

The Global **NEW LIGHT** of MYANMAR

Vice-President U Nyo Saw receives Guangzhou Mayor, Governor of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region



Vice-President U Nyo Saw meets Mr Wei Tao, Governor of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, at the Liyuan International Conference Centre on 17 September 2026.

Vice-President U Nyo Saw, who is currently in Nanning, the People's Republic of China, accompanied by Union Minister U Tun Ohn and delegation members, arrived

in Guangzhou yesterday afternoon. The Vice-President received Guangzhou Mayor Mr Sun Zhiyang of the Guangdong Province and exchanged views on the bilateral relations between the two countries,

cooperation measures, and the promotion of maritime trade. On 18 September, the Vice-President visited the Madao hub of the Pinglu Canal in Qinzhou, which directly connects the sea to the river for cargo ship

transit. Upon arrival, the Vice-President and party were welcomed by party and administrative officials of Qinzhou, who briefed them on the construction progress of the Pinglu Canal project, its anticipated benefits, and the navigational conditions for permitted vessels.

The Vice-President also observed the container port and jetties being operated through artificial intelligence (AI) in Qinzhou. Local authorities and port officials explained the docking of domestic and international vessels, the operation of the freight handling process by AI, the hi-tech innovation including digital technology, and

SEE PAGE 3



This image features the ASEAN Clean Tourist City Award winner, Hpa-an.

Kayin State Day Shines in Colour Photography

IN commemoration of the 71st Kayin State Day, a colour photography exhibition will take place under the title "Clean Tourist City", according to Tourism Hpa-an.

Any Myanmar nationals and photography enthusiasts can participate with their artworks which express Kayin State's natural scenery, culture and ethnics' costumes and customs.

First prize is K1 million, second prize is K700,000, third prize is K500,000, fourth prize is K400,000, and fifth prize is K300,000. In ad-

dition, 20 consolation prizes will be included. Contestant photos will be accepted until 9 October from 15 September. Selection will be made from 12 to 14 October, and the winner list will be announced at the ceremony of Kayin State Day on 7 November.

Application forms can be submitted to the Kayin State Directorate of Hotels and Tourism. Details are provided at visitkyain.com and the Tourism Hpa-an Facebook page, or people can contact the following numbers: 09 43038314 and 09 43070502. — MT/ZS

MRCS Unveils Child Friendly Centres in Sagaing

THE Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) has opened Child-Friendly Spaces in Sagaing Township, Sagaing Region.

The centres were opened in Nandawun and Myothit wards of Sagaing to provide children with safe and enjoyable places to play while improving their health knowledge.

Red Cross volunteers and staff joined 100 children in various recreational activities, including lessons on personal hygiene and health awareness.

The MRCS has been establishing Child-Friendly Spaces in various parts of Myanmar for children affected by natural disasters and conflicts, in-



This photo depicts children enjoying activities at a Child-Friendly Space in Sagaing Township.

cluding those experiencing psychological distress and trauma. The centres are being established with

support from the Danish Red Cross and the Red Cross Society of the Faroe Islands. — ASH/KZL

NATIONAL PAGE 4



Ayeyawady bolsters flood defences in 6 townships

NATIONAL PAGE 7



Real estate associations hold executive elections



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NATIONAL

Objectives of 27th Traditional Myanmar Cultural Performing Arts Competition 2026

- (a) To enhance national prestige, integrity, and preserve the traditional cultural heritage of ethnic people
- (b) To preserve national characteristics and promote the national spirit, cherishing traditional culture among the younger generation
- (c) To explore, preserve and promote the sustainable development of traditional Myanmar arts
- (d) To function as a cultural and artistic institution that contributes to nation-building

Weather

Heavy Rainfall Warning No 80

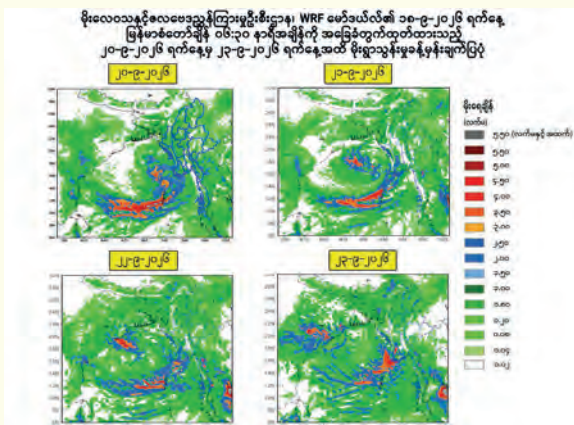
Issued at 8 am MST on 19 September 2026

ACCORDING to the observations at 6:30 am MST today, due to the monsoon strong over the Andaman Sea and the South Bay of Bengal, the strong development of the convective clouds and the unstable air condition over the Andaman Sea and the South Bay of Bengal such as rain or thundershowers are likely to be scattered in upper Sagaing Region and Kachin, Chin and northern Shan states and fairly widespread to widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Bago, Magway, lower Sagaing, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Kayah, Kayin, Mon, Rakhine and (southern and eastern) Shan states with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Yangon, Bago, Magway, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Kayin, Mon and Rakhine states from today morning to 23 September 2026.

Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced in the Deltaic, the Gulf of Mottama, off and along the Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach 35 miles per hour. Wave height will be about 9-12 feet in the Deltaic, the Gulf of Mottama, off and along the Mon-Taninthayi Coasts.

Advisory

People should be aware that, due to the strong monsoon over the Andaman Sea and the South Bay of Bengal, the strong development of convective clouds and unstable air conditions over the Andaman Sea and the South Bay of Bengal, there may be heavy rainfall with strong winds, flash floods and landslides in hilly areas and near small rivers and disruptions to inland water transport and domestic flights. — DMH



Public Notice

DUE to the destructive actions of terrorists, some power plants and transmission lines have been unable to operate and transmit electricity normally. In order to ensure a full supply of electricity to the public, staff of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy have been working around the clock, with dedication and commitment, to repair damaged power plants and transmission lines and to reconnect associated transmission lines, with the cooperation and participation of the people.

Under these circumstances, a fault occurred at 5:26 pm on 19 September on the 230-kV Shwetaung-Myaungtaka Trans-

mission Lines 1 and 2, resulting in a nationwide power outage, known as a System Breakdown.

While responsible staff were conducting on-site inspections of the faulty 230-kV Shwetaung-Myaungtaka transmission line, efforts were immediately made to restore the power system through other power plants without waiting until repairs to the affected line were completed, to minimize the duration of the power outage.

As a result, electricity transmission was gradually resumed from the Paunglaung Power Plant at 5:38 pm and from the Yeywa Power Plant at 6 pm. Subsequently, the electricity generated by the Paun-

glaung and Yeywa power plants was successfully synchronized at 6:23 pm, and power transmission was extended to the Hlawga Substation by 6:45 pm.

However, as a large amount of electrical load suddenly came onto the system when power transmission was being restored, the balance between power generation and consumption was disrupted. Consequently, another System Breakdown occurred at 6:52 pm due to instability in the power system frequency, known as a Frequency Swing.

Efforts are underway to restore the power system and resume normal electricity transmission as fast as possible. — MNA/KTZH

Paung to Shut Unofficial Level Crossings

MON State Electricity, Energy, Industry and Transport Minister U Zeyar Oo conducted a field investigation along the railroad in Paung Township and instructed officials to eliminate unofficial level crossings where accidents tend to happen.

The minister's field investigation was conducted on 17 September, aiming to improve the state's transport sector and ensure public safety. He instructed that



The Mon State minister visits level crossings in Paung Township.

crossing gates and guards signals be visible. In addition, he also dent-prone level crossings be addressed systematically. — TWA/ZS

Low-Pressure Area Conditions

Issued at 4 pm MST on 19 September 2026

ACCORDING to observations at 3:30 pm MST today, a Low-Pressure Area may form over the North Andaman Sea.

Next 96-hour forecast

It is likely to move west-north-westwards and may reach over the North Andaman Sea and adjoining East Central Bay of Bengal during the next 24 hours and intensify gradually into a Depression over the East Central Bay of Bengal during the next 48 hours and then into a Deep Depression over the West Central Bay of Bengal during the next 72 hours. Continuing to move west-northwestwards, it is likely to reach the West Central Bay of Bengal and adjoining North-

west Bay of Bengal near South Odisha-North Andhra Pradesh, India, during the next 96 hours.

General caution

Due to the Low-Pressure Area, rain or thundershowers are likely to be scattered in upper Sagaing Region and Kachin, Chin and northern Shan states and fairly widespread to widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Bago, Magway, lower Sagaing, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Kayah, Kayin, Mon, Rakhine and (southern and eastern) Shan states with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Yangon, Bago, Magway, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Kayin, Mon and Ra-

khine states from today evening to 23 September 2026.

Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced off and along the Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach 35 miles per hour. Wave height will be about 9-11 feet off and along the Myanmar Coasts.

Advisory

People should be aware of natural disasters such as heavy rainfall with strong winds, thunder, lightning strikes, hails, flash floods, and landslides in hilly areas and near small rivers, and make necessary preparations for inland water transport, domestic flights and irrigation dams. — DMH

NATIONAL

Vice-President U Nyo Saw receives Guangzhou Mayor, Governor ...

FROM PAGE 1
the creation of linkages in the region with the use of modern technologies.

