THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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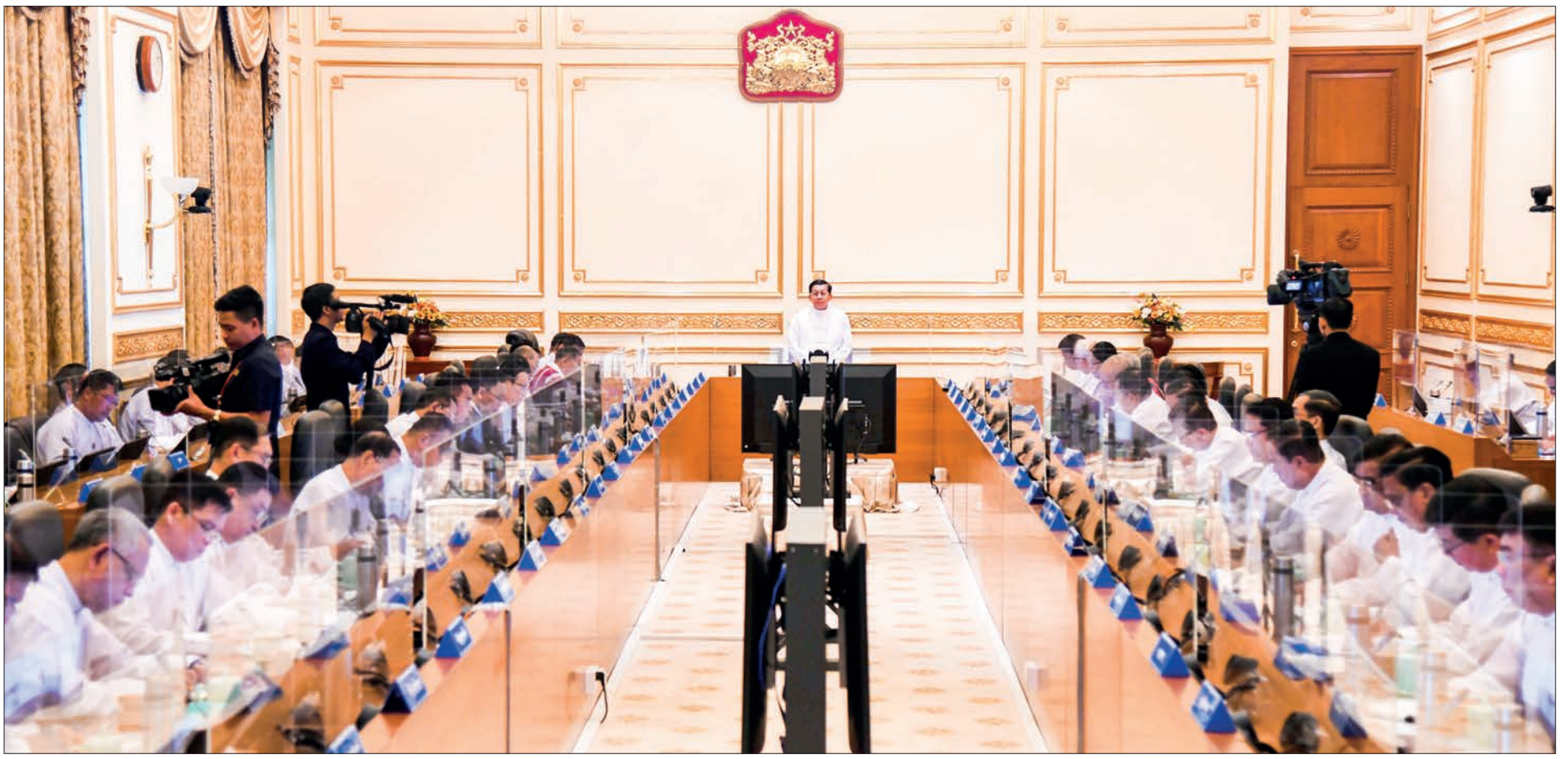
Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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.

Government is responsible for enabling every eligible voter to cast votes: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the meeting with Union ministers, the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman, chief ministers of regions and states and chairpersons of self-administered zones and division in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

NOW is the time to initiate the compilation of correct data on the voting list as correct statistics are important for the forthcoming election, said State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at a meeting with Union ministers, the chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council, chief ministers of regions and states and chairpersons of self-administered zones and division at the SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Grandly holding 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day is a benchmark in the history

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said that he took pride in successfully marking the 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day as a significant benchmark in the history of the State Administration Council.

