

# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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## Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted and its mandated tasks, including the scrutiny of voter lists, shall be implemented in accordance with the law.
2. Effective measures will be taken with added momentum to prevent and manage the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Actions will be taken to ensure the speedy recovery of businesses from the impact of COVID-19.
4. Emphasis will be placed on achieving enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.
5. Upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution, and further work will be undertaken to hand over State duties to the winning party in accordance with democratic standards.



Cargo ships are seen docking near the Maungtaw border crossing.

## Transport hurdle brings down trade value at Maungtaw border post

**T**RANSPORT problems triggered by extreme weather in the border area between Myanmar and Bangladesh impede trade and the value of trade declined, according to the Rakhine State Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Out of two border posts (Sittway and Maungtaw) between Myanmar and Bangladesh, Maungtaw cross-border area faced transport problems and impacts of weather.

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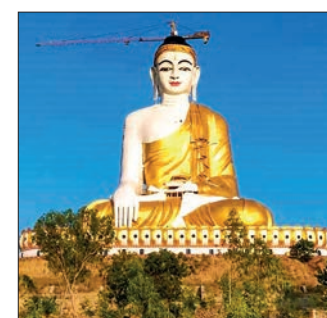


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# Construction of Bodhi Tahtaung Buddha Sitting Image fully completed

ACCORDING to the wishes of the Bodhi Tahtaung Sayadaw, the 19-storey Sitting Buddha statue is being built and almost completed in Monywa Township.

“The pagoda is almost finished. All that’s left is to make the terrace. The statues have been placed on each floor inside the pagoda. Inside, there are 12 floors, the head of the statue is

formed with six floors, the hair is on one floor, and there are 19 floors in all.

Each floor of the Buddha statue is offered with sitting statues. One of the two elevators has been installed, said Sayadaw U Indobhasa.

With the supervision of Bodhi Tahtaung Sayadaw, the Reclining Image was built in 1991,



The interior display of the Buddha Sitting Image.



An almost complete Buddha Sitting Image.

and the Standing Image began in 1995.

The Sayadaw passed away on 23 November 2006 after doing missionary work non-stop for 46 years.

In 2013, the five patron monks continued to build the Buddha Statues according to the Sayadaw’s wishes.

“Normally, it will be completed early. Because of the Covid and politics, the pilgrims stopped coming, so the donation

was delayed. It almost stopped. When the situation is normal, the square will be completed. The square will be wide and the length has to go down the mountain, so it will be expensive.

“When the terrace was built, about K400 million was spent. Now it will cost the same. When the Buddha Sitting Statue was built, it was estimated that K3,000 million would be spent, but now it has exceeded that amount,” said Sayadaw U Indobhasa.

The Maha Bawdi Tahtaung Monastery was established in Khattakon Village, Monywa Township in 1322 ME.

Ashin Narada who would become the Bawdi Tahtaung Sayadaw planted a thousand of Bawdi trees and his action reflected his name as Bawdi Tahtaung Sayadaw.

Now, there are about 10 thousand Bawdi trees plus Buddha sitting statues around the monastery. — Lu Lay/GNLM

**Those wishing to enter the legal fold can contact respective townships’ Red Cross Society, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation, Social Welfare Office and social welfare organizations authorized by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement in addition to reception centres in border areas, Tatmadaw units and police stations**

THE Information Team of the State Administration Council has released statements inviting CDM staff, students and youths, who are in border areas and ethnic armed groups, they can contact the nearest reception centres in border areas, Tatmadaw units and police stations if they want to enter the legal fold and the government will guarantee their lives following the rules and regulations.

In order to prevent the unnecessary loss of human resources, the State Administration Council has publicly invited the basic education staff who are absent from duty to resume their duties and those who take

part in armed resistance under various names of groups, including PDFs. Meanwhile, 3,156 education workers, who were absent from their duties, another 1,009 people, who want to withdraw the cases that were opened against them, and 231 PDF members have contacted and returned to the legal fold. Then, they were given back to their parents systematically and the numbers of people who enter the legal fold and those who wish to are rising. Therefore, the government is making efforts to accept more numbers of those people.

The government opens reception centres in bor-

der areas for those who would like to return to the legal fold. Moreover, those wishing to return home can contact respective townships’ Red Cross Society, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation, Social Welfare Office and social welfare organizations authorized by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. It is guaranteed that they will be able to lead their daily lives peacefully.

*Information Team  
State Administration Council*

**299 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 13 September, total figure rises to 617,355**

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **617,355** after **299** new cases were reported on 13 September 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **594,463** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reaches at **19,443** with one death.

Among the positive cases during the period from 28 January to 7 September 2022, 80 per cent of infected persons have not totally received vaccination, 15.9 per cent received once vaccination, four per cent fully vaccinated and 0.1 per cent booster dose.—MNA



## Our public security system will accelerate efforts to stabilize the politics and security of the country

IN order to hold a free and fair election, the nation must be peaceful and stable. The entire people will need to cast their vote as they wish without being exposed to threats, coercion and pressures in any form. The coming election must be held in all parts of the nation freely and fairly. To ensure there is no unfairness, threats or coercion in the coming election, armed conflicts must cease. To be able to hold the elections, our public security system will accelerate efforts to stabilize the politics and security of the country.

*(The excerpt from the speech delivered by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on the Occasion of the Eighteen Months of the Assumption of State Duties by the State Administration Council on 1 August 2022.)*

## Second day of 23<sup>rd</sup> Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competition held in Sittway Township



A contestant takes part in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competition in Rakhine State.

THE second day of the Rakhine State Level 23<sup>rd</sup> Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competition was held at the U Ottama Hall in Sittway on the morning of 13 September. Rakhine State Chief Minister Dr Aung Kyaw Min, officials, departmental personnel, social organizations, panel of judges of the competitions, contestants, artists, art lovers and invitees were present on the occasion.

Competitions for classic and modern songs genre were held in the morning and afternoon of the second-day session respectively. Male and female contestants aged 10 to 15 and 15 to 20 participated in the basic

education level, higher education level and amateur level competition totalling 46 for the singing contest.

The Rakhine State chief minister and officials encouraged the contestants and coordinated with responsible persons for further needs.

The Rakhine State level Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competition is being held from 12 to 16 September 2022. The competitions were performed at the U Ottama Hall and cultural museum in Sittway with 136 contestants from various districts in Rakhine State. — Tin Tun (IPRD)/GNLM

## MR sells advance train tickets

MYANMA Railways (MR) sells the advance train tickets at the advance ticket sale counter of Yangon Railway Station on Bogyoke Aung San Road in Mingalataungnyunt Township.

Currently, the MR operates Yangon-Mandalay No 5 and No 3 Up trains, Yangon-Pyay No 71 Up train and Yangon-Mawlamyine No 89 Up train. The passengers can buy the tickets for the ordinary class and upper class one day in advance of the trip as usual. “The people can buy the advance train tickets by showing their original citizenship scrutiny cards but not with their endorsement letter of wards authorities,” said U Thaung Htike, superintendent of the railway station.

The people can buy the ticket between 8 am and 12 noon daily with their ID cards. The remaining tickets can be bought at the ticket counters of railway stations till five minutes before departure.

The MR is making efforts

to provide train services on all routes at lower costs. The train ticket prices were increased to 67 per cent starting this June.

The prices are K 12,850 for the upper class (sleeper), K9,350 for the upper class and K4,700 for the ordinary class from Nay Pyi Taw to Yangon while K8,400 for the upper class (sleeper), K6,100 for the upper class and K3,050 for the ordinary class of Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay train.

The Yangon-Mandalay express train ticket prices were increased to K21,250 for the upper class (sleeper) from K13,000, K15,450 for the upper class from

K9,300 and K7,750 for the ordinary class from K4,650.

Moreover, the ticket prices of the Yangon-Mawlamyine train were K4,250 for the upper class and K2,150 for the ordinary class and now they are K7,050 for the upper class and K3,550 for the ordinary class. Moreover, the Yangon-Pyay train tickets are priced at K 6,450 for the upper class and K3,250 for the ordinary class which were K3,900 and K1,950 previously.

The MR will expand the routes depending on the increasing numbers of passengers and logistics. — TWA/GNLM



Yangon Railway Station

## Fabricated page using MRTV logo on social media notified

MYANMA Radio and Television broadcast 11 sectors of the programmes of MRTV HD and related channels on the MRTV Media Application.

A social media page, named “Myanmar Radio and Television”, is found to be using the logo of MRTV Media Application as a profile picture and the old logo of MRTV as a cover photo and selling obscene items.