On the evening of 17 September, the Vice-President met Mr Wei Tao, Governor of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, at the Liyuan International Conference Centre. During the meeting, both sides held cordial and open discussions on enhancing bilateral relations, promoting cooperation, accelerating bilateral trade cooperation, and advancing the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative and the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor. – MNA/TTA

Myanmar delegates attend International Festival of Youth 2026 in Russia



Union Minister Dr Maung Thin attends the International Festival of Youth 2026 in Russian Federation.

A Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister for Youth Affairs Dr Maung Thin attended the International Festival of Youth 2026, held in Yekaterinburg, Russian Federation, from 11 to 17 September. On 13 September, the Union minister observed a youth dialogue session in the morning and attended a meeting at the Festival Organizing Committee's meeting hall in the afternoon together with invited delegates from various countries. Discussions focused on connecting active young people worldwide, developing common goals, future visions for youth policies, effective national strategies and plans, and the digital transformation of the modern era. He also attended the opening ceremony of the festival in the evening.

On 14 September, the Union minister briefed international guests on the implementation of Myanmar's youth policies, national strategic plans for youths and efforts to promote youth development in Myanmar. He also participated in a panel discussion on national-level youth policy implementation by international youth leaders.

On 15 September, he visited a sports training centre in Yekaterinburg and also met with Sverdlovsk Region Governor Mr Pasler Denis Vladimirovich. The delegation subsequently visited the Palace of Youth Centre, a government maritime youth training school, the Military and Civil Youth Vocational Camp, and a museum centre featuring a Buran-class orbiter.

SEE PAGE 6

MoI Union Minister inspects private television companies in Yangon

UNION Minister for Information U Htein Linn inspected the operations of private TV channel companies cooperating with Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV) in Yangon yesterday.

At the Control Room of the Myansat DTH Broadcasting and Distribution Office located within the MRTV compound on Pyay Road, the Union minister inspected the television broadcasting operations, the management and control of audio and video signals, the installation and use of broadcasting equipment and technical systems, and the programming and transmission of more than 150 local and international television channels.

He also inspected the operations of the Shwe FM office, radio programmes being produced and broadcast from Studios G and H in the radio building, audio equipment used for broadcasting, the technical conditions of the studios, and the production and presentation of radio programmes.

He then inspected MRTV's live broadcasting vehicles within the MRTV



Union Minister U Htein Linn inspects the operations of private television companies cooperating with Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV) and radio broadcasting operations in Yangon yesterday.

compound, the management and broadcasting of programmes using the playout system in Room 144 of the radio building and the monitoring and control of audio and video signals.

Similarly, the Union minister inspected the operations of the 9-Metre Earth Station and the transmission of television and radio programmes via satellite communication systems. He also observed the transmitters, equipment and technical systems installed and used for television and radio broadcasting at the equipment room of the 200-metre tower, and the condition of Mandalay FM radio broadcasting, radio broadcasting operations,

programme production and presentation, and technical arrangements.

At the Sky Net headquarters in Botataung Township, he inspected television channels and service operations, television programme broadcasting and technical arrangements. At Shwe Htut Tin compound in Tamway Township, he also inspected the production and presentation of television programmes and the use of studios.

During the inspections, the Union minister instructed officials to give priority to producing and broadcasting educational programmes on agriculture and livestock breeding that can support the livelihoods of people

in rural areas. He also called for the production and presentation of programmes in line with current times to enhance public knowledge and awareness, and for effective use of digital media platforms, in addition to television and radio media, to ensure wider dissemination of information and content. In the afternoon, the Union minister met the patron, chairman and executive committee members of the Myanmar Motion Pictures Organization at its meeting hall on Wingaba Road in Bahan Township, Yangon.

During the meeting, he discussed the government's efforts to promote the development of the arts sector, noting that the film industry plays an important role in the development of the country's cultural sector. He called on film artistes and relevant organizations to give due attention to their respective roles and make concerted efforts to create and produce quality artistic works that benefit the country and its people. He also visited the Myanmar Motion Pictures Museum. — MNA/KTZH

World Bamboo Day celebrated

THE World Bamboo Day ceremony was held on 18 September at the Ingyin Hall of the Forest Department in Nay Pyi Taw, with Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Hsan Oo, deputy ministers, officials, and entrepreneurs in attendance.

The Union minister stated that the event was organized with the aim of raising public awareness of the economic benefits of bamboo resources, promoting bamboo-based in-

dustries and handicrafts, and enabling the systematic and long-term use of bamboo for environmental conservation.

This year's commemorative motto is "Bamboo Beyond Borders", which aims to transform traditional utensils into modern, high-standard value-added products, and to integrate and utilize bamboo in the green economy, circular economy, and climate change mitigation efforts, he added.

Furthermore, he men-



This image illustrates the celebration of World Bamboo Day.

tioned that Myanmar is the third country in the world with the most abundant bamboo growth. Because bamboo emits 35 per cent more oxygen than other trees, it serves as a natural resource that helps combat climate change, contributing to poverty reduction and food security. Subsequently, he gave instructions regard-

ing the development of the bamboo sector: managing natural forests, systematically cultivating high-quality plantations, promoting bamboo-based MSMEs, and facilitating technology and market linkages.

Following this, the attendees watched a video clip commemorating World Bamboo Day. — TWA/ZN

NATIONAL

NSA and President's Office Union Minister visits Belarus

A Myanmar delegation led by National Security Adviser and President's Office Union Minister U Tin Aung San visited Minsk, Belarus, from 14 to 19 September at the invitation of Mr Aleksandr Volfovich, Secretary of the Security Council of Belarus.

The delegation arrived in Minsk on 15 September and was welcomed at Minsk International Airport by a delegation led by Dmitry Viktorovich Ryabihin, Director of the Department of External Security Affairs of the Office of the Security Council of Belarus, and the Myanmar Ambassador to Belarus.

During the visit, the Union minister visited the Great Patriotic War Museum and laid a wreath at the Victory Monument in Minsk. He also paid visits to the



National Security Adviser and Union Minister U Tin Aung San lays a wreath at the Victory Monument in Minsk.

State Security Committee, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Military Academy, the State Forensic Examination Centre and the Ministry of Emergency Situations.

The Union minister also met Mr Aleksandr Volfovich, Secretary of the Security Council of Belarus. They exchanged views on Myanmar-Belarus relations, defence and security

cooperation, trade and investment, education, health, tourism, Eurasian cooperation, and regional and international issues, and exchanged gifts.

At the Military Academy, the delegation observed the training programmes and academic courses provided for domestic and international trainees. At the State Forensic Exami-

nation Centre, discussions focused on crime prevention and investigation, forensic science, evidence examination, training programmes and inter-agency cooperation.

At the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the delegation discussed rescue operations in building collapses and traffic accidents, safety inspections of factories and chemical storage facilities, disaster recovery and related cooperation. The delegation also visited the Ministry's Safety Education Centre.

The Myanmar delegation departed Minsk on the evening of 18 September and arrived back in Yangon yesterday evening, where Yangon Region ministers and officials welcomed them. — MNA/KTZH

People's Military Service Training Course 26 graduation ceremonies held



The graduation ceremony of the People's Military Service Training Course 26 is underway.

GRADUATION ceremonies for People's Military Service Training Course 26 were held yesterday at training schools under the respective commands.

The ceremonies included military parades, during which the trainees pledged allegiance while holding the national flag. Officials from the training schools delivered graduation addresses and presented awards to outstanding trainees.

Following the ceremonies, the Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, chief ministers of the regions and

states, commanders of the respective commands and other officials met with the graduates at the training schools, delivered speeches and offered words of encouragement.

Trainees from Training Course 26 received instruction in physical fitness, military drill, military tactics and other general subjects.

The graduates will now be assigned to various battalions and units to undertake national defence and security duties. Graduation dinners were also held at the training schools in the evening. — MNA/MKKS

Ayeyawady bolsters flood defences in 6 townships

FLOOD prevention and protection works are continuing in six townships in Ayeyawady Region following erosion of the Nyaungdonkyun embankment along a branch of the Ayeyawady River and a breach beneath the Ngawun River embankment.

At a site near Ganchaung Village in Nyaungdon Township, a section of the Nyaungdon-Kyunta embankment measuring about 300 feet

long and 45 feet wide was eroded by riverbank erosion from 25 August. Another section, measuring 160 feet long and 15 feet wide, collapsed on 17 September.

River-channel dredging, porcupine placement, geotextile installation, steel-wire flow-control measures, temporary embankment construction and sand filling are being carried out to prevent further erosion, with Tatmadaw members, Myanmar Police Force personnel,



This image features ongoing relief efforts in Laymyethna Township.

social organizations and residents working together.

Meanwhile, heavy rainfall and riverbank erosion on 30 July caused a breach beneath the

Ngawun River embankment in Laymyethna Township, resulting in flooding in five wards and some villages in Laymyethna, as well as 15 wards

and some villages in Hinthada, Yekyi, Ngathaingyoung, Kyonpyaw and Kyaunggon townships.

Geobags, sandbags and steel sheet piles are being used to reinforce weak sections of the Ngawun embankment. Volunteers are also clearing silt and debris, delivering food to flood victims, providing emergency healthcare and carrying out rehabilitation works in areas where floodwaters have receded. — MNA/KZL

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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.
gnlmnews@gmail.com,
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NATIONAL

China-Myanmar
workshops welcome
ministerial delegates

WORKSHOPS and specialized training on China (Chongqing)-Myanmar co-operation, with delegates from Chongqing’s Municipal People’s Government, Myanmar’s Foreign Affairs Ministry and other ministries, opened on 15 September, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced.