> The multiparty democratic system will be implemented under the political trend whereas the administrative system will be a combined system of democratic administration and federal administration that all ethnic people and citizens aspire to.

Implementing political and national aims for the development of the nation

An aim is being implemented to build a Union based on

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Congratulatory messages from foreign heads of states on 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day

Mr Ranil Wickremesinghe, President of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka sends Congratulatory Message to Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, State Administration Council Chairman and Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

ON behalf of the Government and the people of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and on my own behalf, I wish to extend congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

It is with pleasure that I recall the long-standing friendly ties between Sri Lanka and Myanmar based on the rich teachings of Theravada Buddhism and shared cultural values that have spanned centuries. I firmly believe that the existing ties and relations will continue to strengthen in the years ahead for the mutual benefit of our two peoples.

Please accept, Excellency, my sincere best wishes for the peace, happiness and prosperity of the people of Myanmar.

Mr MUM Ali Sabry, PC, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka sends Congratulatory Message to U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs

IT is with pleasure that I extend my felicitations to Your Excellency on the occasion of the 75th Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I am happy to observe the longstanding bonds of friendship and cooperation between our two countries based on deep religious and cultural affinities. I look forward to consolidating and expanding our relations and close ties across many fields of common interest for the benefit of our two nations.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and best wishes for the peace, happiness and prosperity of the people of Myanmar.

Over 100-year-old three-storey monastery in Sagu intact with ancient artworks

THE three-storey monastery in Sagu has been intact for more than 100 years with excellent and beautiful ancient artworks.

The monastery was built and donated on 6th Waxing of Nayon 1266 Myanmar era, by then governor U Hsaing and Daw Ngwe, their son town administrator U Theik and his wife Ma Yoe and their daughter Ma Wat. Their donations included the Hmangin Yokesone monastery and KanU monastery.

The three-storey monastery has 172 posts, built with 136 feet in length and 72 feet in width. Each post has been sculptured with ancient royal plays such as Culapaduma Zat and Utayna Zat. The sculptures are exquisitely illustrated and carved out of the characters picked up from the royal plays.

In Myanmar, there are numerous monasteries depicting scenes from 550 Jataka (Buddhological stories) and Dhammapada. Monasteries decorated with wooden sculptures are called Yotesone Kyaung in Myanmar. The most prominent monasteries are Mandalay Shweinpin monastery, Sagaing monastery, Salin monastery, Salay monastery in Magway Region, Hmangin monastery and the three-storey monastery. — Zeyar Htet (Minbu)/KZW

The three-storey monastery are seen with its rich ancient artworks.

Public Notice for elimination of violence

1. SO called "CRPH", "NUG" and "PDF" terrorist groups are unlawfully committing killings of monks, teachers, civil servants and general people and looting under the pretext of saying "for the people".
2. Not rendering of encouragement support and assistance to the "CRPH", "NUG" and "PDF" terrorists that are committing intimidations, killings and destructive activities could be construed as protecting lives and property of general public.
3. Giving information secretly relating to bearing of their arms, ammunition and terrorists to authorities could be tantamount to protecting lives and property of innocent people.

It is beneficial for restoring peace of the nation and development of all regions

UNDERSTANDING the armed conflicts and disagreements which cannot shape development of the nation, and plans to restore peace for undertaking development tasks, plans to discuss shaping the peace progress beneficial for restoring peace of the nation and development of all regions.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the peace talk with the peace delegations led by Chair of the Pa-O National Liberation Organization-PNLO Khun Thurein, Chair of the Lahu Democratic Union-LDU Kyar Solomon and Vice-Chair of the Arakan Liberation Party-ALP Saw Mra Razar Lin on 22 August 2022)

Government is responsible for enabling every eligible voter to cast votes: Senior General

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multiparty democratic system will be implemented under the political trend whereas the administrative system will be a combined system of democratic administration and federal administration that all ethnic people and citizens aspire to. On the other hand, one more objective is being initiated for the country to be food sufficiency.

Undertakings for the economic development of the State

In its assumption, the government of the State Administration Council faced a decline in the State economy to -5.9 per cent of GDP amid the global economic decrease. In the first six-month period of 2021-22 FY, the State economy regained +2.4 per cent and in the second half of the financial year, 3.4 per cent because of utilizing the water and land resources, agriculture, fishery and livestock sectors, forestry and human resources sectors. Hence, the Senior General stressed the need to apply the experiences for securing greater development of the State economy.