Legal action will be taken against the use of common imitations of MRTV’s name and logo, including the social media page under existing laws.

Programmes from MRTV are available on www.mrtv.gov.mm and www.mrtv-media.com, as well as on social media platforms such as MRTV



Twitter and MRTV Telegram. As a result, it has been published separately in a variety of sections so that the public can easily access it.

Myanma Radio and Television



# Chinese low-priced onions flood Bayintnaung Market amid soaring local onion prices



Some traders outside Yangon complain about the dumping of Chinese onions, the consumers can enjoy the cheaper rate.

ON 13 September 2022, onions imported by China started to flow into the Yangon market at a lower price than that of local ones, Ko Lwin Ko, a buyer at the Bayintnaung Wholesale

Market, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

I purchased Chinese onions at K2,850 per viss at the Nyaungpinlay Market in Lanmadaw Township, Ko Aung Wai, an onion vendor told the GNLM. The size of Chinese onions was seen as large as an apple in the previous years. This year, it is relatively similar to the local ones produced from the Monywa area.

The local onions are priced at K3,850 per viss in the wholesale market. Dumping through a free-market perspective occurs. Chinese onions are seen flooding Yangon markets accordingly.

Chinese onions are sold at K2,750 per viss at the Bayintnaung Wholesale Market, said

Ko Swe Min who purchased onions there on the morning of 12 September. Meanwhile, onions from the Monywa area are priced at K2,900-3,400 per viss depending on size and quality. Therefore, Chinese onions are K500 less than the domestic ones.

Chinese onions, garlic and potatoes are available in Yangon markets. This way, the consumers had a chance to buy the foreign onions at cheaper rates instead of the soaring local onions. Although traders gave a reason for the yield drop by half, the onion exports to Viet Nam through Thailand are still happening.

The traders from regions and states outside Yangon speculated on the possible price rise

in the coming two months before the harvest of monsoon onions unless there is an entry of cheaper foreign onions into the domestic markets. The wholesale price of onion is likely to break over K4,000 per viss if there is a shortage of onions in the markets, said a trader.

Chinese onions are expected to keep flowing into the markets in the coming days, according to a warehouse located on Yetama Street. At present, consumers can pick the available options in the free market depending on the quality and price.

Some traders outside Yangon complain about the dumping of Chinese onions, the consumers can enjoy the cheaper rate. — TWA/GNLM

## Weekly kitchen grocery market update

DURING the week ending 13 September, the prices of palm oil and onion prices slipped at the Bayintnaung Wholesale Market. Chinese onions entered the wholesale market at K2,750 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes). Meanwhile, the prices of broken rice, Chinese potatoes, sugar, jaggery and chilli climbed up.

### Garlic

On 13 September, the wholesale prices of garlic moved in the range of K2,700-4,200 per viss from Shan State (Aungban area) while Kyukok garlic fetched K4,200 per viss.

### Potato

The wholesale prices of Chinese potatoes on 13 September were estimated at K2,400 per viss, while Shan potatoes were priced at K900-2,200 per viss depending on qualities and sizes. Potatoes imported by Bangladesh are of low quality

with yellow flesh and sprouts so the demand is pretty low.

### Chilli pepper

The prices of chilli pepper bounced back to K19,000 per viss in recent days. Since 5 September, the prices have remained elevated. On 13 September, the prices of chilli pepper went up to K18,000 and K19,000 per viss depending on different varieties (Mohtaung, long red chilli (Panye) and green chilli), whereas the bell pepper is sold at K17,000 per viss.

### Palm oil

The wholesale reference price of palm oil in the Yangon Region this week declined by K490 per viss compared to the last week's price. The reference price for a week from 12 to 18 September was set at K4,730 per viss.

Consequently, palm oil is sold at K7,800-8,000 per viss in the markets. The CIF price of



A kitchen grocery outlet.

palm oil is US\$989 per metric tonne. If it is calculated on the foreign exchange rate of K2,703, the original price of palm oil is only K4,639 per viss.

### Rice

The broken rice price is as high as that of low-grade rice on strong foreign demand. Broken rice fetched K38,000-39,000 per bag whereas low-grade rice grown under multiple cropping

was priced at K42,000 per bag. The prices of low-grade short matured rice (90 days) touched a high of K49,000-50,000 per bag. The wholesale prices of Pawsan rice varieties were constant at K85,000-92,000 per bag from the Shwebo area, K70,000 from the Myaungmya area and K68,000 from the Pyapon area. Meanwhile, the price of the Pawkywe rice variety was stable at K53,000 per bag.

### Pulses

On 13 September, the prices of various pulses stood at over K2,016,000 per tonne of black gram (Fair Average Quality/RC), K2,326,000 per tonne of black gram (Special Quality/RC), K2,085,000 per tonne of pigeon pea (red gram) RC and K4,400-4,600 per viss of chickpea in Yangon markets. — TWA/GNLM

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## Transport hurdle brings down trade value at Maungtaw border post

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This way, exporters conducted trade more through the Sittway border channel. Trade value at Maungtaw post dropped accordingly, compared to the previous months.

Myanmar exported goods worth US\$2.58 million to Bangladesh in August, while there is zero imports from Bangladesh, indicating a trade surplus.

Myanmar delivered goods worth \$1.48 million via Maungtaw and goods valued at \$1.099 million via Sittway. Fishery products are the main export items.

In a bid to boost the bilateral cross-border trade, Yangon-Sittway- Chittagong coastal shipping line is running. The authorities from the two countries together with the Rakhine State Chambers of Commerce and Industry implemented direct trade.

Last July, Myanmar conveyed exports worth \$2.148 million to Bangladesh and imported goods worth \$ 0.005 million into the country, totalling \$2.153 million.

Myanmar sent areca nut, coconut, Jengkol, silver pomfret, anchovy, dried fish, broom, mushroom, ginger, onion, chickpea, dried plum, tamarind seed, footwear, lower garment (longyi), Thanaka, instant coffee mix, sunflower seed and instant noodle to Bangladesh. Meanwhile, apparel, consumer goods, PVC pipes, plastic water storage tanks and hand-drawn pumps are imported into the country. — TWA/GNLM

## COVID-19 infection resurges amid lesser public compliance with health rules

THE COVID-19 infection rate has risen again in the country, but the public's compliance with the statements of the Ministry of Health is still weak.

Starting in early September, COVID-19 positive cases were found in regions and states including Nay Pyi Taw. Such high local transmission is a sign of weakness in following the restrictions, orders and announcements of the Ministry of Health.

"There are many people who haven't received the COVID-19 vaccination in some wards and villages. Some are vaccinated against COVID-19 at the vaccination sites and the companies' and organizations' members get vaccinated on their own plans. There are groups like the group that receives vaccine twice while another that gets thrice, the one that receives not less than fourth doses and the rest that is not vaccinated at all. The people from these groups are seen in crowded places without wearing face masks and so the infection rate is high," Dr Ye Aung Win told the GNLM.

According to the statement regarding the vaccination rate of COVID-19 patients between 28 January and 7 September 2022, of the Ministry of Health, 80 per cent of patients have not been vaccinated at all, 15.9 per cent receive first doses, four per cent have been fully vaccinated and 0.1 per cent complete the booster shots.

"It is found that there has been over 100 positive cases or nearly 200 cases recently. Most cases are reported



Sangyoung Township Red Cross Society members are pictured delivering face masks in crowded places on 13 September. PHOTO: SANGYOUNG RED CROSS

in Yangon Region. Currently, the restaurants, beer bars and teashops are crowded with people and they twist the adherence to the statements of the Health Ministry. The officials should conduct a field study to take action against such doings," said Daw Aye Thet Tun from Yankin Township. The local transmission is higher than the positive cases of returnees and most of the cases are in Yangon, said Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, in his capacity as Chairman of the Region COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee on 6 September. On that day, the country reported 204 positive cases after testing 11,306 patients.

The total positive cases in Myanmar reached 617,056 until 12 September with 594,339 recoveries and 19,442 deaths, according to the Ministry of Health.

"Everybody should be fully vaccinated. It should encourage those who do not get the vaccine to go to the respective health centres and dispen-

saries for vaccines. The vaccine can prevent death and reduce the infection rate," a health worker told the GNLM.

The ministry urges people to receive booster shots as it causes less severe illnesses and fewer deaths among those who are fully vaccinated.