The Chongqing Municipal People’s Government has invited 40 representatives from various Myanmar ministries to participate in three week-long programmes that began on 15 September: a seminar on capacity building for Myanmar’s agricultural development at Southwest University in Chongqing; an advanced seminar on the development of the rule of law and sustainable development for China (Chongqing)-Myanmar cooperation at Southwest University of Political Science and Law; and a specialized training course on the digital economy and trade for Myanmar government officials at Chongqing Technology and Business University.

The workshops are being organized by the Foreign Affairs Office of the Chongqing Municipal People’s Government in co-operation with the Chinese Embassy in Yangon, following discussions held during the visit of Myanmar’s Head of State to Chongqing in 2024 with Mr Yuan Jiajun, Central Committee Member of the Communist Party of China and Secretary of the Chongqing Municipal Party Committee, regarding the provision of scholarships for Myanmar government civil servants.

The opening ceremony of the China (Chongqing)-Myanmar cooperation workshops was attended on the Chinese side by the Deputy Director-General of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Chongqing Municipal People’s Government and other government officials. On the Myanmar side, the Consul-General of the Myanmar Consulate-General in Chongqing and 40 trainee representatives from various ministries were also in attendance. — ASH/TH



This photo features a workshop held as part of a three-week programme that began on 15 September in China.

Magway Myathalun to host 2,590th
Buddha Pujaniya Festival



This photo features bustling visitors at the Magway’s Myathalun Pagoda during the festival.

THE 2,590th Buddha Pujaniya Festival of Myathalun Pagoda in Magway will be celebrated on a grand scale, according to U Aung San, a member of the Myathalun Pagoda Board of Trustees.

“The festival is scheduled to take place from 24 October to 10 November. Arrangements are being made to set up a festival market with approximately 1,000 stalls for pilgrims arriving from various regions. Free rest areas equipped with water and electricity facilities will also be provided for up to 1,000 pilgrims. The festival will include the continuous recitation of the Maha Pathana scriptures. Upon completion of the Pathana recitation, meals and donations will be offered to the Sangha. Rice and other provisions will be offered to 1,500 invited monks. On the night of the Full Moon of Thadingyut, a ceremony will be held to offer 9,000 oil lamps, 9,000 joss sticks and 9,000 flowers. Pilgrims from all regions are invited to attend,” said U Aung San.

Traditional performance troupes – Aung Zambu, Aung San Pwint, San Yay Moe and Chit Swan Thar – will also present performances as part of the entertainment programme for the 2,590th Buddha Pujaniya Festival of Myathalun Pagoda in Magway, according to reports.

Pilgrims typically visit Myathalun Pagoda in numbers ranging from 800 to 1,000 on ordinary days, while the number of visitors rises to nearly 4,000 on significant occasions such as full moon days and Sabbath days. — ASH/MKKS

Kyaikkhami to host honey alms offering ceremony

ACCORDING to a statement from the Kyaikkhami Mid-Water Pagoda Board of Trustees, a township-wide ceremony to offer rice and honey alms will be held in Kyaikkhami, Mon State, at 4 am on 25 September.

The offering procession will commence at Thirizeya Hall on the Kyaikkhami Mid-Water Pagoda compound and proceed to the entrance to U Yewata Road, near the stone pillar in the downtown area.

The Board of Trustees stated that a total of 496 Sayadaws and nuns, comprising 290 monks, 192 novices and 14 nuns observing Buddhist Lent, from 58 monasteries in Kyaikkhami will attend the ceremony to receive the offerings.

The Board of Trustees invites anyone wishing to donate rice and honey to participate in the event. — TWA/MKKS



This photo features the honey-alms offering ceremony held in Kyaikkhami last year.

MRTV to broadcast agricultural development
workshop opening ceremony live

THE opening ceremony of the national-level workshop titled “From Agricultural Sector Development to National Output Growth”, organized by the Ministry of Finance and Revenue, will be held at 9 am on 21 September at the Myanmar International Convention Centre I (MICC I) in Nay Pyi Taw.

The ceremony will be broadcast live from 8:50 am on that day on MRTV HD Channel, MRTV News Channel, MRTV Farmers’ Channel and MRTV NRC Channel, as well as on Myanmar Radio, Padamyia FM, Cherry FM, FM Bagan, Mandalay FM, Pyinsawady FM, Shwe FM and Star FM. — MRTV/MKKS

Gold Market Rate as of
19 September 2026

THE price of one tical (16.329325 grammes) of gold with density of 19.25 grammes per cubic centimetre and above is K7,150,000, as established by the Mineral (Gold) Reference Price Determination Committee.



NATIONAL

Weekly Roundup

13 September President arrives in Siem Reap from Phnom Penh

The high-level Myanmar delegation led by President U Min Aung Hlaing left Techo International Airport in Phnom Penh for Siem Reap by special aircraft and arrived at Siem Reap Angkor International Airport in Siem Reap.

President meets staff families, scholarship trainees in Cambodia

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing met staff and families of the Myanmar Embassy and the Military Attaché Office and scholarship trainees at the Myanmar Embassy in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

MOFA releases statement

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issues the following statement regarding the illegal activities of Kyaw Moe Tun, who has already been dismissed as Myanmar's Permanent Representative to the United

Nations. The Ministry informs the United Nations, the international community, and all governments maintaining diplomatic relations with Myanmar that Kyaw Moe Tun's status as a representative of Myanmar has been revoked and withdrawn. Furthermore, statements and acts of incitement by Kyaw Moe Tun do not represent the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and/or the people as a whole.

15 September UEC announces replacement of lawmakers

The Union Election Commission issued announcements to replace seven Defence Services Personnel Representatives for Pyithu Hluttaw, five for Amyotha Hluttaw and three for Kachin, Kayah and Chin State Hluttaws.

16 September President attends Union government meeting

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Min Aung Hlaing delivered an address at the Union government meeting at the President's Office in Nay Pyi Taw.

17 September VP U Nyo Saw arrives in Nanning

Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Nyo Saw departed Yangon by air

to attend the 23rd China-ASEAN Expo and the 23rd China-ASEAN Business and Investment Summit to be held in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China, and arrived in Nanning and met Chinese Vice-Premier Ding Xuexiang at Liyuan State Guesthouse.

18 September VP Calls for Stronger China-ASEAN Economic Cooperation

Vice-President U Nyo Saw, who is currently in Nanning, China, attended and delivered an opening speech at the opening ceremony of the 23rd China-ASEAN Expo and the 23rd China-ASEAN Business and Investment Summit at the Nanning International Convention and Exhibition Centre in China.

Replacement and Appointment of Union Minister

The President's Office of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar issued Ordinance 6/2026 to replace and appoint Union Ministers. It stated that Lt-Gen Nyunt Win Swe, Union Minister for Home Affairs, was reassigned to his original military duties and General Ko Ko Oo from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) was appointed as the Union Minister of the Ministry of Home Affairs. — GNLM/TTA

Yangon police step up crime prevention measures

POLICE personnel from township police stations across Yangon Region conducted operations in cooperation with traffic police and local administrative officials to strengthen the rule of law and prevent crime.

As part of the operations yesterday, police personnel from Insein, Hlinethaya (East), North Okkalapa, Hlinethaya (West), and members of the Kyauktada, Kamayut and Taikkyi traffic police units carried



Police personnel check suspected vehicles in Yangon. PHOTO: YANGON REGION POLICE FORCE

out activities including crime awareness talks, door-to-door crime prevention education, mo-

torcycle and bicycle patrols, surprise operations to apprehend pickpockets, public awareness

campaigns on the use of pedestrian crossings, and the distribution of pamphlets.

Also, on the evening of yesterday, police personnel in Sangyoung, Mayangon, Dabain (Hlegu), Hlinethaya (West), Phaunggyi and Mingala Taungnyunt townships conducted bar inspections, patrols, checks of suspected vehicles and inspections of household guest registration records. — Aung Thu/MKKS

Venerable Chanmyay Sayadaw passes away at 99



Chanmyay Sayadaw Bhaddanta Janakabhivamsa.

VENERABLE Chanmyay Sayadaw Bhaddanta Janakabhivamsa, who held the titles of Sasanadhaja Dhammacariya, Maha Dhammakathika Bahu-janahitadhara, peacefully passed away at Grand Hantha International Hospital in Yangon at 11:45 am yesterday, 19 September, at the age of 99 (Vasa 79), according to a statement issued by the Chanmyay Yeiktha.

Born on 24 July 1928, the venerable Chanmyay

Sayadaw spent his entire life teaching Vipassana meditation and carrying out religious activities continuously for many years, based on the teachings of the Buddha.

The venerable Sayadaw travelled not only throughout Myanmar but also to various countries abroad to deliver Dhamma talks. He guided his disciples and lay devotees in following the proper path of Dhamma practice. — TWA/KNN

Myanmar delegates attend International ...

FROM PAGE 3

On 16 September, the Union minister met Mr Denis Valerievich Ashirov, Deputy Head of the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs of the Russian Federation. They discussed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on youth affairs between Myanmar and Russia and the holding of an ASEAN-Russia Senior Officials' Meeting on youth

affairs.

He also met Mr Xiaofei Tian, Deputy Secretary-General of the All-China Youth Federation, to discuss bilateral youth cooperation and the responsibilities related to the ASEAN Plus Three Ministerial Meeting on Youth. He later held discussions with the Permanent Secretary of India's Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports on signing an MoU

on bilateral youth cooperation and support for youth development.