Political progress and political objective

The Senior General recounted that in his assumption of the duties of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, he had pledged to the path of the multiparty democratic system. Tatmadaw has agreed to amend the necessary points of the Constitution (2008) but it should not harm the Our Three Main National Causes. The Senior General stressed the need to shape the nation into normality in order to implement two political objectives without fail. If possible, it is necessary to shape the country to have a condition better than that of 2016. If so, the country can be granted a better future.

The Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council, chief ministers of regions and states and chairmen of self-administered zones and divisions reported on regional development, peace and stability, the prevalence of law and order, encouragement for MSME businesses, generating electricity from solar power, investments and job opportunities.

In response, the Union ministers and SAC Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo discussed systematic spending of the State finance under rules and regulations, the need for cooperation in the collection of voter lists on the ground surveys, cultivation of beans for exportation, data of Industry Ministry online for MSME businesses, systematic control for prevention of Covid-19 through border regions and border gates, destruction of NUG and PDF terrorists to deteriorate peace and stability of the State and their killing innocent monks, people and service personnel without reasons and serving of security forces for peace and stability of the State.

> Tatmadaw has agreed to amend the necessary points of the Constitution (2008) but it should not harm the Our Three Main National Causes. The Senior General stressed the need to shape the nation into normality in order to implement two political objectives without fail. If possible, it is necessary to shape the country to have a condition better than that of 2016. If so, the country can be granted a better future.

After hearing the reports, the Senior General stressed that private schools are opened under the permission of the Ministry of Education, MIC and Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. So, they have to deeply follow the disciplines and culture of the country.

Then, the Senior General urged chief ministers to efficiently use agricultural water and strive for achieving high per-acre yield. It is necessary to generate electricity in regions and states while reducing the use of fuel by prioritizing public transportation. Moreover, the Senior General stressed the need to sufficiently manufacture agriculture and livestock products for ensuring food sufficiency for the people.

In conclusion, the Senior General underscored that if MSME businesses develop, these will contribute to the process of import substitution and then manufacturing quality products made of domestic raw materials in order to reduce import volume.

> . . . it is necessary to create a chance for the people to be able to cast votes to be free from threat, coercion and pressure in the election. All were urged to systematically strive for progress in the work process as the electoral measures must be reviewed again depending on the progress of the nation.

Systematic livestock breeding can supply bio-fertilizer to agricultural farms, encouraging MSME businesses. So, it will increase incomes, contributing much to domestic and State businesses.

The Senior General urged all to enhance domestic manufacturing and upgrade the export items in order to increase the State GDP. Moreover, the Senior General stressed the need to eradicate illegal trade.

Now is the time to initiate the compilation of correct data on the voting list as correct statistics are important for the forthcoming election. If necessary, the census should be enumerated to the whole nation to have correct and accurate data.

No voting in the election is based on the individual option of the people, and the government is responsible for enabling every eligible voter to cast votes. In line with the address made in the 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day ceremony, it is necessary to create a chance for the people to be able to cast votes to be free from threat, coercion and pressure in the election. All were urged to systematically strive for progress in the work process as the electoral measures must be reviewed again depending on the progress of the nation. — MNA/TTA

Daily newspapers available online

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

SPTT continues 2nd meeting with UWSP, NDAA and SSPP delegations

THE second-day meeting of the State Peace Talks Team and delegations of the United Wa State Party-UWSP, the National Democratic Alliance Army-NDAA and the Shan State Progress Party-SSPP continued at the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Centre in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

State Administration Council member Union Minister at the Government Office National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee-NSPNC Chairman State Peace Talks Team Leader Lt-Gen Yar Pyae and members — SAC Member Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun, NSPNC Secretary Lt-Gen Min Naung — and NSPNC members Lt-Gen Min Naing, Lt-Gen Win Bo Shein and Lt-Gen Aye Win, and UWSP Vice-Chairman U Lau Yaku, NDAA Vice-Chairman U San Pae and SSPP Vice-Chairman-2 Sao Khun Seng attended the meeting.

The State Peace Talks Team holds talks with the delegations from UWSP, NDAA and SSPP yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

Unfinished matters at the first meeting, the regional development, education, health and general matters were discussed at the second-day meeting. Afterwards, the discussion was made to sign the agreements on the opinions of both sides resulting from the two days of negotiations. The second meeting was adjourned then.