"It is a concern as the positive cases are increasing. Most people do not wear face masks. Some do not wear them as they are fully vaccinated. The people without face masks are mostly seen in crowded places such as pagodas, bus stops, buses, markets and shopping centres. If the officials impose travel restrictions and ban mass gatherings at restaurants and teashops, the infection rate can be reduced. We need to wear face masks until the Ministry of Health releases a statement as a COVID-free country. Even if the people do not wear the face masks, they should participate in preventing the disease, which spread through the air," said a retired employee from Sangyoung Township. — TWA/GNLM

## About 300 Myanmar workers get fired from electronics factory in Pathum Thani District



The picture shows dismissed Myanmar workers.

ACCORDING to the AAC Alliance, roughly 300 Myanmar workers were reported to be fired from the electronics factory in Nawan Nakhon in Pathum Thani District, Thailand.

Laid-off workers have asked AAC Alliance for help to get full compensation and prepare job transfer documents, passports and the extension of residence permits. The factory owner called the Royal Thai Police and officials from the Immigration Department for this matter. In addition to Myanmar workers, Thai workers were also included in the dismissal.

Similarly, over 200 Myanmar workers from a garment factory near Big C Mall in Om Rai, Thai-

land protested for compensation over the dismissal without valid reason on 8 September. They filed a lawsuit against the factory owner for not solving the case, added the AAC Alliance.

In most cases of fired workers, they were working legally with a pink card (labour card) and were full-time employees at their workplaces. Employers may have dismissed the current workers to replace them with Myanmar workers as per the agreements in MoU between the two countries.

Since 10 May, Myanmar has sent between 30,000 and 40,000 workers to meet the labour demand in Thailand under the MoU system. — TWA/GNLM



# LOCAL BUSINESS

## Corn market sees gradual price increase

THE domestic corn market is experiencing a gradual price rise, according to the Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung Commodity Wholesale Centre).

The price stayed below K900 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) as of the second week of August 2022. On 13 September, the price slightly rose to K1,080-K1,100 per viss.

Despite the rise in corn prices, export earnings have to be exchanged according to the reference rate of the Central Bank of Myanmar. Accordingly, corn exports fell amid the CBM's intervention in the foreign exchange market, traders stressed.

At present, the CBM's reference exchange rate for a US dollar is set at K2,100, indicating a large gap compared with the market price of K3,300 in

the grey market.

Transactions for the exports of agricultural produce including corn, rice, bean and oil crops are to be made in dollars instead of Yuan-Kyat/Baht-Kyat cross currency swap in border transactions like the dollar payment method practised in trade by sea, according to the directive released on 30 June.

Thailand gives green light to corn imports under zero tariff (with Form-D), between 1 February and 31 August. However, Thailand imposed a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn imports to protect the rights of their growers if the corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand. The tax exemption period for corn has expired.

Out of the companies that have submitted the Expression of Interests, 86 have been



At present, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions.

forwarded to the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC) to seek permits for official corn exports to China.

Those companies are left to receive a registration code at the final stage, said U Aye Chan Aung, chair of the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

Upon issuing the registration code this month, the corn export to China is expected to commence in September, the association expected.

Myanmar exported 2.3 million tonnes of corn to foreign trade partners in the 2020-2021 financial year. The majority of them were sent to Thailand and the remaining went to Chi-

na, India and Viet Nam.

At present, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. Myanmar has three corn seasons—winter, summer and monsoon. The country produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn every year. – NN/GNLM

## CBM directs local private banks to buy sailor's foreign wages at maximum rate



The office of the Central Bank of Myanmar-CBM.

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) has directed local private banks to purchase the sailors' foreign wages that are

directly paid to their designated bank accounts at the maximum rate, as per the statement of the Myanmar Seafarers Federation

(MSF). MSF's statement mentioned that the CBM released the directives concerning the use of foreign currency in late August. Myanmar seafarers need to realize those directives.

Afterwards, the seafarers are also entitled to use their foreign wages in their own ways.

According to the discussion between the MSF and United Amara Bank and Ayeyawady Bank, a sailor can open a special account and foreign currency accounts together with his partner or his family member with whom he wants to pool his financial resources if he transfers his foreign income to Myanmar. A beneficiary can legally manage bank accounts

when a sailor is out of the country. That co-owner can open more bank special accounts at the available branches and withdraw money.

The private banks are directed to purchase the sailor's foreign wages that came into the bank account at the daily highest rates of the banks, MSF stated.

Additionally, the seafarer is allowed to sell his foreign wages from his bank account to others. Yet, he must transfer money to another party within 21 days of deposit.

Furthermore, they can also make foreign remittances for their personal cases such as supporting their children stud-

ying abroad or going abroad for medical treatment after reporting to and seeking approval of the authorities concerned through the bank.

As a result of this, seafarers can receive a high exchange rate for local currency only when they put their foreign income into local banks. If they directly withdraw Kyat through regional agents in their own ways, the federation is uncertain about the amount of money that will be exchanged, as per the MSF's statement.

The CBM set the reference exchange rate of a US dollar at K2,100, yet a dollar hit approximately K3,300 in the black market. – NN/GNLM

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News and Periodicals Enterprise



## Chinese premier stresses policy implementation to stabilize economy

CHINESE Premier Li Keqiang has stressed efforts to ensure the implementation of policy measures to stabilize economic growth, employment and prices.

Li, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, made the remarks at a special meeting after hearing reports from two working groups on work for stabilizing the economy.

The working groups have been sent by the State Council to 16 provincial-level regions to supervise and provide services to the localities in resolving difficulties in policy implementation.

Vice-Premier Han Zheng, also a member of the Standing

Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, attended the meeting.

The country has adopted a package of strong and effective policies for stabilizing the economy in a timely manner, Li said, stressing the need to ensure the solid implementation of the policies.

Noting that stabilizing the economy depends on market entities, Li urged efforts to help market entities tide over difficulties while expanding effective investment to create demand for the market entities and boost their confidence.

Efforts should be made to speed up the construction of key projects, and increase the quota of the policy-backed and

development-oriented financial instruments based on the local needs, Li said.

The government will support people's essential housing needs as well as their needs for better housing, and make good use of the policy toolkit by adopting city-specific policies, Li said.

Li also stressed promoting the sustained and healthy development of the platform economy, adding that special loans will be used to support the platform enterprises.

The country will continue to roll out more phased policies to expand consumption and investment, Li said, urging local governments and relevant departments to come up with concrete measures.—Xinhua



The government will support people's essential housing needs as well as their needs for better housing, and make good use of the policy toolkit by adopting city-specific policies, Li said. Photo taken on 5 September 2017 shows colourful houses in Nanpingtouwu Village of Huguan County, north China's Shanxi Province. Houses were painted with colourful coatings in the village as an effort to promote the construction of beautiful countryside. PHOTO: XINHUA/ZHAN YAN

## Indonesia calls for global fund at G20 meeting to develop cultural economy



Participants with traditional costumes dance on a street during the culture parade of the Jakarta Carnival commemorating the 491st anniversary of Jakarta, in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 8 July 2018. PHOTO: XINHUA/VERI SANOVRI/FILE

THE Indonesian government has called on the Group of 20 (G20) members to collect a global fund initiative for the recovery of art and culture as an effort to develop the cultural economy.

The initiation was put forward on Monday (12 Sept) by Hilmar Farid, director-general of culture of the Education, Culture, Research and Technology Ministry during the G20 Culture Ministers' Meeting (G20 CMM) in Magelang Regency, Indonesia's Central Java Province.

"Cultures are not only about cultural artifacts or objects, but also cultural actors or artists that create, maintain, and preserve the cultures," Farid said, adding that the G20 members need to listen to the voice and aspiration of cultural practitioners and realize a policy that can accommodate their aspirations.

He said that the G20 CMM was expected to bolster the role of culture in the efforts to preserve the planet, he said.

"This can be achieved

through real actions, so that sustainable living practices can support economic recovery," he said.

The Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Nadiem Anwar Makarim said on Sunday in the opening remark of the G20 CMM that Indonesia was committed to pushing for collaboration in practicing sustainable living, and accelerating empowerment and development of the cultural economy.—Xinhua

## Major UK port set for fresh eight-day strike

WORKERS at Britain's largest container port, Felixstowe, are to strike for a further eight days, union bosses announced Tuesday, as the country suffers a cost-of-living crisis. The walkout from 27 September until early 5 October comes after an initial eight-day stoppage over the summer as dockers and railway staff at the port in eastern England demand pay rises to keep up with decades-high inflation. "The latest strike action is entirely of Felixstowe's own making," Bobby Morton of union Unite, said in a statement.