In the evening, the Union minister attended the closing ceremony of the International Festival of Youth 2026. More than 10,000 young people from over 190 countries, along with 13 ministerial-level and nine deputy ministerial-level delegates from various countries, including Myanmar, attended the festival. — MNA/KTZH

NATIONAL

IPD Grants 350 Industrial Design Certificates

INTELLECTUAL Property Department has accepted industrial design registration since 1 February 2024 and has received over 700 applications, issuing more than 350 registration certificates.

An awareness seminar on industrial design rights for small and medium-sized enterprise operators was held virtually on 18 September at the Intellectual Property Department's Office located at No 52 in Nay Pyi Taw.

As technology advances in today's business landscape, product quality alone is no longer sufficient for market success. Shape, colour, and design



An industrial design rights awareness seminar for MSMEs.

innovation have also become key factors influencing buyer decisions. Integrating design innovation into their business strategies, from jewellery and furniture to packaging and everyday items, is required, the Director-General emphasized.

The department has conducted awareness seminars for MSMEs, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Mandalay Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and universities and

colleges across regions and states since 2023. He encouraged business operators to secure Intellectual Property protection for their product designs, which would enable legal action against imitation and open opportunities for licensing or transferring designs.

The seminar was attended by the director-general, deputy directors-general, directors, and officials from the Intellectual Property Department, along with approximately 80 MSME entrepreneurs from Nay Pyi Taw, Bago Region, and Magway Region. — TWA/EMM

Bids invited for parking fee collection in 8 zones across 6 townships

THE Engineering Department (Roads and Bridges) under the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) will lease out parking fee collection operations in eight Parking Restricted Zones across six townships in Yangon through a competitive tender system, according to the Tender Acceptance and Evaluation Committee. Tender terms and conditions, along with application forms, are available from 21 September to 9 October at the Engineering

Department (Roads and Bridges) Head Office, City Hall (2nd floor), Kyauktada Township, Yangon. The submission deadline is at 2 pm on 16 October. The tender opening will take place on 20 October at Meeting Hall 2, YCDC.

Interested individuals can enquire about further details through the Engineering Department (Roads and Bridges) in person or by dialling 09 443025611 during office hours. — NN/KK

Tenders called for sale of 200 tonnes of seized lowgrade antimony ore

THE Kayah State government has invited open tenders for the sale of approximately 200 tonnes of low-grade antimony ore (average Sb content: 10.89 per cent) seized as public property, according to the Tender Committee.

The ore was confiscated by a combined inspection team from a residential compound in Kontha Village, Ward 4, Kontha village-tract,

Loikaw Township. The court case has been concluded, clearing the way for disposal through a competitive bidding process. The ore will be divided into two lots of 100 tonnes each. Tender forms are available at the Mining Department, Kayah State office, located within the Kayah State Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation in Loikaw.

The submission deadline is 4 pm on 2 October. Bids will be opened at 10 am on 5 September at the Kayah State Minister's Office, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

Individuals can enquire about further details at the Mining Department of Kayah State Office via 09 250966732 or 09 699908372 during office hours. — NN/KK

Real estate associations hold executive elections



This image shows the executive elections of the Myanmar Real Estate Services Association and Yangon Region Real Estate Services Association for the 2026-2029 term.

THE Myanmar Real Estate Services Association (Central) and the Yangon Region Real Estate Services Association held elections for their executive committees for the 2026-2029 term at the Yuzana Hotel in Bahan Township, Yangon, on 19 September.

The elections were conducted in accordance with a directive issued by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration under the Ministry of National Planning, Investment and Foreign Economic Relations on 30 March 2026, as well as the association's 2023 constitution and bylaws, with members participating in the electoral process.

Due to transport diffi-

culties, members from different regions and states were unable to attend the election in person. Preliminary elections were therefore held in the respective regions, states and districts. The elections were systematically conducted with photographic and video records, while ballot applications and ballot papers were submitted to the election commission by the respective regional, state and district chairpersons.

The Yangon Region association has more than 10,000 members, of whom around 5,000 to 6,000 are expected to vote in the current election. The association coordinated with relevant administrative bodies to facilitate voting at the township level. — MT/KZL

BOT Project Opens to Local Firms: Cinema, Housing, Shops

THE Yangon Region government stated that domestic companies are invited to submit Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the construction of an international standard high-rise building featuring a DCP (Digital Cinema Package) cinema, staff housing, and shop rooms on Min Yan Aung cinema land area owned by the Ministry of Information.

The project site is located on a 2.024 acre plot

of Min Yan Aung cinema land at 281/A, Khaymathi Street, North Okkalapa Township, Yangon Region.

The Yangon Region government will oversee the development, which will be carried out under a BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) system for a term of 30 years, extendable by two additional five-year periods. The new complex will feature a 750-seat DCP cinema, staff housing, and retail

shop rooms.

Eligible applicants are domestic companies registered with the Yangon Region Government Office's Regional Tender Scrutiny and Supervision Committee.

Documents are available from 24 September at the Myanmar Film Promotion Division (Yangon Region) at 102, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, Ward 5, Mayangon Township, Yangon. The submission

deadline is at 4:30 pm on 30 September. Late submissions will not be considered anyhow.

Individuals can enquire for further details through the Myanmar Film Promotion Division (Yangon Region) at 01 8664741 or 09 420174122 during office hours, according to the Yangon Region government's Tender Acceptance and Evaluation Committee. — NN/KK

Taking preventive measures against natural disasters

THE El Niño phenomenon has reached a strong El Niño state this September, with sea surface temperatures and atmospheric conditions in the tropical Pacific Ocean near the equator showing significant El Niño characteristics, resulting in abnormal weather patterns. The Department of Meteorology and Hydrology has announced that the strong El Niño conditions may persist from October 2026 through February 2027, with the phenomenon potentially remaining at its strongest during this period.

In general, the El Niño phenomenon can cause a delayed onset and early withdrawal of the monsoon, irregular rainfall patterns, heavy rainfall, strong winds, drought, water shortages and high temperatures. Recently, Myanmar has experienced episodes of heavy rainfall, with some areas experiencing or continuing to experience flooding. Therefore, people should be aware that the strong El Niño conditions may result in unexpected weather conditions.

According to weather forecasts, although extremely hot conditions may be experienced after the period of heavy rainfall associated with the El Niño phenomenon ends, isolated heavy rainfall is expected in various parts of the country due to moderate monsoon winds over the Andaman Sea and the southern Bay of Bengal, strong development of cumulonimbus clouds, and cloud bands extending from a low-pressure cell developing along the central coastal areas of Vietnam. In addition to weather forecasts, attention should also be paid to the potential impacts and consequences of severe weather. As strong El Niño conditions are expected to continue causing abnormal weather patterns, special attention should be paid to possible weather events, associated natural disasters and their potential impacts on public health. Under the current weather conditions, heavy rainfall and strong winds may trigger natural hazards such as flash floods and landslides. Therefore, people living near hilly areas should remain alert to the risk of landslides, while those living near rivers and creeks should take precautionary measures against flooding and inundation.

Currently, due to severe weather conditions, some flood-control embankments in Ayeyawady Region and Yangon Region have been damaged, resulting in flooding and inundation in residential areas. Relevant ministries and organizations, together with residents, are continuing to take vigorous and accelerated measures to control and prevent further water intrusion by mobilizing machinery and manpower and employing appropriate technical measures.

Relevant ministries and organizations, together with residents, are continuing to take vigorous and accelerated measures to control and prevent further water intrusion by mobilizing machinery and manpower and employing appropriate technical measures.

As abnormal weather patterns caused by the El Niño phenomenon are expected to continue, concerted efforts must be sustained to prevent and mitigate various natural disasters that may occur. Preparatory measures must also be taken in advance to respond to potential natural disasters that have not yet occurred.



Title	-	Mother
Author	-	Bhamo Tin Aung
Publishing House	-	Lin Yaung Thit
Publication Date	-	September 2026 (4 th Edition)
Price	-	K20,000

Mother

“A person’s worth should be measured by how much of the historical responsibility placed upon their shoulders by the era in which they live they were able to shoulder.”

The speaker of these historic words was Sayagyi Bhamo Tin Aung, one of the most influential figures in Myanmar literature. Saya served as an executive committee member of the World Peace Congress (Myanmar) (1951-63), executive of the Myanmar Writers Association (1950-51), secretariat member of the Internal Peace Committee (1957-63), executive of the Writers’ Literary Club (1961), and president of the Union of Burma Writers Union (1963-64). He also served as the chairman of the Burma-Albania Friendship Association and vice chairman of the National Anti-Imperialism and Anti-Kuomintang Aggression

Committee.

Judging by these titles, one might assume he lived a life of comfort and privilege – a conclusion that would be entirely wrong. Bhamo Tin Aung spent a total of roughly 13 years imprisoned behind bars and on the Cocos Islands. During the AFPFL (Anti-Fascist People’s Freedom League) government era, he was first arrested on 29 August 1952 for his writings and held until 4 January 1957 (a total of four years, four months, and six days). Because of his writings published in the November 1958 issue of Linyon (The Eagle) Journal, he was arrested again from 1959 to 1962 for two years. Later, he was imprisoned once more for his writings – spending five years on the Coco Islands and around two years in Insein Prison.

Under the chapter titled Dark Nights in one of his books, he wrote:

“On 29 August 1952, I was arrested under Section 5 of the Defence Regulations. After being made to stay alongside rats, mosquitoes, and cockroaches for seven days in the sunlight-deprived Barr Street lock-up, the Union of Burma Writers Association agitated loudly, demanding that I be transferred to the central Rangoon Prison, and I finally arrived there on 5 September. Because I authored books such as Civil War, A Day of Pyitawtha, The Great Rebel, Mother, and Pyitawtha Khin Khin Oo, the government acted as the plaintiff and prosecuted me case after case, again and again. Even though the book Mother was just a single title, they prosecuted me under two separate charges simply because it had been printed twice.”

