance, truth, and light.

Through learning halls and studies deep,
The nation vows this trust to keep,
New scholars rise, well-trained, refined,
To serve the health of all mankind.

So may the people live made whole,
In a body strong and peaceful soul,
By native cures and mindful care,
A healthy future, just and fair.

“Honouring Traditional Medicine and Traditional Medical Practitioners ...”



Cockroach

By Hu Wo (Cuckoo's Song)

Among books in a pile,
Words are eaten while
He is illiterate to its entire.

ပိုးဟပ်
စာအုပ်ပုံကြား
စာတွေစားပြီး
သူကား ဘာမှမတတ်ချေ။

Hu Wo (Cuckoo's Song)
14 December 2025

မောင်ခင်မင်(ခန့်ဖြူ)

NATIONAL Entertainment

Miss Myint Myat Moe

THE person who competed excellently at the Miss Cosmo international pageant held in Vietnam and achieved Myanmar's first-ever good placement by winning Miss Cosmo 2025 Top 5 is Myanmar's representative beauty queen, Miss Cosmo Myanmar Myint Myat Moe. She returned to Myanmar at 11 pm on 23 December, and her homecoming was warmly welcomed at Yangon International Airport by National Director Htoo Ent Lwin and beauty queen Thae Su Nyein.

May

ACTRESS and singer May has announced that she will be present at the Yangon Social 2026 New Year Countdown event to welcome the New Year together with her fans and create unforgettable moments. The event will be held on 31 December at the Yangon Social Outdoor Area, located at 37 (B), U Tun Nyein Street, Inya Lake Garden Compound, Mayangon Township, Yangon. At this event, singers Sai Sai Kham Leng, Snare, Bambino, and May will sing many songs for their fans.

CELEBRITY BRIEF



May Sweet

VETERAN singer May Sweet has also said that she will be present at the Mystery Countdown 2026 event. This event will be held at 7:30 pm on 31 December at the Amarapura Grand Ballroom (Level 3) in the Wyndham Grand Yangon Hotel. At the event, May Sweet will perform together with Chit Kaung, Ye' Lay, Mi Sandi, and Lar Dint Htar Yi, accompanied by the Runet Band, with the performances by Diamond dancers.

Phyo Gyi

SINGER Phyo Gyi, who has been gradually reappearing on concert stages, said that on New Year's Night, 31 December, he will be present at the Myanmar Countdown 2026 event to be held at Wunna Theikdi Stadium (1 and 2) in Nay Pyi Taw. At this event, Phyo Gyi will perform together with Yair Yint Aung, JFire, (A-Z Order) 3,



Nyi Nanda

IN the film 'Myit Lat Tet Pay Mae Yay Si Ka Kyan Tal', which features distinctive characters, actor Nyi Nanda plays the role of Mommy Aung, a gay (medium) character, alongside actor Nay Toe. At the film's special premiere, Nyi Nanda attended the event dressed exactly like his character in the film, appearing in full female attire. Regarding this, Nyi Nanda told the media, "The main reason is that I really value the character Mommy Aung. That's why I put in so much effort and preparation. For men, attending an event is usually quick, just putting on some clothes, and it's done. They only need about half an hour or an hour to get ready. But this time, it required a lot of preparations like outfits that took two or three days to prepare, shoes and everything else. It was very tiring, but in the end, it made me happy. I want people to know that we have worked hard and put in real effort." — Htun Htun/KTZH

Myo Gyi

ROCK singer Myo Gyi, together with Wai Wine, will perform with the Iron Cross Band at a music concert held on 28 December at Wunna Theikdi Stadium (1 and 2) in Nay Pyi Taw in commemoration of the Myanmar Countdown 2026. After that performance, Chan Myae Maung Cho and Wai La will sing together with the Mercury IX Band, and GLatt will perform together with the Sheeno Band.



Azalea Dancer Group, Ice Cold, Junior Chit Kaung, Khine Mye Thitsa, and Nay Naw.