"Rather than seeking to negotiate a deal to resolve the dispute, the company instead tried to impose a pay deal," Morton said the new strikes

"will inevitably lead to delays and disruption to the UK's supply chain". Unite said the port is responsible for almost half of the UK's container goods.

The union said management at the Felixstowe Dock and Railway Company had "unilaterally ended pay talks after refusing to improve its pay offer and instead announced that it was imposing a pay deal of seven per cent". UK annual inflation stands above ten per cent and is set to surge further before next year as energy and food bills soar. Felixstowe port expressed disappointment at the new walkout, adding however there is "no prospect of agreement being reached with the union".—AFP



The walkout from 27 September until early 5 October comes after an initial eight-day stoppage over the summer. PHOTO: AFP



## OPINION

### Make all-out efforts for boosting agricultural and livestock products

AS an agri-based country, the people of Myanmar are engaging in livestock farms in addition to agricultural farms in order to produce agricultural products and livestock products for local consumption as well as export surplus products. Moreover, those producers are striving for manufacturing value-added products made of agricultural produce and livestock products for earning income. Export of agricultural produce and livestock products earn incomes, contributing much to the economy of the people and the State. As some 70 per cent of the people are residing in rural areas, priority is being given to booming businesses based on agriculture and livestock farms as their livelihoods.

However, Myanmar needs to promote the production of the agricultural sector to be exported to foreign markets in keeping abreast of other countries. Among agricultural produce, the export of pulses and beans is the largest volume. In fact, as doing business, the per-acre yield of pulses and beans is still lesser as well as paddy in comparison with that of other countries.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization-FAO's report stated that a total of 6.65 hectares of farmlands are placed under paddy in Myanmar which set targets to yield 100 baskets of summer paddy and 80 baskets of monsoon paddy. The increased per-acre yield of paddy will benefit the farmers and earn incomes for the State. As a nature of geographical conditions, Myanmar is teeming with plentiful fresh-water rivers and creeks, which supply fresh water for agricultural tasks. Some 33 million acres of cultivable lands are put under paddy, pulses and beans, maize, sesame, cotton and other crops in addition to rubber, oil palm and coconut plants.

Meanwhile, livestock farms for cattle, goats, pigs, sheep and poultry farms are taking place near the cultivation areas to be easily managed by farmers. Waste from cattle is useful as natural fertilizers for agricultural lands. Reciprocally, feed farms such as grass and maize can be nurtured near the livestock farms.

Actually, agriculture is an important livelihood for the State whereas livestock is also playing a key role to earn income not only for the farmers but for the State. Only when efforts should be made for increasing the products made from agriculture and livestock will it be a drive for the socioeconomic development of the people and be beneficial for the nation.

That is why the government is providing necessary assistance for ensuring local food sufficiency and exporting surplus products to foreign markets. On the other hand, agricultural and livestock farmers need to make all-out efforts to improve their production sector with greater success as they inspire.

WE ALREADY know reading stimulates thinking and consequently, thinking again bears writing. Except for some examples such as the writing of one's experience, 80 per cent of writing needs thinking. Nevertheless, it is natural and habitual we read something to be read. Reading for pleasure is widely regarded as a good thing but is that enough?

It's enough for those of us who happen to love reading and who have time for it. But what if we had evidence that it was such a good thing that omitting it from a school curriculum or timetable was a bad thing? What if senior management teams needed evidence? What if school library funding were being cut? What if too many people were too busy to prioritize reading for pleasure? What if teenagers were avoiding it because no one was telling them how it would affect their lives, well-being, and perhaps even exam results?

It turns out that all those things are true. It turns out that reading for pleasure has a wide range of extremely important benefits, which we absolutely owe our young people. I would like to argue that not promoting reading for pleasure and not creating a reading culture in school is a dereliction of duty towards our students. It will make their lives poorer.

Until 2015, I felt this in my heart but the actual evidence was flimsy. There were many studies but some were very small or not replicated and it was hard to be able to say with any certainty what the results really showed. All that changed in 2015 when a Reading Agency published its Literature Review, a meta-study of hundreds of other studies over many years. "Reading for pleasure has a dramatic impact on life outcomes," was the headline conclusion. The research also showed that it wasn't

A NEW study demonstrates that receiving at least two doses of Pfizer vaccinations significantly lowers the majority of the long-term symptoms people observed months after getting COVID-19. In this study, people who received at least two doses of the COVID-19 vaccination compared to those who received none experienced eight of the ten most frequently reported symptoms between 50 and 80 per cent less often.

# Concept Of Readaxation

By Yin Nwe Ko



Reading for pleasure deliberately to lower stress levels, thus increasing well-being and performance. PHOTO: APLUSALA.ORG

just the daily act of reading but the enjoyment of it that made the difference.

Hence the phrase "reading for pleasure". So, now we know: Daily reading for pleasure positively affects mental health, self-esteem, vocabulary, general knowledge, socioeconomic status, relationships, mood control, empathy, self-understanding, and stress levels. It was that last one – stress levels – that led me to invent the concept of "readaxation". I define this as "Reading for pleasure deliberately to lower stress levels, thus increasing wellbeing and performance."

**Why might reading for pleasure reduce stress?**

- Because readers believe it does. Ask any reader, "Do you think reading for pleasure would reduce stress?" and most say yes. Confirmation bias means we tend to see what we expect to see: if we expect to see stress reduction, we do.
- If we're engaged in a book we can't simultaneously be worrying – it gives negative thoughts a break.
- Reading for pleasure allows a state of "engagement", offered

by Martin Seligman, an American Psychologist, educator, and author of self-help books, and others as an importantly positive and transformative psychological state.

- It leads to increased self-worth, itself likely to reduce the stress of negative feelings.
- We can choose books to create the desired emotion. If our emotional state is one we don't like, we can change that by reading a book that will make us feel another emotion.
- Reading gives us space away from the demands of other peo-

ple. It gives us a break. This is especially important for introverts.

**What if our schools do not care enough about stress and well-being?**

They should care because too much stress and poor well-being lower exam results. There's also a strong link between daily reading for pleasure and improved exam results, the better overall performance at school. How can I help our students read more? The tips for all classroom teachers are as follows: -

- Don't leave it to English teachers or librarians – this is a human activity, for all ages.
- Read yourself. Talk about what you read.
- Show an interest in everything your students read. Ask them for recommendations.
- Never disparage their reading choices. Fiction or non-fiction – neither is "better".
- Introduce silent reading time into your practice (you must read while they're reading). Look for schemes such as DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) and ERIC (Everyone Reads In Class.) The beginning or end of the day are great times for this; it's settling and calming.
- Support your school librarian and library.

In addition, some of the other factors may support our pleasure of reading.

Unwinding with a good book is a hobby many of us enjoy, but perhaps we take for granted how much it can contribute to our well-being. In a busy world full of technology and distractions, reading can help us to reduce stress, understand life, and see our problems in a different light. In England, about two-thirds of the population read books for pleasure. It's a hobby that research has linked to improvements in our mood, and a greater sense of community and empathy for others. If you are one of these many bookworms, you probably know that feeling of becoming completely immersed in a book to the point where you block out everything else. Your mind becomes focused and any worries you had fade out.

Even reading for a few minutes when you feel stressed might give you the time-out you need to feel better. Meera Phull, a Mental Wellbeing Nurse at Bupa, says: "Reading offers such a wonder-

ful opportunity for escapism, to broaden the imagination, and to keep our minds active and learning. I like to have two books on the go at any time. I have one that is informative and motivating, and one that is pure leisure reading and helps me switch off and relax."

**How to fit reading into your day**

Where and when do you like to read? There are lots of points in the day when you might fit in a few pages. I spend a couple of hours a day especially, at night, as part of my commute, and becoming absorbed in a good book always feels like a valuable way to use that time. Many people find their reading time at home. One of my intimate friends says: "For me, reading represents escape and cosiness. I like settling down on a rainy afternoon with a book, a cup of tea, and a blanket, and letting myself get lost in another world. I really like stories about everyday life. I find that reading novels about different people and the scrapes they get themselves in helps me understand the world a bit more. And I love meeting a character that makes me laugh and who I can relate to." Bedtime is one of the most popular times to read, and four in ten readers say reading helps them to sleep better. Reading a book could be an important part of your pre-bedtime routine.