The third meeting will be continued on 7 January and the mutual opinions will be signed as the agreements at the event, it is learnt. — MNA/CT

CBM makes efforts to develop digital payment system and improve social economy of people

1. The Central Bank of Myanmar is constantly striving to increase public awareness of the digital payment system that can connect various payment methods and reduce the use of cash. During the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee Independence Day, efforts are being made to enable digital payment at venues and collection and clearing services on behalf of banks and vendors.
2. Now, under the leadership of the Central Bank of Myanmar, the digital payment system has been widely used by the public in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory since (4-1-2023). Collection and clearing services on behalf of the seller were given by Nature Link Pay Company Limited (Trusty E-Commerce) and Zego Pay Company Limited (Zego Money) at the 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day commemorative exhibition venue, Ayeyarwady Bank Limited (AYA Pay) and Myanmar Citizens Bank (Citizen Pay) at Sein Daung Store, KBZ Pay, a mobile payment service provider, AYA Bank Limited (AYA Pay), Asia Green Development Bank Limited (One Pay), AYA Farmers Development Bank (A+ Wallet), Myanmar Citizens Bank (Citizen Pay), CB Bank PCL (CB Pay), UAB Bank Limited (UAB Pay), Shwe (Rural and Urban) Development Bank (Mo Money) and Internet Wallet Myanmar Limited (OK$) at the Junction Center respectively. Giving gift vouchers and providing promotion plans and awareness campaigns about the use will be carried out until (8-1-2023). People will be able to use a modern, secure and efficient digital payment system more, as officials have announced that efforts are being made to develop economic and social sectors.

Central Bank of Myanmar

CBM Governor receives Thai Ambassador and delegation

CENTRAL Bank of Myanmar Governor Daw Than Than Swe received the Thai delegation led by Ambassador Mr Mongkol Visitstump yesterday morning at the CBM Office in Nay Pyi Taw.

They discussed the situation of Thai Baht/Myanmar Kyat direct payments in bilateral trade, remittances from Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand, foreign exchange issues and banking and payment system issues between Myanmar and Thailand.

The meeting was also attended by the CBM deputy governors, permanent secretary and directors-general. — MNA/TS

The Thai ambassador and delegation call on the governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

9 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 6 January, total figure rises to 633,709

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **633,709** after **nine** new cases were reported on 6 January 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **608,341**, including **10** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged to **19,490** on 6-1-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic.

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www.gnlm.com.mm
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION
(+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 454237515
ADVERTISING & MARKETING
(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 251022355
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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gnlmnews@gmail.com
www.gnlm.com.mm

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

Coord meeting held on protection of Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand

A coordination meeting on the protection of the interests of Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday.

It was attended by State Administration Council member U Thein Nyunt, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Ko Ko Hlaing, Union Minister for Immigration and Population U Myint Kyaing, Union Minister for Labour Dr Pwint San, MoFA Deputy Minister U Kyaw Myo Htut and Permanent Secretary U Chan Aye, Myanmar Ambassador to Thailand U Chit Swe, Director-General U Kyaw Tin Shein of the Department of Consular and Legal Affairs and other relevant officials.

Union ministers and the Myanmar Ambassador to Thailand discussed the legal employment of Myanmar migrant workers, extension and issuance of passports, challenges and suitable arrangements in granting certificates to the unidentified migrant workers. Moreover, they focused on long-term and short-term projects for passport renewal processes and other matters related to the interests of citizens and the organizing of working groups. — MNA/KTZH

The coordination meeting is underway to protect Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand yesterday.

Display of 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day commemorative booths, traditional food booths, decorated floats continues third day

Booths are packed with students, youths and people on the third day of the event in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO : KO GYI HTEIN**

THE third-day display of 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day commemorative booths, traditional food booths and decorated floats continued at Taboung Ground near Nay Pyi Taw Uppatasanti Pagoda yesterday and was crowded with a large number of students, youths and people.

The ethnic cultural troupes welcomed participants and the officials of decorated floats from ministries, regions/states including Nay Pyi Taw Council explained the displayed cultural culture, regional knowledge, the status of well-known leaders and activities for socioeconomic development.

Moreover, the booths featuring photos showing customs and traditions, wearing styles, local commodities, famous recreational sites, local products, natural resources, development programmes, public services and records for human resources development were also packed with visitors.