Rangoon Downtown gears up for New Year Countdown at The Secretariat

THE Rangoon Downtown New Year Lifestyle Countdown Festival, featuring prominent singers, will be held on the night of 31 December at The Secretariat Yangon, located in Botahtaung Township, Yangon Region, according to singer Bunny Phyoe.

At the Rangoon Downtown New Year Lifestyle Countdown Festival, which will take place on the night of 31 December at The Secretariat, Yangon, the participating singers will include academy Sai Sai Kham Leng, Ye' Lay, Ar-T, Ni Ni Khin Zaw, Bunny Phyoe, and Bobby Soxer.

"For Yangon audiences who are ready to welcome the New Year with the most grand and unforgettable memories by counting down together with us at the Rangoon Downtown New Year Lifestyle

Countdown Festival 2026, Altitude Entertainment Group will organize this lively event on 31 December within the compound of The Secretariat, Yangon. We warmly invite everyone who wants to spend New Year's night as an unforgettable memory to come and join us," said Bunny Phyoe.

The Rangoon Downtown New Year Lifestyle Countdown Festival, which will feature many of the most famous artists, will include not only live music performances but also fun game activities. In addition, a well-arranged food court with a wide variety of food will be provided for attendees. The festival programme will officially begin at 6:30 pm, while entry to The Secretariat Yangon, the festival venue, will be open from 4 pm. — ASH/KTZH



NATIONAL

Preparatory meetings held, polling stations inspected for 2025 General Election

TO ensure the successful holding of the 2025 multiparty democratic general election, the coordination meetings were held at the meeting halls of the Kachin State government office, North-East Command, and the relevant regions and states' chief ministers, regions, states, districts, townships' levels election commissions members and departmental officials attended the meetings.

The region and state chief ministers and commanders made remarks respectively, and the departmental officials reported on their tasks for the electoral processes.

The region and state chief ministers, commanders and officials inspected the polling stations in Myitkyina Township

in Kachin Sate, Lashio Township in Shan State (North), Taunggyi, Kholang, Namhsan, Loilem, Panglong and Langkho of Shan State (South), Kengtung Township in Shan State (East), Myeik Township in Taninthayi Region, Mayangon, Hmawby and Taikkyi townships in Yangon Region, Monywa Township in Sagaing Region, Pyay and Shwetaung townships in Bago Region to inspect the preparations, voter lists display, installation of voting machines, transport system and health-care for voters, fire safety and security measures.

The heads of the polling stations explained the preparations to cast votes with MEVMs, and the officials provided proper instructions. — MNA/KTZH



Kachin State Chief Minister U Khet Htein Nan inspects the pooling station in Kachin State yesterday.

Myawady dismantles 509 more online scam hub buildings

THE government continues to conduct joint operations in the Shwe Kokko and the KK Park areas, where suspects commit telecom fraud and online gambling activities. The combined teams comprising security personnel and administrative bodies are involved in these operations, which include entering the areas, dismantling and removing illegal buildings, and taking further action in accordance with the law.

Yesterday, the authorities demolished three four-storey illegal buildings and two two-storey buildings in Section 3 of KK Park, and a total of 509 buildings out of 635 illegal buildings have so far been demolished in the KK Park area.

To destroy the illegal buildings within the KK Park area, these buildings were demolished using machinery and explosive devices starting from 14 December, and as of today, 61 buildings have been destroyed.



These photos reveal the illegally built two-storey flats destroyed in the KK Park Section 3, Myawady Township, Kayin State.

online scams and gambling activities in KK Park and Shwe Kokko areas, the seized materials were incinerated systematically.

The government considers the eradication of telecom fraud and online gambling crimes as a national responsibility and, to ensure that such activities can no longer operate within Myanmar, will continue its efforts in coordination not only with domestic forces but also with the governments of neighbouring countries. — MNA/KZL



The map showing the demolition measures in the KK Park Section 3, Myawady in Kayin State.