**What are the differences in various life situations?**

Reading can be helpful for people in all kinds of life circumstances. When parents read books to their children, it can have psychological and social benefits for both of them. A review of studies covering over 3,000 families found that for older people, evidence suggests that reading books can be a successful way to prevent feelings of loneliness. Reading as

## ARTICLE

you age may also be an important way to keep your brain active and engaged.

If you are dealing with a particular health problem, reading certain books may help you to understand and cope with the situation. Reading Well Books on Prescription is run in association with local libraries. It's a scheme where you can look for expert-approved books to help with everything from mental health problems to long-term conditions. As another example, we have a list of books about dementia that could help people diagnosed with dementia or their careers.

**The time you should make for the reading?**

Would you like to read more? One of the barriers to spending time reading might be feeling too busy to pick up a book. A way to overcome this could be to set yourself a goal and commit to making reading part of your schedule. I also think it's important, to be honest with yourself about what books you genuinely enjoy, rather than forcing yourself through books that you find hardgoing. That way, you will naturally feel more inclined to read more, as you will look forward to discovering where the next few pages will take you.

All in all, in a study conducted by the University of Sussex, individuals who had read for merely six minutes exhibited slower heart rates, less muscle tension, and reduced stress levels. Besides, another research has found that reading for relaxation and pleasure has been found correlated to higher community participation and greater insight into human nature and decision-making. Here, it is enough to realize that reading for pleasure is a kind of readaxation, I think.

Reference: Teaching Teen

## Vaccines significantly lower risk of long-term effects of COVID-19

Prof. Michael Edelstein of Bar-Ilan University's Azrieli Faculty of Medicine directed the study, just published in the Nature journal *npi Vaccines*.

He worked with the IT and infectious disease teams at three of the Faculty's affiliated hospitals in northern Israel: Baruch Padeh Medical Centre, Ziv Medical Centre, and Gali-

lee Medical Center. Most of the statistical analysis was done by Paul Otiku, a PhD candidate at the Azrieli Faculty of Bar-Ilan.

**Almost 3,500 adults from all throughout Israel**

Between July and November 2021, almost 3,500 adults from all throughout Israel took part in the study. These people

responded to a survey that asked them a number of questions concerning previous COVID-19 infections, vaccination status, and any symptoms they might have been feeling.

The poll was offered in four widely spoken local languages, including Hebrew, Arabic, Russian, and English. More than half of the partici-

pants (2,447) reported having never had SARS-CoV-2, whereas 951 had already contracted the virus. 637 (67 per cent) of the affected individuals received two or more doses of the vaccination. 21 (0.9 per cent) of the 2,447 people who stated they had no prior infections had received one dose, 1,195 (48.8 per cent) had received two doses, 744 (30.4 per

cent) had received three doses, and the remaining 19.9 per cent had not had any vaccinations. The post-acute self-reported symptoms were compared between people who had received vaccinations and those who had not. When age and the amount of time between infection and survey participation were taken into account, they discovered that

receiving two or more doses of the Pfizer vaccine was related to a lower probability of reporting the most prevalent post-COVID symptoms.

**The most frequently reported symptoms**

The most frequently reported symptoms, including fatigue, headaches, limb weakness,

and chronic muscular pain, decreased by 62 per cent, 50 per cent, 62 per cent, and 66 per cent, respectively, among participants in the current study. Persistent muscle soreness was reduced by 70 per cent and shortness of breath by 80 per cent. The study adds to the limited knowledge currently available regarding the effect of vaccination on long-term COVID. The study's principal investigator, Prof.

Source : ANI



# SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

## NASA's Moon mission pushed back, again

NASA is now targeting 27 September as the earliest possible launch date for its uncrewed Artemis 1 mission to the Moon, the agency said in a blog post Monday.

The date would depend on engineering teams successfully carrying out a test to fuel up the Space Launch System rocket, and receive a waiver to avoid retesting batteries on an emergency flight system that is used to destroy the rocket if it strays from its designated range.

If it does not receive the waiver, the rocket will have to be wheeled back to its assembly building, pushing the timeline back several weeks. For the 27 September date, a "70-minute launch window opens at 11:37 am EDT," while the mission would end with an ocean splashdown of the Orion capsule on 5 November.

A potential next date comes on 2 October. The Artemis 1 space mission hopes to test the SLS as well as the unmanned Orion capsule that sits atop it, in preparation for future Moon-bound journeys with humans aboard.

Once launched, it will take several days for the spacecraft to reach the Moon, flying around 60 miles (100 kilometres) at its closest approach. One of the trip's main objectives is to test the capsule's heat shield — which at 16 feet (five metres) in diameter is the largest ever built — when the ship re-enters the atmosphere.

The next mission, Artemis 2, will take astronauts to the Moon without landing on its surface, while the third — set for the mid-2020s — would see the first woman and person of colour on lunar soil.—AFP



The Artemis 1 (rocket pictured 2 September, 2022) space mission hopes to test the SLS as well as the unmanned Orion capsule that sits atop it, in preparation for future Moon-bound journeys with humans aboard. **PHOTO: AFP**

## The 'majestic' Singapore orchid named in honour of Queen Elizabeth



"Dendrobium Elizabeth is a majestic, robust and resilient plant," said Whang Lay Keng, curator at Singapore's National Orchid Garden. **PHOTO: AFP**

ELIZABETH is majestic, hardy and "very fashionable", said a top Singapore flower curator — referring not to the late monarch, but to an orchid named

after the queen when she visited the former British colony.

After Queen Elizabeth II's death last week, the city-state's Botanic Gardens loaned a tow-

ering sprig of Dendrobium Elizabeth to the British high commissioner's residence, to be displayed alongside pictures of the monarch.

The orchid hybrid, with twisted Dresden-yellow petals and a uranium-green lip, was named in honour of the queen when she visited Singapore in 1972, said Whang Lay Keng, curator at Singapore's National Orchid Garden. "Dendrobium Elizabeth is a majestic, robust and resilient plant," she told AFP.

"It's kind of like how Queen Elizabeth carried herself."

Flowering just twice a year, the Dendrobium Elizabeth was bred from orchids originating from Singapore and Papua New Guinea, and carries just about 40 blooms per plant.—AFP

## 'A necessity': Lebanon's forced conversion to solar

THANKS to solar energy, residents of the northern Lebanese village of Toula are finally able to enjoy ice cream again — a treat in a sun-baked country plagued by power cuts.

Lebanon's economy collapsed in 2019 after decades of corruption and mismanagement, leaving the state unable to provide electricity for more than an hour or two per day.

Last winter, the mountain village of Toula barely had three hours of daily generator-driven electricity.

Solar power now helps keep

the lights on for 17 hours, an engineer working on the alternative energy project said.

"For two years the kids have been asking for ice cream, now it's finally time," said Toula mini-market owner Jacqueline Younes, beaming. "We are waiting for our first order of ice cream to arrive." While many Lebanese rely on costly generators for electricity, a growing number of homes, companies and state institutions are turning to solar — not out of environmental concern, but because it's their only option.—AFP



An hour's drive south of Toula, a branch of Spinneys supermarket is also installing panels in the parking lot and rooftop to slash its generator bills. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Egypt environment groups in 'fear' ahead of COP27: HRW

THE Egyptian government has severely restricted environmental groups' work, leaving activists fearful of publicly scrutinising authorities ahead of the country hosting a crucial global climate summit, Human Rights

Watch said Monday.

The UN's annual Conference of the Parties (COP) involves nearly 200 countries, with hundreds of observers, NGOs and — very often — mass demonstrations designed to

ramp up the pressure on political leaders to tackle climate change.

Egypt will host this year's event, COP27, in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh in November.—AFP



# HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

## Huge US nurses' strike begins, with 15,000 pausing work



Nurses stage a protest with support from the registered nurses union, SEIU Local 121RN, outside the West Hills Hospital on 18 June 2020, in West Hills, California. **PHOTO: FREDERIC J. BROWN / AFP**

THE largest private sector nurses' strike in US history kicked off Monday, organizers said, with some 15,000 workers in hospitals across Minnesota and Wisconsin demanding better working conditions and higher wages.

Strikes in the United States have occurred regularly over the past year, with employees reporting to be exhausted by working during the Covid-19 pandemic and struggling with price rises.

The three-day nurses' stoppage was set to last until Thursday morning, according to a spokesperson for the Minneso-

ta Nurses Association which was coordinating the action.

Holding signs bearing messages such as "Patients Before Profits," employees gathered in groups in the early morning hours to protest outside some of the 16 affected hospitals, according to photographs the union posted online.