The opening dedication

reads:

“With this novel, Mother, I bow and pay humble tribute to the Burmese women who – making do from behind, enduring starvation and scarcity – supported and stood by their husbands, sons, and brothers fighting for the liberation of the entire Burmese nation.”

Mother is one of Bhamo Tin Aung’s most acclaimed works. The novel poignantly captures the harsh, gruelling life of its central protagonist, an older woman named ‘Nyein’, who wanders the streets carrying a merchant basket on her head to provide for her husband and son, set against the political backdrop of the era. It weaves together the political landscape of Myanmar across pre-independence British and Japanese rule and post-independence AFPFL governance, illustrating the press environment of the time alongside a stifled, constricted society.



Book Title	-	Lotus in the Mud
Author	-	Thein Pe Myint, Mya Than Tint
Publishing House	-	Zun Pwint
Publication Date	-	September 2026 (6 th Edition)
Price	-	K20,000

Lotus in the Mud

THIS book is a collaborative work by two well-known Myanmar authors, Sayagyi Mya Than Tint and Sayagyi Thein Pe Myint, based on the novel Resurrection by the great Russian writer Leo Tolstoy. First published in 1962, it became a prominent translated novel in Myanmar literature and has maintained a lasting good reputation among readers.

The book portrays, through a love story, a society with a vast gap between rich and poor, where the innocent become the accused and the prey of the hunter in the broken system. The novel begins with a sex worker named A Shwe going to prison, and the entire book is to be read with a sense of poignancy, contemplation, and wonder. It

also depicts the era and its system, and contains memorable content within the story.

The story, set in Pyu, follows the life of a girl named Shwe Tin, the daughter of a farm labourer. Her life, how she becomes a victim of fate, and Shwe Tin’s heart-breaking experiences amidst the love struggle between the lower class and the wealthy.

Thakin Tauk Tun, a leader who always stands on the side of farmers and the lower class, reflects in his image the characteristics of nationalist intellectuals of the Doh Bamar Asiayon (We Burmans Association). The character Nyo Lay, who gives up personal interest for the benefit of others, represents self-renunciation in traditional Myanmar values. Furthermore, the jour-

nalist character Maung Maung Than will help readers gain an ultimate outside eye on society, operating on the sidelines to observe it.

The background of the story is set from the 1930s to the 1950s, reflecting the historical situation of Myanmar. The story depicts the landlord class in Pyu, colonial exploitation of the rural people, and the social unrest before and after independence. Another story narrates one character’s experience of the world.

This deeply captivating novel, set against the colonial era, describes the lives of farmers, farm labourers, and manual workers, the exploitation and profiteering by landlords and the stories of various people who

end up in prison. Those who did unjust things and ended up in prison, those who did unjust things and remain free outside prison, those who did too much that was just and were detained in prison, those who were right yet were thrown into prison. The two authors also skillfully analyze the possibilities behind such phenomena for readers to consider.

In summary, Lotus in the Mud is a good translation that brings a world literary classic to Myanmar readers, crossing cultural boundaries. Thanks to the efforts of Thein Pe Myint and Mya Than Tint, Myanmar readers have been able to enjoy Tolstoy’s profound thoughts with the flavour of Myanmar literature.

Let Us Work Together for a Cooler Earth

By Min Min Zan

The ozone guards our Earth so bright,
It keeps us safe from harmful light.
Let’s stop the chemicals that harm,
And keep our precious world from harm.

Let every nation join as one,
To save our Earth beneath the sun.
Use greener ways and save our air,
With simple steps and loving care.

Plant more trees and save the green,
Keep rivers clear, our planet clean.
Each little step can help us all,
Together we can make a call.

For those who come in years ahead,
Let greener paths be widely spread.
Protect our Earth, both near and far,
And keep it safe beneath each star.

Friend with Faces

Translated By Hu Wo (Cuckoo’s Song)

Sometimes
Your face
Looks like a silver moon shimmering at night.

Sometimes
Your face
Looks like a glassy sun shining in daytime.

Sometimes
Your face
Looks like a grey, cloudy sky as though rainy.

Sometimes

Your face
With a darkening anger wave
Looks like a stormy sea.

Once one face,
Once another face;
Your face in manners
I lose count and forget –
How on earth didn’t you know that?
Harbouring a grudge, kill me if you must.
Even if not so, mutter imprecations.
I cannot only remember it, friend.

Original poem by Tekkatho Min Maw

The Flower that won’t fall

having roots among the pebbles
from the roots emerge the plant
from the plant, the buds begin to bloom
then how would it fall (to the ground)
when summer arrives?

Composed on 20 January 1966
Translated on 17 September 2026

The Unpossessed Flower

’tis that I do not want to live
since I look up on thee
’tis that I do not want to die
since I see her regal heights:
the points of life and death
cannot be crossed
because the unpossessed flower is blooming



Translator’s note: Tin Moe composed this poem a few years s after he composed his more well-known poem ‘The Unpossessed Flower’. There are a few translations of that poem, but above is my translation. Both poems have ‘flower’ in the titles.

NATIONAL

Entertainment



Popular singer ready for A Night of Memories music concert

POPULAR singer May Kha Lar will perform at a special music event titled A Night of Memories with May Kha Lar at The Idol Parami BBQ Restaurant on Parami Road.

She will perform popular classic songs, with singer Min Min joining her for duets. The Pandora Girl band will provide live music, while DJ Yin Yang will perform during the 30-minute break. – TWA/KTZH

MMPO Chair attends family show of Atta Kanbar film

MYANMAR Motion Pictures Organization Chairman Director U Kyi Soe Tun attended the family show of the drama film 'Atta Kanbar' at Nawa-day Cinema in Yangon on 15 September.

Produced by Mya Nan Tawwin Film Production and based on a novel by writer Ponnami, the film was scripted by Nya Hmway Pan and Ngwe Sin Thone and directed by Hein Soe. The film, now



showing nationwide, stars Yi, Thundray Oo, Zaw Win Naing and other supporting actors. – Htun Htun/KTZH

Filming of Let Me Keep Loving You begins



THE production launch ceremony for the new TV series “Let Me Keep Loving You” was held recently.

Written by Chit Su Khin and directed by Ye Naung, the series features Aung Min Khant, Banya Phone Pyae, Ye Lwin Oo, Everest Moe, Nay Chi Shun Lat, Mon Devi, Hmu Thakhin Ko and other artistes. – TWA/KTZH

Rock in Mandalay concert set for 30 Oct

THE Rock in Mandalay music concert will be held at Mandala Thiri Stadium in Mandalay on 30 October, featuring veteran singer Lay Phyu and popular bands including Wanted, Reason, Wael, Velocity, Double Tape and 3:16.

The stadium at 68th and 73rd Streets of Chanayethazan will open at 3 pm, with performances scheduled from 4 pm to 11 pm. – TWA/KTZH



113th Anniversary Music Festival Honouring Saung U Ba Than set for 27 Sept



THE 113th Anniversary Music Festival Honouring harpist Saung U Ba Than will be held at Wazira Cinema in Pabedan Township, Yangon, at 1 pm on 27 September.

Organized by Media N Event Production, the festival will feature veteran and emerging artistes from Myanmar's music, theatre and film industries performing harpist Saung U Ba Than's well-known classic compositions, according to organizer-director Kyi Thar (Pwe Kyite Khin). – ASH/KTZH

Images of the Heart music concert by veteran composer

THE Images of the Heart music concert by veteran composer Dr Sai Kham Leik is expected to cost up to K3.9 billion, according to Director Zin Yaw Maung Maung, an event organizer.

About K3.6 billion has already been spent, with the total expected to reach K3.9 billion upon completion. Tickets will be sold soon, but the event is not being organized primarily for profit, the organizer said.

“Making money is not our main



objective. Even if we incur a loss, we will accept it happily,” said Zin Yaw Maung Maung. – TWA/KTZH

Artist's 13th solo exhibition, 'The Feline Mysteries'



ARTIST Naing Zaw's 13th solo exhibition, 'The Feline Mysteries', will be held at Good Mood Gallery on Sule Pagoda Road, Yangon, from 19 to 23 September.

The exhibition features acrylic artworks exploring the mystery and depth of cats, incorporating Myanmar traditional motifs, Bagan influences and Alice in Wonderland-inspired fantasy elements. The gallery will be open from 10 am to 5 pm, and art lovers can contact 09 881100027 for details. – TWA/KTZH

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cambodia launches initiative to reduce e-waste

CAMBODIA'S Ministry of Environment has launched a US\$30-million initiative to improve electronic waste management and accelerate the country's transition to a circular economy, according to a joint press release on Saturday.

The five-year project is supported by \$26 million in co-financing from the Cambodian government and private partners, alongside a \$4-million grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Developed in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the initiative aims to curb pollution and optimize resource use throughout the electronics value chain.

The initiative is projected to directly safeguard over 200,000 people by establishing safer working environments and reducing exposure to hazardous waste.

Additionally, the project targets a 27,000-tonne reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, the containment of toxic materials like mercury and persistent organic pollutants, and the prevention of more than 20,000 tonnes of pollutants from entering the environment. — Xinhua

Shrine opens to honour stuffed toys

A shrine dedicated to services in honour of stuffed toys opened in June in a mountainous forest in Kyoto Prefecture, offering a place for people to express appreciation for their plushies and find peace together.