UEC Member meets Kazakhstan CEC Deputy Chairman



Union Election Commission Member U Myo Hlaing meets Deputy Chairman of the Central Election Commission of Kazakhstan Mr Yerman Mukhtar in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

UNION Election Commission (UEC) Member U Myo Hlaing met Mr Yerman Mukhtar, Deputy Chairman of the Central Election Commission of Kazakhstan, at 1:45 pm yesterday at the Bagan Hall of Jasmine Nay Pyi Taw Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, the UEC member explained Myanmar's election-related observation arrangements and the on-

going efforts to ensure elections are conducted in a free, fair, and dignified manner.

Mr Yerman Mukhtar, in turn, outlined Kazakhstan's election processes and shared experiences from his country. He also raised questions regarding Myanmar's electoral procedures, which were answered openly and in detail by the UEC member. — MNA/KZL

NATIONAL BUSINESS

MoI to enhance iron mills in Sagaing, Mandalay with smelting, wire-drawing technology

THE Ministry of Industry will provide Iron Smelting and Wire Drawing Technology to operating iron mills in Sagaing and Mandalay regions.

The Directorate of Industrial Supervision and Inspection carried out on-site inspections at the iron smelting and wire drawing mills operating in Mandalay Region to provide technical and necessary assistance and meet manufacturing standards.

"There are 220 iron smelting and wire drawing mills in the Sagaing and Mandalay regions. Some are operating in the post-earthquake. The DISI is leading the inspection team to define the needs that we can

support rather than checking compliance with standards.

"We also share knowledge related to earthquake-resistant construction steel in post-disaster reconstruction to improve structural resilience. The industrial zone also distributes ASTM A615 guides that cover deformed and plain carbon steel bars for concrete reinforcement. We also provided training at SME workshops in the Bago Region regarding iron smelting. The DISI is disseminating technical knowledge and providing training on the quality of iron and steel to industrial zones or individuals," said an official of the DISI. — ASH/KK



Workers engaged in iron smelting and wire drawing processes at a workplace.

CBM forex injection pushes fuel oil reference prices down

FOLLOWING the injection of the Central Bank of Myanmar into the fuel oil sector, fuel oil reference prices showed a small decline this week ending 1 January 2026, with K2,435 for Octane 92 and K2,460 for Octane 95, K2,140 for diesel and K2,585 for premium diesel.

The prices were set at K2,520 for Octane 92 and K2,570 for Octane 95, K2,230 for diesel and K2,690 for premium diesel last week ending 25 December. The prices showed a slight decline of K85-110 per litre.

The price index set by Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS), the pricing basis for many refined products in Southeast Asia, influences the domestic fuel prices, according to the Supervisory Committee on Oil Import, Storage and Distribution of Fuel Oil.

The committee is governing the market to ensure a stable price and secure supply. Furthermore, the Central Bank of Myanmar has been injecting foreign currencies into the fuel oil sector to help cut the price. CBM pumped US\$23 million into the fuel oil sector on 24 December 2025. Under the guidance of the Su-



Greenbacks at the exchange counter.

pervisory Committee, the Petroleum Products Regulatory Department has been issuing daily reference wholesale prices to ensure price stability for energy consumers.

The committee is inspecting the fuel stations to see whether they are overcharging. Authorities are taking action against those retailers of fuel stations under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law 2017 if they are found overcharging rather than the set reference rate.

As per the statement, about 90 per cent of fuel oil in Myanmar is imported, while the remaining some 10 per cent is produced locally. Domestic fuel prices are highly

correlated with international prices. The State is steering the market to mitigate the loss experienced by the importers, sellers and energy consumers. Consequently, the government is trying to distribute the oil at a reasonable price compared to that of regional countries.