Hospitals have planned to continue providing care, albeit with possible disruptions.

North Memorial Health Hospital in Robbinsdale, Minnesota said it "may be making some adjustments to non-emer-

gency care and services to ensure adequate and safe staffing during the strike period."

But it stressed it will continue to offer its "full range of services" including inpatient, outpatient and emergency care, and that it would serve customers for any previously scheduled appointments. The two sides have been negotiating for more than five months, without reaching an agreement. "Right now in Minnesota, nurses are overworked, hospitals are understaffed, and patients are overcharged," MNA said in a statement.—AFP

## EU watchdog approves vaccine targeting Omicron sub-variants

THE EU's medicines watchdog on Monday approved a vaccine specifically targeting the new and infectious types of the Omicron variant amid fears of a new wave of winter infections.

The so-called "bivalent" jab, made by Pfizer/BioNTech, targets the highly infectious BA.4 and BA.5 types of the variant and is the first of its kind to be approved within the 27-nation bloc. "This recommendation will further extend the arsenal of

available vaccines to protect people against Covid-19 as the pandemic continues and new waves of infections are anticipated in the cold season," the European Medicines Agency said.

The vaccine also targets "the original strain of SARS-CoV-2" and comes 11 days after the Amsterdam-based drug watchdog approved vaccines by Pfizer and Moderna against the original Omicron variant.

The latest shot is aimed at people over 12 and who have already received at least one primary vaccination against the coronavirus, and it is an adaptive version of Pfizer's original Comirnaty vaccine.

European nations have been keen to rush through the new generation of jabs so they can start booster campaigns ahead of a feared Covid surge in the latter part of this year.—AFP



The latest shot is aimed at people over 12 and who have already received at least one primary vaccination against the coronavirus, and it is an adaptive version of Pfizer's original Comirnaty vaccine. **PHOTO: AFP**

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Aussie state issues public health alert after detection of measles infection

HEALTH authorities of Australia's state of New South Wales issued a public health alert on Tuesday as the first case of measles had been confirmed in the state since February 2020.

The case acquired the infection while travelling in Asia last month. The case developed symptoms after returning to Sydney and is now isolated in hospital.

The NSW Health unveiled a couple of locations the case had spent time in while being infectious and urged people who may be susceptible to measles and were present at those locations at the same time to be alert for symptoms until 24 September.

Measles is highly infectious, the symptoms of which include fever, sore eyes and a cough followed three or four days later by a red, blotchy rash spreading from the head and neck to the rest of the body.

Measles could be spread in the air through coughing or sneezing by someone who is carrying the disease.

The NSW Health said people who have not had two lifetime doses of measles vaccine, a confirmed history of measles infection, or who have a weakened immune system are considered susceptible to measles.—Xinhua

## Philippines logs 1,574 new COVID-19 cases, 40 deaths



Metro Manila, the capital region with over 13 million people, tallied 665 new cases. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

THE Philippines reported 1,574 new COVID-19 infections on Tuesday, bringing the number of confirmed cases in the Southeast Asian country to 3,909,772.

The Department of Health said the number of active cases dipped to 24,502, while 40 more patients died from COVID-19 complications, pushing the country's death toll to 62,382.

Metro Manila, the capital region with over 13 million people, tallied 665 new cases.

The Philippines reported its highest COVID-19 single-day tally of 39,004 new cases on 15 Jan. The country, with a population of around 110 million, has fully vaccinated over 72.7 million people.—Xinhua



# ECONOMY WORLD

## US inflation likely eased in August — but not enough

US inflation likely slowed in August, largely thanks to falling gasoline prices, but not enough to satisfy policymakers, especially President Joe Biden, as high prices continue to inflict pain on American families and businesses.

The consumer price index (CPI), a key measure of inflation, is expected to have fallen in August compared to the prior month — the first decline since November 2020. The Labour Department is due to release the latest data Tuesday.

The annual inflation pace also is likely to have improved

to 8.0 per cent, according to a MarketWatch consensus forecast, from the blistering 9.1 per cent rate in June — the highest in 40 years.

Prices have been soaring for months, exacerbated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which has impacted energy and food prices, as well as ongoing supply chain snarls amid Covid lockdowns in China.

While Americans will welcome relief at the pump, from the steady drop in gasoline prices, high costs for food and housing continue to strain family budgets.



Soaring prices have forced Americans to spend a larger share of their incomes on staple goods. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

“Risks remain skewed to the upside, due to an uncertain

outlook for key inputs, including agricultural and energy

commodities, as well as the pass-through of wage gains in a tight labour market,” according to Barclays US analysts Pooja Sriram and Jonathan Hill.

They project a one per cent increase in food prices in the month, with housing up 0.6 per cent.

Inflation also has become a hot political issue just weeks away from key midterm congressional elections, and Biden has made fighting high prices his top domestic priority, so any relief will be welcomed at the White House.— AFP

## UK unemployment falls, remains close to 50-year low



UK unemployment remains close to 50-year lows after easing over the summer but sky-high inflation continues to squeeze wages. **PHOTO: MLADEN ANTONOV/AFP**

UK unemployment remains close to 50-year lows after easing over the summer but

sky-high inflation continues to squeeze wages, official data showed on Tuesday.

The unemployment rate fell to 3.6 per cent in the three months to the end of July, the Office for National Statistics said in a statement.

That was the lowest level since 1974, the ONS said. The latest level compared with 3.8 per cent for the three months to the end of June, it added.

Despite many workers receiving pay increases to help cope with inflation that is sitting at a 40-year high above 10 per cent, wages in real terms have slid 2.8 per cent from a year earlier, the statistics office noted.

Britain is suffering a cost-of-living crisis as energy and food bills soar in particular—AFP

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Cuba factory that rolled Castro's cigars still strives for 'the perfect puff'

SEATED before a machine that checks cigar quality, Orquidea Gonzalez says she is proud to carry on the craft's tradition and contribute to an export industry that has grown during the pandemic.

“I love making cigars. This is where I've spent my life, and it's an art. Not everyone knows how to make cigars, like not everyone knows how to paint a picture,” said the 55-year-old factory worker.

Her job is to measure in a metal tube the draw of each cigar to ensure that the smoker gets the perfect puff.—AFP

#### Brazil's financial market upgrades 2022 growth forecast to 2.39%

BRAZILIAN financial analysts upgraded their gross domestic product (GDP) growth forecast for 2022 from 2.26 per cent to 2.39 per cent, and for 2023 from 0.47 per cent to 0.50 per cent, the Central Bank of Brazil said Monday.—Xinhua

## Italy vote a 'Brexit' moment, left warns

ITALY'S election gives voters a choice between such radically different ideas of the country and its place in Europe that it compares to Brexit, the centre-left's leader said Monday.

Democratic Party (PD) chief Enrico Letta faced Giorgia Meloni, head of the far-right Brothers of Italy party, which is leading in the polls, for the only live debate between the two leaders before the 25 September vote.

“This is a crossroads, a sort of referendum, a bit like in Great Britain when they had to choose between Brexit and staying in the

EU,” Letta said, calling for “more Europe, not less”.

Brussels “must deal with the big issues”, Meloni said in the Corriere della Sera daily streamed debate.

But her coalition — which includes Matteo Salvini's anti-immigrant League and Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia party — also believes countries must be able to protect their own interests, she said. Brothers of Italy is now polling at 24 per cent despite being a political descendant of the Italian Social Movement (MSI), formed by supporters of fascist dictator

Benito Mussolini after World War II. Letta — whose party is polling just behind Brothers of Italy, but which has failed to pull together a large leftist alliance — said his rivals posed a threat to immigrants, to women's rights, and to homosexual families.

#### 'Fake news'

The PD, which is expected to pocket 21 per cent of the vote, was the only party which could stop Italy gaining a government along the lines of that led by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, he said.—AFP



Supporters cheer as they attend a rally by Italian far-right party Brothers of Italy leader Giorgia Meloni, as part of the campaign for general elections, in Piazza Duomo in Milan, Italy on 11 September 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**



# Sony withdraws from music business in Russia amid Ukraine invasion

SONY Group Corp. has withdrawn from its music business in Russia, sources familiar with the matter said Monday, as the humanitarian impact of the country's invasion of Ukraine made continuing operations there untenable.

The Japanese electronics and entertainment giant, which had suspended operations in the country earlier this year, sold its Russian music business unit and transferred artists signed to it to a local company, the sources said, though the value and other details of the transaction are not known. With Russia continuing to face global sanctions, Sony's local branch has recently said it could not maintain its presence within the country.