The ethnic traditional choral dance troupes sang and performed in front of their decorated floats and the people joined the dance happily.

Moreover, the traditional food booths and souvenir shops were also crowded with people.

The fund-raising shops of the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Industry, Myanmar Economic Corporation and Ottara District Red Cross Brigade of Myanmar Red Cross Society sold the foodstuff and commodities at fairer prices at the event.

Moreover, the event included drawing lots, quizzes, games and hand-painting programmes. In the evening, the artistes of MRTV and the Department of Fine Arts and the ethnic traditional choral dance troupes entertained the public with songs and dances.

Myanmar Police Force also provided security measures by cooperating with Tatmadaw members and Fire Brigade members and the clinics were also opened in case of emergency cases.

The Traffic Police Force conducted road safety measures during the event.

The exhibition comprises 25 booths of ministries, 15 booths of Nay Pyi Taw, regions and states and 15 booths of traditional foods, totalling 55, showing 26 decorated floats from ministries, 15 decorated floats from Nay Pyi Taw and regions and states, a decorated float marking the Independence Day, a Union decorated float and five decorated floats for Tatmadaw, totalling 48. Admission is free for the people and they can visit between 4 and 8 January. — Hein Min Soe, Gyaing Law/KTZH

Trade Mark Ads Call 09251022355,09974424848

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Pharmaceuticals available are displayed at a pharmacy.

Over 370 tonnes of pharmaceuticals worth over US$9.119 mln imported in Dec 3rd week

MORE than 370 tonnes of pharmaceuticals, with an estimated value of over US$9.119 million, were imported from foreign countries in the third week of December 2022, according to statistics released by the Ministry of Commerce.

Between 17 and 23 December 2022, Myanmar brought in over 250 tonnes of medicines worth $8.294 million by sea from Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Cyprus, Ecuador, Germany, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Spain, the Philippines, Singapore, Portugal, Thailand, the US and Viet Nam.

Also, Myanmar imported over 120 tonnes of medicine worth $0.825 million from China (100 tonnes) and Thailand (20 tonnes) through the border posts.

Myanmar's pharmaceutical imports in November 2022 amounted to US$53.711 million from about 5,000 tonnes, the Ministry of Commerce stated. —TWA/EMM

Myanmar imports over 29,000 tonnes of fertilizers worth $15.273 mln in Dec 3rd week

MYANMAR imported over 29,000 tonnes of fertilizer worth US$15.273 million in the third week of December, mostly from Brunei, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Between 17 and 23 December 2022, Myanmar imported over 23,000 tonnes of fertilizer worth $14.862 million in seaborne trade from Brunei (over 15,000 tonnes), China (about 9,000 tonnes), the UAE (over 1,000 tonnes), Canada (over 500 tonnes), Germany (over 300 tonnes) and Italy (over 750 tonnes).

The volume of fertilizer import is, however, up by over 13,000 tonnes compared with that of the previous week.

Meanwhile, the country imported over 1,850 tonnes of fertilizer worth $0.411 million through a cross-border channel during the week ending 23 December, with about over 100 tonnes from Thailand, about 400 from India and about 1,400 from China.

Myanmar brought in over 29,000 tonnes of fertilizer worth $57.279 million by sea and cross-border channels. China was the main supplier of fertilizer then, the Ministry of Commerce stated. — TWA/EMM

A panoramic view of the Brunei Fertilizer Industries (BFI) plant and jetty. **(PHOTO: BFI)**

CBM governor elaborates need of digital currency to reduce cash transactions

STEPS are required to develop plans to encourage digital payments for municipal service, tax payments and utility bills such as meter bills and water bills collected by the government across the country, said Daw Than Than Swe, Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM).

She remarked at the coordination meeting on digital payment enhancement and strengthening digital payment in Nay Pyi Taw, held on 3 January 2023 at Zabuthiri Hall in Nay Pyi Taw.

She also added the use of mobile apps and QR codes to expand digital transactions in Nay Pyi Taw.

A customer makes the payment with the use of a mobile app at a shop.

The CBM is prioritizing promoting digital payment, cash use plunge and currency stability. Moreover, a CBM-NET system to handle large payrolls and retail payments were also carried out. It also gives green light to digital wallets and merchant-acquiring service providers. Additionally, digital payment switch systems to facilitate the settlement of small payments between different service providers are also being undertaken.