Some countries levied higher tax rates and hiked oil prices than Myanmar did. However, Malaysia's oil sector receives government subsidies, and the prices are about 60 per cent lower than those of Myanmar. Every country lays down different policy patterns to fix oil prices, the Supervisory Committee on Oil Import, Storage and Distribution of Fuel Oil stated. — NN/KK

MMFA to conduct 25th Risk Management Training on 20 Jan 2026

THE Myanmar Microfinance Association (MMFA) will offer the Risk Management Training Online (Batch 25) from 7 pm to 10 pm from 20 to 23 January (7-10 pm).

This training is tailored to senior loan officers, supervisors, branch managers and those interested in the microfinance sector.

Risk Management Training will cover Introduction to Risk Management, Approach to Risk Management, Credit Risk, Fraud, Internal Audit, Human Resource Risk, Liquidity Risk, Institutional & Social Per-

formance Risk, and Reputation Risk, by Certified Trainer U Naw Sai of Naw Sai of Microfinance Professional Myanmar, Certified Trainer-Frankfurt School of Finance & Management and MMFA.

The fee is K80,000 for non-members. Members can enjoy a K20,000 discount. Trainees will receive a completion certificate. Those enthusiastic can enrol in the course by 13 January through <https://shorturl.at/zXet6>. For further details, individuals can contact 09 965209010 during office hours.

— NN/KK

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Lebanon’s cabinet approves draft law on financial crisis losses

LEBANON’S government on Friday approved a draft law to distribute financial losses from the 2019 economic crisis that deprived many Lebanese of their deposits despite strong opposition from political and banking officials.

The draft law is a key demand from the international community, which has conditioned economic aid to Lebanon on financial reforms.

It will be submitted to the

country’s divided parliament for approval before it can become effective.

The cabinet passed the draft bill with 13 ministers in favour and nine against. It stipulates that each of the state, the central bank, commercial banks and depositors will share the losses accrued as a result of the financial crisis.

Prime Minister Nawaf Salam told journalists after the session that the bill “is not



The image displays the Parliament of Lebanon building in Beirut. PHOTO: JOSEPH EID / AFP/FILE

ideal... and may not meet every-one’s aspirations” but is “a realistic and fair step on the path to restoring rights, stopping the collapse... and healing the banking sector”. — AFP

Hong Kongers bid farewell to ‘king of umbrellas’

SCORES of residents flocked to a cramped shop in Hong Kong’s old district to bid farewell to the city’s “king of umbrellas”, who is retiring after spending decades repairing umbrellas at his family business.

Established in 1842 during

the Qing Dynasty, the Sun Rise Company was founded by the Yau family in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou.

Current proprietor Yau Yiu-wai, 73, announced earlier this month that his 183-year-old family business would close its

doors at year’s end. The family-run shop has been passed down through five generations, but due to shifting consumer habits towards online shopping and his advancing age, it has to cease operations, Yau told AFP on Friday. — AFP

US stocks edge lower from records as precious metals surge

WALL Street stocks edged down from records on Friday amid holiday-thinned trading

while precious metals extended their year-long surge to record highs.

Silver topped \$75 an ounce for the first time while gold also pushed to a fresh record price, with geopolitical risk elevated as US military and economic pressure on Venezuela persists. Precious metals have surged in 2025 as uncertainty about US policy under President Donald Trump — and the prospect of further Federal Reserve interest rate cuts — have weakened the dollar, reducing its appeal to investors.

Major indices in New York moved sideways for much of a quiet, post-Christmas session. All three finished marginally lower, with the Dow and S&P 500 both slightly below Wednesday’s records. — AFP



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) at the opening bell on 12 May 2025 in New York City. PHOTO: ANGELA WEISS / AFP / FILE

Investigation report released on Inner Mongolia mining plant accident that killed 6

AN investigation report into a fatal accident at a mining facility in north China’s Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, operated by a mining company under China National Gold Group Co Ltd was made public this Saturday.

The accident, which occurred on 23 July 2025, claimed six lives and left one person injured, with the report recommending that 42 individuals be held accountable.