But the financial im-



The Japanese electronics and entertainment giant, which had suspended operations in the country earlier this year, sold its Russian music business unit and transferred artists signed to it to a local company. PHOTO: KYODO

pact of the business suspension on the company is expected to be limited as its operations in Russia and Ukraine account-

ed for just 0.7 per cent of Sony's global businesses in terms of sales for the fiscal year ended March 2022.—Kyodo

# UAE rejects extradition of Briton accused of \$1.7 bln tax fraud

A Dubai court on Monday rejected Denmark's extradition request for a Briton accused of robbing the Danish state of 1.7 billion euros through tax fraud, one of his lawyers told AFP.

Hedge fund trader Sanjay Shah was arrested in June by Dubai police Denmark's request.

He is accused of running a scheme for three years from 2012 in which

foreign firms pretended to own shares in Danish companies and claimed tax refunds.

"I can confirm that the request was denied on the grounds of insufficient information from Denmark," Kare Pihlmann, lawyer for the 52-year-old British financier, told AFP.

Danish Justice Minister Mattias Tesfaye has said that Copenhagen in-

tends to appeal the decision by a court in Dubai, if the legal basis is sufficient to do so.

Shah has said he is not guilty and claims he did not violate Danish law, according to Emirati media.

Police in the Gulf emirate said in June that Shah was arrested "with the aim of subsequent extradition for prosecution in Denmark."—AFP

# Euro surges as ECB seen hiking interest rates further

THE euro soared against big rivals Monday, a day after Bundesbank president Joachim Nagel signalled more interest rates hikes from the European Central Bank to fight sky-high inflation.

The European single currency rocketed 1.6 per cent versus the yen and

by more than 1.4 per cent against the dollar.

The ECB last week hiked eurozone interest rates by a record 0.75 percentage points, and warned inflation would remain elevated for an extended period. On Sunday, German central bank president Nagel signalled the ECB

would probably continue raising rates with eurozone inflation set to keep on climbing. Market watchers now expect another big ECB rate hike in October.

"The ECB is expected to raise rates more after the comments," said analyst Craig Erlam at trading firm OANDA.—AFP

# Norway 'sceptical' about gas price cap

NORWAY, which has replaced Russia as Europe's leading supplier of natural gas, on Monday dashed the hopes of EU member states who wanted a cap on gas prices.

Following his second phone call with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in the space of a few days,

Norway's Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store said he was "sceptical" about the idea of a gas price cap.

"We agree to have an even closer dialogue with the EU in the future on the various proposals on the table", he said.

"We approach discussions in an open spirit, but we are sceptical of a maxi-

mum gas price".

European energy ministers who met Friday in Brussels said they were in favour of a series of measures aimed at combatting soaring gas and electricity prices, with some calling for a cap on the price of gas imports in the EU.

While the Commission has proposed a price ceil-

ing on gas imported from Russia, several member states, including Italy, called for a price ceiling on all gas bought by EU states, noting that Russian gas imports accounted for only nine per cent of EU imports. The Commission, itself opposed to that idea amid fears it would push liquid natural gas (LNG) suppliers to look elsewhere, is expected to present a draft of its emergency energy measures this week.

Non-EU member Norway, which has benefitted from soaring prices following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, has until now kept a low profile on the issue. Underlining the importance of price movements to calibrate supply and demand, Norway has argued that it was up to oil and gas companies to negotiate their own contracts.—AFP



Oil platform off the coasts of Norway. PHOTO: DANIEL SANNUM/AFP

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA RAJIN VOY.NO. (KRJN0263N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V KOTA RAJIN VOY.NO. (KRJN0263N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **14-9-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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# GLOBAL AFFAIRS

## Art world to mark 50 years since Picasso's death

FROM the Prado museum to the Pompidou Centre and New York's Met, the art world has mobilized to stage "an unprecedented" 42 exhibitions marking 50 years since Picasso's death, officials said Monday.

Prepared over the past 18 months by France and Spain, the "Year of Picasso" initiative will involve "38 very important art institutions in Europe and the United States," Spanish Culture Minister Miquel Iceta told reporters. The aim is to "show off all the facets" of Picasso, said French Culture Minister Rima Abdul Malak, describing him as "the most famous and emblematic modern artist".

A series of talks about him



The 'Year of Picasso' initiative will involve '38 very important art institutions in Europe and the United States'. PHOTO: THOMAS COEX/ AFP

and his work will also be held alongside the exhibition.

The celebrations will begin on 23 September at Madrid's Mapfre Foundation with the

exhibit "Pablo Picasso and the breaking down of sculpture" and will run until April 2024 with the closing exhibit at the Petit Palais in Paris.—AFP

## Burkina junta chief sacks defence minister as jihadist violence rages

BURKINA Faso junta chief Lieutenant-Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba, who took power in a January coup, has sacked his defence minister and assumed the role himself after a series of jihadist attacks, according to decrees published Monday.

The first decree, read on national television, removed Gen-

eral Barthelemy Simporte as defence minister, while the second said the "president has taken over the duties of the minister of national defence and veterans".

Damiba headed a group of officers who mounted a coup on 24 January, toppling elected leader Roch Marc Christian Kabore, who had failed to stem

the jihadist insurgency that first emerged in Mali in 2012.

Much of the Sahel region is now battling the insurgency after it spread to Burkina Faso in 2015, then to Niger. In recent years, the violence has also begun to spill over into West African coastal states Ivory Coast and Togo.—AFP

## Florists prepare for soaring sales ahead of queen's funeral

FLOWER sales are set to blossom for the state funeral of Queen Elizabeth II next week, as Britons rush to pay respects across the country.

Well-wishers descended on London's vibrant Columbia Road flower market on Sunday to snap up colourful bouquets after Britain's longest-serving monarch died last Thursday.

Thousands of people have already left cards, flowers, toys and other trinkets outside Buckingham Palace and other royal residences. "It's a lot busier than normal following the passing of the queen," flower seller Albert Deane told AFP

at the weekly market.

"People are buying a lot of roses and chrysanthemums... that last well outside," added Deane, 39, from beside rows of pastel-coloured hydrangeas.

### Demand 'significantly high'

Demand was "significantly high" in recent days, particularly for the queen's favourite white lilies, according to the British Florist Association.

"I understand the queen was (also) fond of yellow flowers, so I thought I would pick up yellow lilies," purchaser Caroline Roberts added at the market.—AFP



Queen Elizabeth II Funeral: Customers queue to buy flowers on a stall at Columbia Road Flower Market, in east London. PHOTO: AFP

### RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

## Ukraine, Russia 'interested' in securing nuclear plant: IAEA



Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. PHOTO: AFP

KYIV and Moscow have shown "signs that they are interested" in creating a security zone around Europe's largest nuclear plant in Ukraine threatened by shelling since Russia invaded its neighbour, the UN atomic watch-

dog said Monday.

Shelling around the Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in southern Ukraine has raised fears of a nuclear disaster.

The International Atomic

Energy Agency (IAEA), which has two experts at the plant since a mission there early this month, has urged fighting around the facility to stop.

"What we need here really is Ukraine and Russia to agree on a very simple principle of not attacking or not shelling the plant," IAEA director general Rafael Grossi told reporters.

"Basically it's a commitment that no military action will include or will imply aiming of course at the plant or a radius that could be affecting its normal operation. This is what we expect."

He added both Kyiv and Moscow were "engaging" with the agency on the issue and asking "lots of questions".—AFP

## Moldova axes plan to resume Russia-bound flights

THE national air carrier of Ukraine's neighbour Moldova has cancelled plans to resume Russia-bound flights, it said.

Air Moldova had announced on Friday that it would resume flights to Russia, which were halted over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

But in a statement late Sunday it said that "Moldova's civil aviation authority published an operational directive... prohibiting national companies to carry out flights in Russia's air space".

"As a result Air Moldova will not be able to assure flights between Chisinau and Moscow as announced earlier," it said.

Before the Russian invasion, Air Moldova ran routes to Russia's capital Moscow, its second city Saint Petersburg and the city of Krasnodar in the south.

Moldova closed the country's airspace on 24 February, the same day Russian troops entered Ukraine, Moldova's neighbour to the east. It was reopened on 21 March.

Moldova, a country of 2.6 million people wedged between Romania and Ukraine, was in late June granted EU candidate status.