Awareness campaigns for digital payment enhancement will be conducted at Junction Center and other sites in Nay Pyi Taw. The expo will also feature promotion plans and campaigns. She also discussed matters to turn the capital city into a digital city and called for the ministries, banks, digital wallets and merchant-acquiring service providers to submit action plans to achieve that goal.

The officials from the CBM, Kanbawza Bank, AYA Bank, Asia Green Development Bank, UAB Bank Limited, Myanmar Citizens Bank, Shwe (Rural and Urban) Development Bank, Ayeyarwaddy Farmers Development Bank and mobile money service providers attended the meeting. — TWA/EMM

MOGE: CNG filling stations open for extended hours

NATURAL gas stores for vehicles are now offering extended sales hours, according to the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise. CNG shops used to open daily from 5 am to 9 pm, but now that is open until 10:30 pm.

In the past, it sold around 17 million cubic feet of natural gas, but in early December, it increased to more than 18 million cubic feet of natural gas. For CNG vehicles in the Yangon Region, gas produced from the Nyaungdon-Maubin oil and natural gas field will be opened in 40 of the current 41 filling stations in the Yangon Region. CNG vehicles running daily in Yangon Region CNG is being distributed and sold to from 5 am to 10:30 pm every day. The price is also the same as the previous price, which is distributed and sold at K275.15 per kilogramme, according to the department of Natural Gas for Vehicles of Myanmar Oil and Natural Gas Enterprise. — TWA/KZW

LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar ships over 165,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh under G-to-G pact

DEPENDING on to the Government-to-Government pact between Myanmar and Bangladesh, Myanmar has conveyed over 165,000 tonnes of white rice to Bangladesh, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar and Bangladesh inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on rice trade on 8 September this year.

According to this MoU, Bangladesh has agreed to buy 250,000 tonnes of white rice and 50,000 tonnes of parboiled rice from Myanmar between 2022 and 2027.

Following the MoU, Bangladesh's Directorate General of Food and Myanmar Rice Federation signed a sales contract for 200,000 tonnes of Myanmar's white rice (five per cent broken) to be exported to Bangladesh. As per the sales contract, Myanmar has exported over 165,000 tonnes of white rice to Bangladesh as of 2 January 2022. The remaining will be delivered by the deadline.

Rice bags are seen being loaded onto the vessel at Ahlon International Port Terminal.

As per the MoU between Myanmar and Bangladesh on the rice trade, 48 companies, under the supervision of the Myanmar Rice Federation, are to export 200,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh with Chinese yuan payment between October 2022 and January 2023.

By the contract, white rice (ATAP) GPCT Broken STX variety will be delivered. The FOB prices were 2.78856 Yuan per kilogramme and 2788.56 Yuan per tonne.

The Export/Import Division of the Trade Department issued 42 export licences worth over 534 million Yuan for 41 companies to convey 191,700 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh.

Since 7 September 2017, Myanmar and Bangladesh have engaged in rice trade under the government-to-government pact. That MoU stated that Bangladesh has agreed to buy Myanmar's white rice (250,000 tonnes) and parboiled rice (50,000) tonnes between 2017 and September 2022.

Bangladesh's Directorate General of Food and MRF signed the sales contracts as per the MoU and Myanmar sent 100,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh each in 2017 for the first time and 2021 for the second time, as per the sales contract. — NN/EMM

Fuel oil prices down over K100 per litre

THE prices of fuel oil decreased by K100 per litre within two days, according to the fuel oil market.

On 4 January 2023, the prices of fuel oil were K2,095 per litre for Octane 92, K2,160 for Octane 95, K2,360 for diesel and K2,440 for premium diesel.

On 6 January, the prices declined to K1,945 per litre for Octane 92, K2,010 for Octane 95, K2,230 for diesel and K2,310 for premium diesel. The figures indicated a decrease of K130-K150 per litre depending on the types of oil within two days.

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

Consequently, the prices touched a high of K2,605 per litre for Octane 92, K2,670 for Octane 95, K3,245 for diesel and K3,330 for premium diesel in late August.

The committee is steering the oil sector effectively to ensure adequate supply in the domestic market and price stability for energy consumers.

The committee is issuing the daily reference rate for oil to offer a reasonable price to energy consumers. The reference rate is set on the MOPS's price assessment, shipping cost, profit margin, premium insurance, tax and other general costs.