The regional government

immediately conducted a higher-level investigation into the accident to determine its cause and nature and implement corrective measures. According to the investigation report, six university students drowned after falling into a flotation cell during a study visit at a copper-molybdenum ore-dressing plant in Hulunbuir. All six were rescued but later pronounced dead, and a supervising teacher was also injured. — Xinhua

Cape Town’s housing crisis meets Airbnb boom

THE laughter of children echoed against walls lined with dozens of mattresses in a large, dim room of an illegally occupied building in Cape Town’s bustling and touristy city centre.

A girl was having her hair braided on a stool near neatly placed plastic bags holding the belongings of people who

had moved into the abandoned building from across the city.

The property is in the heart of Cape Town, where rental prices are soaring as tourism is booming.

“My income doesn’t allow me to pay Cape Town’s exorbitant rent prices,” said one of the residents, Fundisa Loza, 46. — AFP

THE EVENTS THAT SHAPED
THE WORLD IN 2025

YEAR IN REVIEW



The year 2025 unfolded under the weight of global uncertainty, political shifts and record-breaking events. These are developments that left a decisive mark on the world.

Trump's America First agenda unfolds

DONALD TRUMP returned to the White House on 20 January 2025, after defeating Kamala Harris in the 2024 election. Sworn in as the 47th president, he launched his second term with sweeping executive orders targeting trade, immigration, and foreign aid.

His “America First” agenda reignited trade wars, disrupted global markets, and reshaped alliances amid ongoing conflicts. Domestically, protests, court battles, and polarization intensified, reflecting deep divisions.

Trump's comeback, marked by personal vindication after legal challenges and an assassination attempt, kept him in constant media spotlight.

China achieves space, AI milestones

In 2025, China marked a landmark year of innovation, emphasizing self-reliance and global leadership in emerging sectors. The DeepSeek large AI model gained worldwide recognition for efficiency in reasoning and setting new benchmarks in performance-to-cost ratios.

In space exploration, the China National Space Administration launched the Tianwen-2 asteroid probe on 28 May, China's first asteroid sample-return mission, aiming to collect samples from 469219 Kamoʻ oalewa by 2027 and later study comet 311P/PanSTARRS by 2035.

On 5 November, the People's Liberation Army Navy commissioned the Fujian, its first domestically designed supercarrier equipped with advanced EMALS technology.

Filmmakers exploit India-Pakistan conflict

India and Pakistan experienced a serious military crisis in 2025, lasting from 23 April to 10 May. It was the worst fighting between the two nuclear powers in decades.

Indian filmmakers are locking up the rights to movie titles that can profit from the patriotism fanned by a conflict with Pakistan.

The fighting came to an end when US President Donald Trump announced a surprise ceasefire.

Now, some Bollywood filmmakers see an opportunity to cash in on the battle.

Extreme weather causes chaos

In 2025, extreme weather events caused global chaos. Europe experienced deadly heatwaves,

with temperatures reaching 46.6°C and thousands of deaths linked to climate change.

Asia faced catastrophic floods and cyclones, including Sri Lanka's worst flooding since the 2000s and the first cyclone in the Strait of Malacca in 135 years, killing over 3,000 people.

The Americas saw historic floods, hurricanes like Category 5 Melissa, and intense wildfires in California and Canada.

Ceasefire holds, Gaza tensions persist

After two years of devastating conflict, US-led pressure resulted in a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. The truce enabled partial Israeli troop withdrawals, the exchange of remaining living hostages for Palestinian prisoners and increased humanitarian aid, although international organizations warn assistance remains far below needs.

Negotiations for a second phase, expected to lead to Gaza's demilitarisation, remain uncertain amid ongoing accusations of ceasefire violations and continued regional tensions.

Peace efforts in Ukraine during 2025

Peace efforts in Ukraine during 2025 have centred on negotiations involving Russia, the United States, and international partners, though progress remains slow.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov stated that Moscow is fully prepared to resolve the conflict but insists that root causes must be addressed for a lasting settlement.