The brainchild of a company based in Osaka Prefecture that repairs stuffed toys, Nuigurumi Jinja in Nantan enshrines a divided spirit from a venerable shrine in Kyoto's Higashiyama Ward known for conducting Shinto funerals and services for dolls.

The grounds of Nuigurumi Jinja, literally "plushies shrine", feature a thatched-roof water pavilion shaped like soft-serve ice cream and a small "torii" gate for stuffed toys. Visitors were delighted during the inaugural festival in mid-June, taking photos with their beloved plushies.

Behind the project is Komichi Horiguchi, 51, president of Cocoro Co, a "hospital" for stuffed toys in Toyonaka, Osaka Prefecture, which is said to have "treated" about 26,000 stuffed animals to date. — Kyodo

Trump bans media outlets

US President Donald Trump said Friday that CNN, MS NOW (previously known as MSNBC) and Politico were banned from the White House "effective immediately", citing what he called fake news in a post on Truth Social.

"I am proud to announce that, effective immediately, I am banning Fake News CNN, MSNOW (who recently changed their name from MSNBC

due to lack of viewership and credibility!), and Politico (The recipients of an illegal and ridiculous \$8 Million subscription, an All Time Record, directly from the United States Government, under Crooked Joe Biden, in order to keep them 'alive.' Seems like corruption to me!), from the White House as a result of their constant 'reporting' FAKE NEWS!" Trump wrote. — Xinhua

Prime minister inaugurates international conference on environment and climate dynamics

Organized by the National Green Tribunal (NGT), the event commenced at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a two-day international conference on "The Future of Environment and Climate Dynamics", being organised by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Saturday. The two-day Conference is being organised by the National Green Tribunal on 19 and 20 September.

The inaugural session is also attended by Chief Justice of India Justice Surya Kant, Union Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Bhupender Yadav, Attorney General R Venkataramani and NGT Chairperson Justice



Among the G-20, India is the only country to have met the commitments made at the COP-21 Summit in Paris ahead of time, PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ UNITED NATIONS INDIA

Prakash Shrivastava.

The conference witnesses the participation of environmental experts, Judges of the Supreme Court of India and High Courts, District

Court Judges, Secretaries of various Ministries, senior government officials, representatives of State Judicial Academies, State Legal Services Authorities, State

Expert Appraisal Committees (SEACs), State Environment Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAAs), State Wetland Authorities and other stakeholders. — ANI

North Korean leader inspects munitions factories

NORTH Korean leader Kim Jong Un inspected munitions factories earlier this week and called for the enhancement of artificial intelligence used in both offensive and defensive weapons systems, state-run media said Saturday.

His three-day inspection through Friday came after Pyongyang held a joint firepower drill involving ballistic and cruise missiles as well as attack drones last weekend.

Pictures distributed by the official Korean Central News Agency showed Kim observing large-caliber multiple rocket launchers and drones at the factories.

Analysts have pointed to the possibility that

North Korea is trying to emulate Russia's combination of rocket launchers and drone attacks in its war against Ukraine. South Korean media speculated Pyongyang could export such weapons systems to Moscow.

Japan, the United States and South Korea

regard large-caliber rockets as ballistic missiles.

Kim noted that North Korea's achievements in modernizing all components of its defense capability, including artillery, mean "a significant change in the composition and means of our armed forces", KCNA said.

He also called for "steadily accelerating the expansion of production capacity and the modernization of technical processes" as well as "putting the armor and automation of artillery weapons on a higher stage", the news agency reported.

Meanwhile, Kim's younger sister Kim Yo Jong on Saturday rejected a recent resolution adopted by the International Atomic Energy Agency that criticized Pyongyang's nuclear development, saying it disregarded the security environment in which North Korea is "exposed to constant nuclear threat of outside forces". — Kyodo



In an unknown location shows North Korean leader Kim Jong Un during a visit to a munitions factory. PHOTO: KCNA/KYODO

ECONOMY WORLD

India-New Zealand free trade agreement approaches implementation

The agreement would create 'a significant opportunity' for Indian exporters, with New Zealand committing to bring tariffs on Indian goods to zero from day one, subject to the agreement's provision.

THE India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement is likely to come into force within the next month, said New Zealand Trade and Investment Minister Todd McClay, as the two countries work on exchanging official notes to begin the process of implementing the pact.

In an interview with ANI, McClay said the agreement, which has cleared the New Zealand Parliament, would provide Indian exporters with duty-free ac-



McClay said the agreement would create "a significant opportunity" for Indian exporters. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/PROJECTS MONITOR**

cess to the New Zealand market from the first day of implementation.

The New Zealand

Parliament approved the implementing legislation on 15 September, with the official parlia-

mentary record showing 93 votes in favour and 29 against. Royal assent was granted on 17 September.

McClay said the agreement would create "a significant opportunity" for Indian exporters, with New Zealand committing to bring tariffs on Indian goods to zero from day one, subject to the agreement's provisions. "I think you will see a lot more trade in chemicals and pharmaceuticals, but also in machinery," he said. — ANI

NEWS IN BRIEF

China's high-tech FDI surges in first 8 months of 2026

CHINA registered robust growth in foreign direct investment (FDI) in high-tech industries during the first eight months of the year, despite a decline in overall inflows, official data showed on Friday.

During this period, FDI in high-tech industries surged 35.1 per cent to 200.26 billion yuan (about US\$29.66 billion), accounting for 41.7 per cent of the national total, a rise of 12.4 percentage points from a year earlier, the Ministry of Commerce said.

A total of 42,582 new foreign-invested enterprises were set up, an increase of 0.3 per cent year on year, while FDI in actual use came in at 479.95 billion yuan, down 5.3 per cent from the previous year. — Xinhua

FDI commitments decrease in Nepal

FOREIGN direct investment (FDI) commitments to Nepal decreased significantly in the first two months of the current 2026-27 financial year compared with the same period of the previous financial year, according to a report released by the Department of Industry on Friday.

Nepal received FDI commitments worth 11.12 billion Nepali rupees between mid-July and mid-September, down from 33.92 billion rupees during the corresponding period of the previous financial year, the department said.

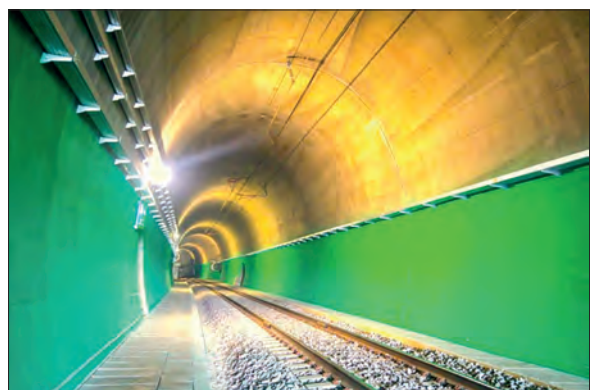
The commitments were made for 328 projects, which are expected to create 3,447 jobs.

The tourism sector received the largest FDI commitment by value, totalling 3.7 billion rupees, while the information and communication technology sector, with 212 projects, accounted for the highest number of projects. (1 Nepali rupee equals US\$0.0065) — Xinhua

Georgia posts 6.9% economic growth in Q2

GEORGIA'S real gross domestic product (GDP) grew 6.9 per cent year on year in the second quarter of 2026, slowing from 7.4 per cent growth in the same period last year, preliminary data released Friday by the National Statistics Office of Georgia (Geostat) showed.

Nominal GDP totalled 28.1 billion lari (about US\$10.8 billion) in the April-June period, up from 25.6 billion lari in the same quarter of 2025, according to Geostat. GDP per capita rose to 7,141.9 lari (\$2,748.4), from 6,904.3 lari a year earlier. The GDP deflator, a broad gauge of price changes across the economy, in-



This photo taken on 24 December 2025 shows an interior view of Tunnel 9 of the Georgian Railway Modernization Project in Khashuri, Georgia. **PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE**

creased 3 per cent, down from 4.2 per cent in the second quarter of 2025.

Transportation and storage grew 19.8 per cent year-on-year, while arts, entertainment and recreation expanded 17.4 per cent, information and communication

16.6 per cent, and human health and social work activities 15 per cent. Wholesale and retail trade, including repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, grew eight per cent, while manufacturing expanded 7.3 per cent. — Xinhua

Travellers crowd airports, stations at start of Japan's Silver Week holidays

TRAVELLERS crowded airports and major train stations in Japan on Saturday at the start of the Silver Week autumn holidays, with the five-day stretch the longest in 11 years.

The number of train passengers between Friday and the last day of the holidays on Wednesday will nearly match those typically seen in the New Year and summer holiday seasons, according to six regional companies of the Japan Railways Group.

Many of the flights from Tokyo's Haneda airport were fully booked on Saturday, airlines said.

While Hokkaido and Okinawa are popular des-



A shinkansen bullet train platform in Tokyo Station is crowded on the first day of the Silver Week holidays on 19 September 2026. **PHOTO: KYODO**

tinations during the holidays, flights to Haneda were also crowded, they said.

"It is usually hard for me to take a block of leave so I appreciate the consecutive holidays. I want to

enjoy the view of the Seto Inland Sea," said Shigeru Matsuyama, a 52-year-old Tokyo resident who was going on a bike trip along the popular Shimanami Kaido cycling road in western Japan. — Kyodo

AI takes spotlight at China-ASEAN Expo

WHEN Vietnamese visitor Doan Minh Thao stepped into an exhibition hall of the 23rd China-ASEAN Expo here on Friday, he got interested in an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered eyewear that can provide real-time translation in over 40 languages, including Vietnamese.