The rates for regions and states other than Yangon are evaluated after adding the transportation cost and the retail reference rates daily covered on the state-run newspapers and are posted on the media and official website and Facebook page of the department on a daily basis starting from 4 May. — NN/EMM

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 6 January 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K1,945
Octane 95	K2,010
Diesel	K2,230
Premium Diesel	K2,310

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,163,000 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,737,000 per tical

Dollar Price

A US dollar set by the Central Bank of Myanmar	K2,100
A US dollar in the forex market	K2,835 to K2,855

The above prices may change from time to time.

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OPINION

Seek changes to overcome difficulties and challenges in life

EVERYBODY or every country needs to take adequate time for solving crises or problems or for overcoming challenges based on considerations of how to analyze the situation of crises or problems.

They have to take their opinions on the crises into consideration. In this regard, they need to analyze the situations and whether their perceptions would be in conformity with the crises or difficulties. Hence, they have to consider possibilities for the emergence of optimistic thoughts and behaviours which may contribute towards solving the crises or problems.

Surveys stated that whenever a person faces difficulties or crises, they will have to grasp different opinions to solve these difficulties or crises. Such a kind of capability to solve problems depends on their emotional situations and fine personality.

Hence, everybody must be emotionally strong to encounter the impacts of the ways of the mundane world. Moreover, they have to forge empathy and sympathy for each other. According to medical surveys, persons with empathy and sympathy can mitigate bad mental emotions with blossoming fine emotional moves. Only when the culture of empathy, sympathy and compassion will they be capable of responding to difficulties and crises.

> That is why only when those persons have equipped themselves with powerful arms such as empathy, sympathy and compassion in fighting the battle of life will their future be brighter and will they stand tall among others in society. To do so, they all need to uplift their capacity.

In the life cycle, everybody is trying to overcome life challenges along the lifespan. Practically, empathy, sympathy and compassion make their souls soft. These crises train those persons to be strengthened for having endurance against bad impacts of challenges. To have such a situation, they have to upgrade themselves inch by inch. Gradually, they will reach different levels with a higher capacity to overcome difficulties.

In society, those who have the experience to solve difficulties and challenges will have higher capacity than other persons who do not have experience in solving life problems. It is sure that those who have experience in solving problems and difficulties will have the chance to take higher positions.

That is why only when those persons have equipped themselves with powerful arms such as empathy, sympathy and compassion in fighting the battle of life will their future be brighter and will they stand tall among others in society. To do so, they all need to uplift their capacity.

Hence, everybody needs to understand what is the best in life, what is the most important and how to solve and overcome the challenges along their lifespan, and how they can accumulate invaluable experiences to be applied in their lives. Now is the best time for all to enhance their capacity for all. ■

ARTICLE

What Garbage at the Pitch of FIFA World Cup 2022 showed

By Suzuka YOSHIDA

THE FIFA World Cup 2022, which started on 20 November, ended after about a month of struggle. There was a lot of drama left behind, and the players did their best to produce results.

One of the topics of this World Cup was that it was different from a game, namely, garbage picking-up and cleaning by Japanese national team players and supporters.

Garbage pick-up caught the attention of the media around the world when the Japanese supporters who attended the opening ceremony cleaned up around their seats. Despite it is not a game of the Japanese national team. And after each game, the Japanese national team picked up garbage and cleaned up their locker room before leaving. Some media reporters called the move "classy", but the players and supporters weren't cleaning up to be praised. This is because it is a common practice among Japanese.

Evaluated for picking up garbage vs. Lost for throwing trash away

It was after Japan's first match against Germany that the FIFA 2022 Steering Committee approached the Japanese supporters. As the supporters finished picking up the garbage as usual and were about to leave their seats to go home, FIFA officials ordered them to "remain in their seats". Supporters noticed bearded Arab gentlemen staring at them, yelling in horror, "We're going to get hit, be careful!" and scared. However, the Qatari organizing committee picked up the microphone and spoke to them.

"I want to say thank you to all the Japanese supporters here. Arigatou Gozaimashita (Thank you in English)."

The supporters were dumbfounded by the unexpected words. Then, with big smiles, they shared big joy with Arab gentlemen.

Let us mention another interesting happening regarding trash at the FIFA World Cup. During the match between Denmark-Australia on 30 November, a Danish player threw a note given to him by the coach on the pitch. An Australian player picked it up and gave it to his coach. The Australian coach found out about the Danish strategy from that memo, changed their tactics, and won. It's ironic that how you treat garbage can make such a difference.