Russian MFA spokeswoman Maria Zakharova noted “slow but steady progress” in talks with Washington, urging the US to resist Western attempts to derail peace. Meanwhile, BRICS leaders expressed hope that mediation initiatives, including the African Peace Initiative, could lead to a sustainable resolution.

Trump sparks global trade war

The global trade war erupted when Trump accused partners of unfair practices and imposed sweeping tariffs on steel, aluminium, and copper. Retaliation quickly followed, sparking uncertainty and market volatility across commodities and equities. Negotiations brought partial relief: the EU reached compromises, and China later agreed to a settlement, easing tensions. Talks with Canada collapsed amid Washington's criticism of Ottawa's trade campaign, leaving relations strained. Domestically, rising food prices forced the US to lift some agricultural tariffs. Overall, the conflict began with aggressive duties, escalated into global retaliation, and ended with

mixed outcomes – stability with some partners but unresolved disputes.

Pope Leo guides faith into a new era

On 8 May, Robert Francis Prevost became the first American pope, taking the name Leo XIV following the death of Pope Francis. Born in Chicago and a former missionary in Peru, the 69-year-old pontiff pledged continuity on social justice, migration and environmental issues.

At the same time, he reassured conservative circles by restoring traditional liturgy at the Vatican, while ruling out short-term reforms on women's ordination and same-sex marriage.

Massive investment in AI

Spending on artificial intelligence surged to an estimated \$1.5 trillion in 2025, according to Gartner, fuelling fears of a speculative bubble. Nvidia briefly reached a valuation exceeding \$5 trillion.

Concerns grew over misinformation, copyright violations and job losses, particularly in tech and retail. In the US, new legislation was introduced after a lawsuit accused an AI chatbot of encouraging a teenager's suicide.

Louvre suffers stunning art theft

On 19 October, thieves disguised as workers entered the Louvre Museum in broad daylight, stealing crown jewels worth an estimated €88 million in just eight minutes.

The robbery exposed major security flaws at the world's most visited museum. Four suspects were charged, but the stolen items remain missing.

US strikes in the Caribbean and Pacific

Washington launched operations against suspected drug-trafficking vessels in the Caribbean and Pacific, resulting in around 100 deaths. Venezuela condemned the actions as a pretext to destabilise Nicolas Maduro's government and seize oil reserves.

The US imposed a “full blockade” on sanctioned tankers linked to Venezuela and offered a \$50 million reward for Maduro's arrest.

SPORTS

Myanmar to play 3rd place match at ASEAN U16 Futsal Championship

MYANMAR secured a place in the third-place playoff after the completion of the group stage at the 2025 ASEAN U16 Futsal Championship in Thailand on 27 December.

On the final day of group matches, hosts Thailand drew 3-3 with Indonesia, while Vietnam defeated Brunei 5-3. Indonesia's draw against Thailand was enough to book a place in the final, while Vietnam finished third in the standings.

After all group matches, Thailand topped the table with 10 points, followed by Indonesia on eight points, Vietnam on seven points and Myanmar on three points. Brunei lost all four matches and finished without a point.

Under the competition format, group winners Thailand will face runners-up Indonesia in the final, while third-placed Vietnam will meet fourth-placed Myanmar in the third-place match. Both the final and the third-place playoff will be played on 29 December.

— Ko Nyi Lay/KZL



Team Myanmar players celebrate victory in the match. PHOTO: MFF

Independence Day prelude race draws over 1,000 cyclists



Cyclists start near tollgate of Hmawby during Men's open race to commemorate of the 78th Anniversary of Independence Day in 2026 in Yangon, on 27 December 2025.

MORE than 1,000 cyclists took part in the men's and women's open cycling race held in Yangon on the morning of 27 December as a prelude to the 78th Anniversary of Independence Day in 2026.

Organized by the Yangon Region Government, the race began at 6 am in front of the People's Square on Pyay Road, Dagon Township. Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein flagged off the women's open race from the Airport Road junction and the men's open race from near the toll gate in

Hmawby Township.