With the help of this gadget, developed by a Chinese company, he managed to have unimpeded verbal communication with exhibitors at

the venue.

AI-related products including these smart glasses have taken center stage at the ongoing Expo, which attracts more than 3,400 companies from China, the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and beyond.

“Last year, AI was mostly for show. This year, it is driving sales,” said Wang Jicai, secretary-general of the China-ASEAN Expo Secretariat. — Xinhua

Nepal sees rise in remittance inflows, forex

NEPAL recorded an increase in both remittance inflows and foreign exchange reserves in the first month of the 2026-27 financial year, according to a report released by Nepal’s central bank on Friday. Remittance inflows increased 10.2 per cent year on year to US\$1.40 billion in the one-month period from mid-July to mid-August, Nepal Rastra Bank said in the report.

During the same

period, 70,441 Nepali migrant workers obtained labor permits, including both first-time permit recipients and those renewing their permits, compared with 68,110 during the same period in the previous financial year. The country’s gross foreign exchange reserves increased 2.1 per cent to \$25.84 billion by mid-August, from \$25.31 billion in mid-July, according to the report. — Xinhua

Maersk orders 26 large container ships

DANISH global shipping giant Maersk said Friday it

had ordered 26 large container vessels as part of



The vessels are expected to be delivered in 2029 and 2030. **PHOTO: MAERSK**

an ongoing fleet renewal.

The vessels are expected to be delivered in 2029 and 2030, the company told AFP in an email.

Maersk, the world’s second-biggest container shipping group, did not disclose which shipyards would build the vessels, nor the value of the contracts.

“The vessels will have a capacity of 18,600 TEU (20 foot equivalent unit) and will be equipped with dual-fuel engines able to

operate on liquified gas,” the company said.

In mid-August, Maersk raised its full-year earnings guidance as it reported a doubling of profits in the second quarter, driven by strong demand in Asia in particular.

Its profits rose even as the ongoing Mideast war throttled tanker and cargo traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, a key transit route for oil, gas and other crucial industrial products. — AFP

Foreign recruits get behind wheel as Hiroshima bus shortage bites

FACED with a worsening shortage of bus drivers, a Hiroshima transport company has turned to Indonesia for help, hiring two foreign nationals who hope to begin carrying passengers on regular routes by the end of the year.

Saeful Ulum, 49, and Thiery Corompis, 36, joined Hiroshima Kotsu in April as prospective drivers, in what the company says is the first such recruitment of foreign nationals by a bus operator in Hiroshima Prefecture.

“We are departing now. Please take care,” Ulum announces smoothly in Japanese during a training run.

With both hands firmly on the wheel, he checks the side mirrors before pulling away. The two men began training on public roads in June as they work



This photo taken in Hiroshima on 17 August 2026, shows Hiroshima Kotsu bus driver Saeful Ulum.

towards becoming full-fledged route bus drivers. Hiroshima Kotsu, which mainly operates services in Hiroshima city, has 195 drivers, about 20 per cent

fewer than a decade ago. The shortage has made it increasingly difficult to maintain routes, forcing the company to reduce services twice in 2024.

With few younger people entering the profession, the workforce is also aging, with the average of drivers currently 53. — Kyodo

Sri Lanka commissions 1st battery storage system connected to national grid

SRI Lanka commissioned its first battery energy storage system in the north-central city of Anuradhapura on Friday, an effort to expand renew-

able energy use and improve the stability of the national electricity grid.

President Anura Kumara Dissanayake unveiled a commemorative

plaque and inspected the facility, which has a capacity of 10 megawatts. Minister of Ports, Civil Aviation and Energy Anura Karunathilaka also partic-

ipated in the event.

The system is designed to support the integration of renewable energy into the national grid. — Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V XIN HUA YUAN VOY.NO. (BY8030S89)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V XIN HUA YUAN VOY.NO. (BY8030S89)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **20-9-2026** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CMA-CGM SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS DIGEST



File photo shows fishermen on a boat in the harbor of Ilulissat on the west coast of Greenland, 250 kilometres north of the Arctic Circle. **PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE**

19 SEPTEMBER

Denmark hails ‘binding’ Greenland deal with Trump

DENMARK on Saturday hailed a “binding” deal announced by US President Donald Trump to give Washington “permanent control” over Greenland’s security and bar Russian and Chinese bases from the Arctic territory.

Since returning to the White House in January 2025, Trump has repeatedly insisted that Washington needed to control Greenland for strategic reasons, alarming NATO ally Denmark and sparking fierce pushback from the alliance.

Denmark and Greenland – an autonomous Danish territory – both hailed the deal and said they would sign it on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York next week. Danish Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen said Saturday that the potential signing meant “next week could be a good week”.

But the terms of the deal are uncertain, and Denmark maintains its sovereignty remains intact. – AFP

18 SEPTEMBER

OpenAI’s Sam Altman to brief UN Security Council

OPENAI CEO Sam Altman will brief the United Nations Security Council next week during the annual gathering of world leaders for the UN General Assembly, the company said Friday.

The meeting is being organized by France, which currently holds the rotating presidency of the 15-member Security Council, and comes as major players in the industry have said a slowdown in AI development could be necessary out of safety concerns.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday called for coordinated international action to address AI risks as fears rise about the dangers of the fast-evolving technology.

“National action is essential. But global coordination is also indispensable,” Guterres told reporters. Concerns about AI safety have escalated in recent weeks. – AFP

17 SEPTEMBER

Modi pitches India as global chipmaking hub

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi pitched India as a new global hub for semiconductor production on Thursday, urging technology firms to invest in what he called a “reliable” location. “Chips from Indian plants are reaching customers in India and across the world,” Modi told executives from major global technology firms at a semiconductor conference in New Delhi.

Modi met senior executives from Indian and global technology companies on Wednesday ahead of the conference, according to his office.

Representatives of Tata Electronics and CG Power, as well as Advantest, Applied Materials, ASML, Foxconn, Intel and Micron, were among those attending.

Countries are seeking to secure semiconductor supply chains and bolster vulnerabilities in global chip production. – AFP

16 SEPTEMBER

S Africa pushes back on US visa curbs

SOUTH Africa on Wednesday hit back at new US visa restrictions over its racial equity policies, accusing the Trump administration of distorting its laws and further straining ties between Washington and one of Africa’s most influential powers.

The dispute is the latest front in a broader clash over race, trade and diplomacy that has seen Washington cut aid, impose tariffs, expel South Africa’s ambassador and boycott a G20 summit in Johannesburg, all against the unresolved legacy of white minority rule.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the new visa restrictions would target those who promote “race-based discrimination, incite violence, or enable land confiscation without compensation in South Africa”.

Foreign Minister Ronald Lamola said Pretoria viewed the move “with concern” and that Washington was echoing narratives promoted by fringe groups opposed to South Africa’s post-apartheid reforms. This visa restriction policy is only the first step in a series of escalatory measures. – AFP

15 SEPTEMBER

Lebanon prosecutor requests charges for ex-president

A LEBANESE prosecutor on Tuesday requested that former president Michel Aoun be indicted over the 2020 Beirut port blast that killed more than 200 people, a judicial official told AFP.

The prosecutor at Lebanon’s Court of Cassation asked the judge overseeing the case, Tarek Bitar, to “press charges against (former) president Aoun,” said the official, requesting anonymity.

The official added that charges were being sought against Aoun because he “had prior knowledge of the presence of ammonium nitrate at the port and its danger, without taking the necessary measures” or referring it to the country’s Higher Defence Council.

The massive explosion on 4 August 2020 killed more than 220 people, injured more than 6,500 and laid waste to swathes of the capital. In March, a judicial official told AFP that judge Bitar had completed his probe. – AFP

14 SEPTEMBER

Helicopter-borne electromagnetic surveying coils configured

PROFESSOR Wang Yanzhang, the executive deputy director of the State Key Laboratory of Deep Earth Exploration and Imaging at Jilin University, and his team have been deeply engaged in the field of deep Earth exploration for over a decade.

The team has developed an integrated exploration system combining airborne electromagnetic surveying with SERF magnetometry. Their self-developed helicopter-borne electromagnetic equipment acts like a “CT scanner for the Earth”, revealing underground geological structures, while SERF magnetometers detect minute variations in the Earth’s magnetic field. – Xinhua

13 SEPTEMBER

Anthropic boss calls for AI slowdown

DARIO AMODEI, the head of AI company Anthropic, called on Sunday for the pace of development of artificial intelligence models to slow down and to be closely monitored, describing the risks associated with AI as “serious”.

His comments came a few days after AI researcher Jacob Coxon, who left OpenAI to join Anthropic, decided to leave the industry, accusing both US companies of “gambling with our lives” in the race to develop models capable of self-improvement.

OpenAI boss Sam Altman and Elon Musk quickly chimed in to say they agreed with Amodei’s assessment, as pressure builds for improved oversight.

Amodei’s statement echoed another call by Anthropic in early June to slow or suspend development. – AFP

LOCAL SPORTS

Royal-D Golden Belt Championship finals set for 20 Sept

THE 2026 Royal-D Golden Belt Championship finals, featuring top Myanmar Lethwei fighters, will be held at Theinbyu Gymnasium in Yangon on 20 September.

At the semifinals held on 4 September, 24 fighters from six weight classes competed in 12 bouts. The 12 winners will face one another in the finals for six Golden Belt championship titles.