However, the process of its accession to the bloc could take many years.—AFP



# Pope heads to Kazakhstan on Central Asia peace drive

POPE Francis, warned by doctors not to travel to Ukraine in the immediate future, will Tuesday bear a message of peace instead to a tense Central Asia with a three-day trip to Kazakhstan.

The Argentine pope, who is forced by knee pain to use a wheelchair and has admitted he must slow down or consider retirement, will take part in an inter-religious summit in the capital, Nur-Sultan.

Francis departed from Rome's Fiumicino airport at 7:35 am (05:35 GMT) on an ITA Airways plane.

The 85-year-old said Sunday that the 38th trip abroad since his election in 2013 would be "an opportunity... to (have a) dialogue as brothers, animated by the common desire for peace, peace that our world is thirsty for".

Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill, a close ally of President Vladimir Putin, was initially expected but has pulled out of the September 14-15 event, dashing



Pope Francis greets the faithful as he attends the International Congress of Catechists at the Paul VI hall on 10 September 2022, at the Vatican. PHOTO: ALBERTO PIZZOLI / AFP

hopes of a meeting with Francis over the Ukraine conflict.

While the pope has called for peace and denounced a "cruel and senseless war", Kirill has defended Putin's "military operation" and the fight against Russia's "external and internal enemies".

About 100 delegations from

50 countries are expected to take part in the event in Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic that gained independence in 1991.

"Dialogue, a coming together, the search for peace between different religious and cultural worlds are at the heart of this trip," Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said Monday.— AFP

# William Ruto: Kenya's 'hustler-in-chief' president

INCOMING Kenyan president William Ruto has clawed his way to the top as the nation's "hustler-in-chief", playing on his religious faith and humble beginnings selling chickens by the roadside.

Although one of the richest men in the country and dogged by corruption allegations for years, the fiercely ambitious Ruto portrayed himself as the champion of the poor and downtrodden during the 9 August election campaign.

He won a narrow victory

over the veteran opposition leader Raila Odinga, despite running as the effective challenger after acrimoniously falling out with outgoing President Uhuru Kenyatta who backed his rival in the closely-fought race.

"In becoming Kenya's fifth president, William Ruto symbolises determination to overcome the odds," Kenyan historian Macharia Munene said in an opinion piece for The Standard newspaper on the eve of his swearing in.—AFP



Kenya's incoming president has pledged to tackle the country's economic woes and reach out to rivals. PHOTO: AFP

# New king visits a tense and changing Northern Ireland



A mural tribute to Queen Elizabeth II on the unionist Shankill Road in Belfast has become a focus for mourning. PHOTO: AFP

AS he tours the four corners of his fractious new kingdom, Charles III faces the most testing task of reconciliation in Northern Ireland.

Scotland, which Charles visited on Monday, may be angling for a new referendum on independence but armed resistance there to the Crown waned centuries ago.

Northern Ireland only

achieved peace in 1998 -- and it remains fragile.

The devotion of Northern Ireland's unionists to Queen Elizabeth II bordered on the reverential, integrated with their wider sense of belonging to the United Kingdom, which they feel is under threat as never before.

On Belfast's staunchly unionist Shankill Road, a mural tribute for Elizabeth's Platinum

Jubilee celebrations in June has drawn a steady stream of mourners and flowers.

Shankill resident Marina Reid, 54, cited reports that have sparked deep anger among unionists, of a few nationalists letting off celebratory fireworks and singing songs since the queen's death last week.

"That tells you everything about the respect we're getting from them in our time of grief," she told AFP.

Northern Irish police are investigating but the reports do not reflect the response of the broader community of pro-Irish nationalists.

## 'Courageous'

"I recognize that she was a courageous and gracious leader," Sinn Fein vice-president Michelle O'Neill, who is in line to become Northern Ireland's first minister, said Monday at a special session of the regional assembly in Stormont.—AFP

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Armenia, Azerbaijan report deadly border clashes

ARMENIA and Azerbaijan on Tuesday reported large-scale border clashes that left Azerbaijani troops dead in the latest flare-up between the arch foes. There have been frequent reports of shootouts along their shared border since the end of the 2020 war between Yerevan and Baku over the contested Nagorno-Karabakh region.

"At 00:05 am (2005 GMT) on Tuesday, Azerbaijan launched intensive shelling, with artillery and large-calibre firearms, against Armenian military positions in the direction of the cities of Goris, Sotk, and Jermuk," Armenia's defence ministry said.

In a statement, it said Azerbaijan had also used drones.

But Azerbaijan's defence ministry accused Armenia of "large-scale subversive acts" near the districts of Dashkesan, Kelbajar and Lachin on the border, adding that its army positions "came under fire, including from trench mortars".— AFP

### UN accuses Taliban of harassing female staff in Afghanistan

THE United Nations mission in Afghanistan has accused the Taliban authorities of intimidating and harassing its female staff working in the country, including detaining three women for questioning on Monday. Since the Taliban seized power in August last year, they have imposed harsh restrictions on girls and women to comply with their austere vision of Islam -- effectively squeezing them out of public life. "There has been an emerging pattern of harassment of Afghan UN female staff by the de facto authorities," the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said in a statement.— AFP





The Myanmar sports team are seen yesterday before departure for Japan to compete in Asia Junior Sports Exchange Games 2022. PHOTO: MNA

## Myanmar team leaves for Japan to compete in 2022 Asian Junior Games

THE Myanmar sports team left Yangon yesterday morning to participate in the Asia Junior Sports Exchange Games 2022 to be held in Japan.

Director General of the Department of Sports and Physical Education U Tun Myint Oo, Chairman of the Myanmar Table Tennis Federation and departmental officials saw off the Myanmar sports team led by deputy Permanent Secretary

of the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs U Kyaw San at the Yangon International Airport.

A total of 21 members including Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs U Kyaw San as a group leader, principal of the Institute of Sports and Physical Education (Mandalay) as a deputy leader, one administrator, one coach, three male players and three female

players for Badminton Sport, one administrator, one coach, three male players and two female players for Table Tennis, one coach, and one athlete for Para-Badminton and one coach and one athlete for Para Table Tennis participate in the Myanmar Sports Team.

The Asian Junior Games will be held in Tokyo, Japan from 14 to 20 September. — MNA

### Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

#### 1. Political affairs

- (a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.
- (b) To emphasize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
- (c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy.

#### 2. Economic affairs

- (a) To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern techniques and strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.
- (b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
- (c) To promote and support local businesses to create employment opportunities and increase domestic production.

#### 3. Social affairs

- (a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
- (b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National peoples and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national characteristics.
- (c) To enhance the health, fitness and education quality of the entire nation.

## Joshua accepts terms for Fury fight: management team



Tyson Fury (left) offered Anthony Joshua the chance to fight for his WBC belt. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

ANTHONY Joshua has accepted terms for a proposed world heavyweight title fight with Tyson Fury, his management team announced on Tuesday.

Fury, the WBC champion, made the offer to his British rival

last week, saying he would be willing to offer Joshua 40 per cent of the purse in order to seal the contest.

Joshua's management team, 258, said on Tuesday they had accepted Fury's offer on be-

half of Joshua and his promoter, Matchroom, and were awaiting the champion's response.

They wrote on social media in a message retweeted by Joshua: "258 and @MatchroomBoxing can confirm, on behalf of @anthonyjoshua, that we accepted all terms presented to us by Fury's team for a fight Dec 3rd last Friday. "Due to the Queen's passing (death of Queen Elizabeth II), it was agreed to halt all communication. We are awaiting a response." Fury made the offer for a "Battle of Britain" bout with Joshua after it emerged that rival champion Oleksandr Usyk had ruled out fighting again until early next year.

Joshua, 32, suffered his second straight defeat to the Ukrainian in Saudi Arabia last month and had planned to make a relatively low-key comeback. —AFP

## US Open finalist Ruud to begin 2023 campaign in Auckland

NEW world number two Casper Ruud announced Tuesday he will start his 2023 season at the Auckland Classic when the ATP Tour event returns in January after a three-year hiatus because of Covid.

The 23-year-old Norwegian rose to a career-high second in the world despite losing Sunday's US Open final to Spain's Carlos Alcaraz. It was Ruud's

second Grand Slam final defeat of 2022 after falling to Rafael Nadal at the French Open in June.

Ruud, a winner at ATP tournaments in Gstaad, Geneva and Buenos Aires this year, will headline the Auckland men's tournament beginning 9 January as he warms up for the first Grand Slam of the year at the Australian Open in Melbourne starting a week later.—AFP



Norway's Casper Ruud will start his 2023 season in Auckland. PHOTO: AFP