A total of 80 women cyclists competed on a route from the Airport Road junction through Hledan, Myaynigon and Pyay Road before finishing at the People's Square, while 986 male cyclists raced from Hmawby via Htaukkyant, Sawbwag-yigon, the Airport Road junction and Myaynigon junction along Pyay Road to the same finish point.

Following the race, an award ceremony was held, during which prizes, medals and cash awards were presented

to athletes who secured first to fifth places as well as consolation prizes. The awards were presented by the Yangon Region Chief Minister, regional government ministers, their spouses and departmental officials.

Cyclists from Yangon Region, Ayeyawady Region, Taninthayi Region, Bago Region, Shan State and Kayin State participated in the event, which aimed to promote public participation in sports and mark the upcoming Independence Day celebrations. — Bala/KZL

Morocco made to wait for Cup of Nations knockout place after Egypt advance

HOSTS Morocco missed the chance to secure qualification for the knockout phase of the Africa Cup of Nations after drawing 1-1 with Mali on Friday, but Mohamed Salah's penalty gave Egypt a 1-0 win over South Africa which took them through to the last 16.

The Group A clash between Morocco and Mali at the Prince Moulay Abdellah Stadium in Rabat was a tale of two spot-kicks, with Brahim Diaz giving the tournament hosts the lead from a penalty deep in first-half injury time and Lassine Sinayoko equalizing on 64 minutes.

The stalemate, watched by a crowd of almost 64,000 which included France captain Kylian Mbappe, ended Morocco's world record winning run after 19 matches.

It also means Morocco have not yet confirmed their last-16 place, although they are first in their section with four points from two games.

Mali come next on two points alongside Zambia, who

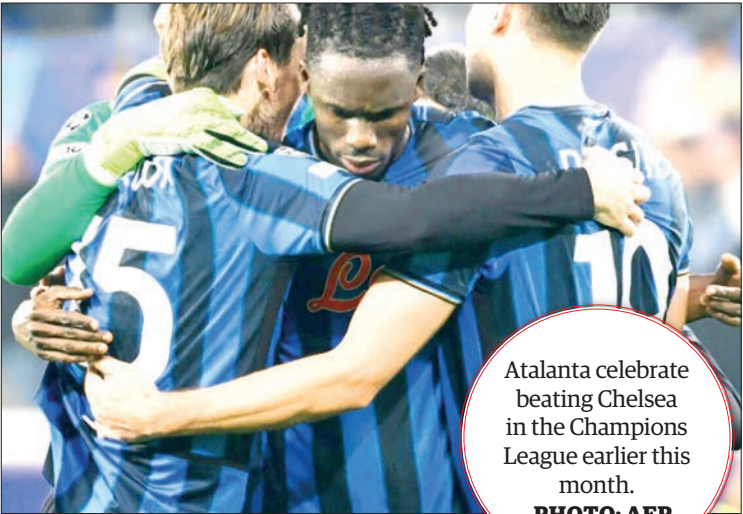
drew 0-0 with Comoros earlier in Casablanca.

Morocco face Zambia on Monday and a victory in that match will ensure that the hosts go through as group winners.

— AFP



Hosts Morocco missed the chance to clinch a place in the last 16 of the Africa Cup of Nations after being held to a 1-1 draw by Mali on Friday. PHOTO: AFP



Atalanta celebrate beating Chelsea in the Champions League earlier this month. PHOTO: AFP

Palladino's Atalanta on the up as Serie A leaders Inter visit

ATALANTA are on the comeback trail ahead of Sunday night's visit of Serie A leaders Inter Milan, with coach Raffaele Palladino leading the charge for the revitalised Bergamo club.

Since Palladino replaced Ivan Juric last month Atalanta have rediscovered their groove, as witnessed by the way they

dealt with Eintracht Frankfurt and Chelsea in the Champions League.