In addition to the six Golden Belt title bouts, the event will feature three special challenge bouts. One of these will feature a direct student of legendary Myanmar Lethwei fighter Tway Mashaung. The legendary fighter himself will attend the event to support his student and address the audience.

Tickets for the finals can be purchased in person at Theinbyu Gymnasium or by dialling 09 425023799 or 09 254214160. Tickets are also available via U Sai Zaw Zaw’s Facebook page Messenger.

For fans unable to attend in person, the finals will be broadcast live on MRTV-4, the Pyone Play app, the Pyone Play Sport YouTube channel and the Royal-D Performance Partner Facebook page. — TWA/KZL



This photo captures match-ups scheduled for the 2026 Royal-D Golden Belt Championship finals.

Team Zanaka eFootball players depart for Asian Games

THE first batch of eFootball mobile and console players from Myanmar’s national Esports team, Team Zanaka, departed Yangon International Airport for Japan yesterday afternoon to compete at the XX Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

The XX Asian Games 2026 will be held from 19 September to 4 October at venues across Aichi-Nagoya. Team Zanaka, representing the Myanmar Esports Federation (MESF), will make its first appearance in the Esports competition at the Asian Games.

Team Zanaka advanced to the top 12 in Asia after overcoming leading teams in the regional qualifiers. The Myanmar team will compete against leading Asian teams, including hosts Japan, the Republic of Korea, China, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

MESF President Dr Kaung Myat San said the national Esports team had systematically prepared for all five Esports disciplines in which it will compete at the Asian Games.



The two athletes from Myanmar’s national Esports team depart for Japan to compete at the XX Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. PHOTO: ZWE MARN

He described Myanmar’s qualification in all five disciplines as a historic achievement for the country’s Esports sector and expressed confidence that the team could bring home medals with the support of the public.

A total of 21 managers, coaches and athletes from the Myanmar Esports team will travel to the Asian Games. The two eFootball mobile and console athletes departed as the first batch.

KBZPay Deputy Managing Director Daw Ei Thanda Hlaing said KBZPay had supported the development of Esports in Myanmar in cooperation with MESF for many years. She said KBZPay had provided more than K7.7 billion in support since 2018 for youth development, digital technology and the long-term development of Myanmar’s Esports sector.

KBZPay, U9, Lipovitan-D and SINODA are supporting MESF

as partners for its Asian Games campaign. U9 will provide network services for athletes and fans, while SINODA will support the physical and mental well-being of Esports players. Lipovitan-D will serve as Team Zanaka’s Official Partner and provide continued support.

Myanmar has participated in the Asian Games since 1951 and has won medals in various sports throughout its history. At the XX Asian Games, Esports will feature five disciplines with 33 medal events.

The eFootball mobile and console players were seen off at Yangon International Airport by MESF President Dr Kaung Myat San, Vice-President U Kyaw Htet Lin, federation officials, Esports enthusiasts and fans.

The Honour of Kings team will depart for Japan on 24 September, followed by the PUBG Mobile team on 25 September and the Mobile Legends: Bang Bang team on 26 September. — Thitsa (MNA)/KZL

Myanmar Teqball players reach two Asian Games finals

MYANMAR’S Khin Hnin Wai advanced to the women’s singles final, while the pair of Su Mon Aung and Phyu Phyu Than reached the women’s doubles final in the Teqball competition at the XX Asian Games, held at Nagoya City Higashi Sports Centre in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

The Myanmar national Teqball team, comprising two coaches and four athletes, is competing in the men’s singles, women’s singles and women’s doubles events at the Asian Games, which are being held from 17 to 20 September 2026.

In the women’s singles



Myanmar Teqball players compete at the XX Asian Games, in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

event, Khin Hnin Wai competed against players from Kyrgyzstan, Indonesia and Lebanon on 18 September. She won all three matches in straight sets to advance to the semifinals with an unbeaten record.

In the women’s doubles, Myanmar’s Su Mon Aung and Phyu Phyu Than lost their opening group match to the Thai duo in straight sets. They bounced back by defeating the Cambodian and Lebanese duos in straight sets to advance to the semifinals.

At 7:30 am Myanmar Standard Time on 19 September, Khin Hnin Wai faced a Lebanese player in the women’s singles semi-final. She won the first set 12-7 with focused play and took the second 12-8 after another closely contested game, securing a straight-sets victory to advance to the women’s singles final.

At 8 am, Su Mon Aung and Phyu Phyu Than faced the Lebanese pair in the women’s doubles semifinal. The Myanmar pair won the first set 12-11 and dominated the second 12-1 to secure a straight-sets victory and book their place in the women’s doubles final.

In the men’s singles semi-final at 9:30 am, Myanmar’s Saw Friday faced an Iraqi player. Although he maintained his concentration throughout both sets, he narrowly lost 11-12 in each and missed out on a place in the final. Saw Friday will compete in the third-place match against the Philippines’ Prince Agustin on 20 September.

In the women’s singles final at 12:30 pm on 20 September, Khin Hnin Wai will face Indonesia’s Sumaya. In the women’s doubles final at 2:40 pm, Su Mon Aung and Phyu Phyu Than will face Thailand’s Suphawadi Wongkham and Jutatip Kuntatong. — MNA/KZL

3rd Shining Shanghai festival kicks off

The third annual Shanghai International Light Festival officially commenced on Thursday, illuminating the city with a sprawling, immersive showcase designed to highlight its rich cultural heritage and foster global exchange.

Light Festival combines lighting installation art with artificial intelligence.

The festival, which runs through 16 October, features a central venue located in a prominent downtown park, augmented by 16 distinct sub-venues scattered across historic villages, ancient towns, and iconic old streets. Organ-



People enjoy a light show during the 3rd Shining Shanghai festival in Shanghai, east China, 17 September 2026. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

izers have scheduled 158 specialized theme activities over the month-long event, offering domestic and international visitors a diverse array of visual arts and audio-visual experiences.

According to festival planners, this year's installations leverage advanced light and visual technology to explore Shanghai's multifaceted urban spirit.

The creative programming explicitly draws from three foundational regional lineages: the city's revolutionary "red" history, its unique East-meets-West "Haipai" culture, and its traditional "Jiangnan" water-town heritage. Project organizers stated that the visual architecture is intentionally designed to serve as a bridge for cultural exchange, un-

derscoring the municipality's historical openness, inclusivity, and celebration of global diversity.

The celebrations began Thursday evening with a formal opening ceremony at the central location, kicking off the multi-venue, 158-event schedule that will anchor the city's autumn tourism calendar. — Xinhua

National book festival opens in Ulan Bator

THE 40th edition of Mongolia's National Book Festival officially opened in Ulan Bator, the capital of Mongolia, on Friday, bringing together hundreds of authors, publishers, readers and book lovers from Mongolia and abroad.

The festival is being organized by the non-governmental organization Nomiin Soyolt Yertunts (World of Book Culture) at Sukhbaatar Square in the heart of the capital. The festival aims to promote a culture of reading and appreciation for books, encourage children and young people to read more, and provide an opportunity for readers to meet and interact with authors and writers, according to the organizer. — Xinhua

Virtual zoo lifts spirits of children in Japan hospitals



A young child uses specialized hand controllers while experiencing a virtual reality (VR) tour from a hospital playroom. **PHOTO: KYODO**

CHILDREN facing long hospital stays in Japan are getting a chance to venture beyond their wards and explore zoos and other destinations through virtual reality.

More than 30 hospitals across the country, including Okayama University Hospital, are taking part in the initiative for children and adolescent and young adult patients undergoing treatment for cancer and other serious illnesses. The project aims to give patients who have difficulty leaving hospital a chance to interact with others, easing feelings of isolation and giving them something to look forward to during treatment and after discharge.

In mid-July, 15 chil-

Kintetsu Real Estate and Cluster developed the virtual space.

dren aged 4 to 16 gathered in a playroom in Okayama University Hospital's pediatric ward and put on VR headsets for a virtual trip to Osaka's Tennoji Zoo. They found themselves in a recreation of the zoo's African savanna area, built in an online metaverse, where giraffes and zebras wandered against the backdrop of the Abeno Harukas skyscraper. — Kyodo

Countries move to ban social media for children

THE European Union unveiled proposals on Wednesday to ban social media for children under 13, as a growing number of countries look to restrict children's access to the platforms following a global backlash.

More than 20 countries around the world have now taken steps to block or restrict children going online on social media, according to an AFP tally. Seven have measures already in place or set to be implemented, with their policies targeting children under the age of 15 or 16. Australia was the first country to introduce a blanket ban on social media for under-16s, at the end of 2025. The US state of California has also recently moved to tighten restric-



A young student uses her mobile phone at a public school in Planaltina, Brasilia on 16 March 2026. **PHOTO: AFP**

tions on minors' access to social media. Under plans unveiled Wednesday by EU chief Ursula von der Leyen in the European Parliament, the bloc will also only allow limited, supervised access until the age of 15, after months of considering ways to protect minors from features designed to

keep users hooked. Social media has been banned for under-16s in Australia since December 2025.

However the ban so far appears to have been widely circumvented by teenagers, according to data released in August.

Brazil began implementing measures in

Over 20 nations restrict children from using social media.

March requiring platforms to link the accounts of users aged under 16 to those of their parents, while also requiring platforms to verify users' ages. Indonesia has banned social media for under-16s since March.

Malaysia has taken a similar approach, with legislation coming into force in June excluding under-16s from major platforms. — AFP