Atalanta sit fifth in the Champions League, level on points with mega-bucks Paris Saint-Germain and Manchester City, and now they're heading back up the Serie A table. — AFP

Translated Japanese novel becomes No 1 bestseller in Russia

No 1 bestseller at Russia's largest bookstore chain, Chitai Gorod.

A translated debut novel by Japanese author and film producer Genki Kawamura has become the No 1 bestseller so far this year at Russia's largest bookstore chain, according to a Russian newspaper.

The book, whose English title is "If Cats Disappeared from the World," sold 104,000 copies

between January through 17 December at Chitai Gorod bookstores, Vedomosti said.

A Russian book distributors association with a membership of around 700 bookstores also said it ranked top in total sales at its outlets from January to November. Specific numbers were not released.

Known in Japanese as "Se-



A selection of the Russian translation of "If Cats Disappeared from the World" by Genki Kawamura is displayed at a bookstore in Moscow on 22 December 2025. **PHOTO: KYODO**

kai Kara Neko ga Kietanara," the translation has a total circulation of more than 820,000 copies in Russia, of which 450,000 were

issued this year, according to the CEO of major Russian publishing house Eksmo, who said sales this year tripled from the

previous year. The novel was published in 2012 in Japan, with the Russian translation released in 2020.—Kyodo



People watch as a giant lantern lights up during the Giant Lantern Festival in San Fernando, the Philippines. **PHOTO: AFP**

Towering lanterns light up Philippines Christmas festival

THE annual Giant Lantern Festival in San Fernando, Philippines, showcases massive six-metre-high handcrafted lanterns to celebrate the Christmas season and the region's century-old craftsmanship.

These dazzling displays, weighing up to a tonne and costing over one million pesos (\$17,020) each, utilize 12,000 synchronized bulbs and kilometres of wiring to symbolize the Star of Bethlehem.

For local designers like Karl Quiwa, a sixth-generation lantern maker, the three-month construction process is both a "religious obligation" and a cherished family tradition intended to bring hope and cheer to the nation. Behind the scenes, teams manually operate metal barrels to create kaleidoscopic light effects, a feat that attracts thousands of spectators.

Despite its cultural significance and

Each display costs over 1 million pesos (\$17,020) and uses 12,000 synchronized bulbs and kilometres of wiring.

economic impact — driven by sales to local homes and overseas Filipino communities — the tradition faces a precarious future.

Veteran craftsmen express concern that younger generations, increasingly preoccupied with technology and digital entertainment, are not learning the trade. There is a growing fear among these artisans that they may be the "last of their kind" to uphold this vibrant cultural heritage. — AFP

Cars, jewellery top UHNI luxe choices

Ultra High Net-worth Individuals (UHNIs) prefer luxury cars and jewellery as primary spending categories.

ULTRA High Net-worth Individuals (UHNIs) prioritize luxury cars and jewellery as top spending categories, per a Nuva-ma report. Fifty-eight per cent invest in luxury vehicles, while 53 per cent favour jewellery, driven by a preference for enduring value like automobiles, fine jewellery, elegant watches, and bespoke experiences. UHNI consumption is quiet and legacy-focused,

avoiding overt displays.

German engineering dominates cars: 42 per cent opt for Mercedes-Benz (some exclusively), followed by BMW at 29 per cent. Other brands include Range Rover, Porsche, Rolls-Royce, Jaguar, Volvo, and Lamborghini.

In watches, Rolex leads with 27 per cent ownership, trailed by Audemars Piguet (23 per cent), Patek Philippe

(19 per cent), and Breitling (19 per cent). Rado, Breguet, and Hublot hold smaller shares.

Thirty-nine per cent spend on luxury bags and watches each, with 17 per cent on perfumes, travel, diamonds, and clothing. Louis Vuitton tops bags at 35 per cent, followed by Chanel (25 per cent) and Hermès (20 per cent), alongside Christian Dior and Loro Piana. — ANI



This highlights their focus on enduring, high-value assets over fleeting trends. **PHOTO: ANI**