The locker room after the Japanese team cleaned up and left.
https://twitter.com/FIFAWorldCup_JP

"Cause and Effect" is the basic concept

In Japan, everyone is expected to keep their surroundings clean and tidy. It starts at an age when they can't speak yet, and they are trained by their parents to take out the toys and put them away after playing with them. In both kindergartens and schools, teachers ask children to clean up their own garbage, to keep their room clean, to wash their hands frequently, and to put things back where they were.

School teachers and Athletic clubs trainers also thoroughly taught players that :

- Punctuality,
- Greet your teammates and trainers properly,
- Repair tools for damage and get rid of dirt,
- Check the number of tools,
- Set in order (return to original position),
- Collect garbage and put it in the trash can,
- Make it cleaner than before.

All members cooperate together to do this. This will keep the practice field and equipment in good condition so that players can begin smoothly the next day. In cases practice fields are not tidied up and cleaned, tools and garbage become obstacles that hinder practice. Above all, you will learn teamwork and discipline.

Since sports clubs in which children participate are originally positioned as activities to enhance humanity, tidying up and cleaning are taught first. This is to make them realize that their actions (littering the trash and leaving things out) are a nuisance to others and that they will eventually take responsibility for cleaning themselves. This custom will push you up the acquisition of skills because you can maintain your desire to practice.

Cleaning may be related to the Buddhism mindset of "cause and effect". It means that the "cause" produces the "effect", and whether it is a good result or a bad result, you will have to receive it.

5S method developed from cleaning

Keeping the environment clean has come to be seen as a characteristic of the Japanese as a discipline. And factories operated by Japanese companies have further developed it and are making great use of it in the manufacturing industry.

In factories and offices, a workplace organization method was born in which employees thoroughly cleaned their workplaces by themselves systematically. It is called "5S". Five Japanese words starting with S are used, and factory workers should repeatedly follow them at the manufacturing site. This method allows the work to proceed efficiently and effectively.

5S guides workers to work efficiently. Everyone must follow this, regardless of their position in the factory. This made the situation so workers can share information on how much inventory there is and how many of what items have to be made.

Once this information was shared, they were able to get a monthly sales forecast. Managers can also calculate the cost.

If you can predict sales and costs, it will be easier to make predictions for the entire company, which can be reflected in employee salaries.

If the sales are good, it will be possible to add to the wages of the employees, so the employees will be happy.

The company management side can be stable.

Such a flow can be expected. People with high positions such as executives take the lead in 5S in order to set an example in the workplace in most cases.

Japanese supporters cleaned the zone they used with garbage bags which were used during the game. From https://times.abema.tv/fifaworldcup/articles/-/10052619

Foreign workers who can't do repetition

In recent years, foreign workers have started working alongside Japanese workers in factories.

Foreign workers are instructed to follow the 5S method, but they seem to be hard to do so. Even if they can understand it in their head, they will object and say, "I know that."

Above all, they recognize that cleaning is something that lower-class people do. In their home countries, they are in the position of hiring a maid at home and may think that they do not need to do it because they are an elite class with higher education. Also, people who grew up with a habit of never cleaning seem to be accustomed to a dirty environment.

There are supporters and national team players who were inspired by the Japanese team to suddenly start cleaning the Qatar soccer field. Some of them may have cleaned it with a thin veneer of culture to be admired.

I hope that the next FIFA World Cup will have supporters who understand the theory of "cause and effect" and truly beautify the football field as well as no abusive language. ■

Source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/5S_(methodology)
https://twitter.com/i/status/1598163264562946048
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CcO9oc8soyI
https://abema.tv/video/episode/89-106_s1_p1272?utm_medium=web&utm_source=abematimes&utm_campaign=-times_yahoo
https://twitter.com/i/status/1595394595109896194

5S are summarized in the table.

Japanese	English	content
Seiri	Sort	Sorting through all items in a location and removing all unnecessary items from the location.
Seiton	Set in order	Putting all necessary items in the optimal place for fulfilling their function in the workplace.
Seisou	shine	Sweeping or cleaning and inspecting the workplace, tools and machinery on a regular basis.
Seiketsu	standardize	Standardizing the processes used to sort, order and clean the workplace
Shitsuke	Sustain/ self-discipline	Get into the habit of following established rules and procedures by the self-discipline of the workers as like "do without being told".

ENVIRON WORLD

Half of world's glaciers expected to vanish by 2100: study

Visitors hike on the ice during a guided tour of the Matanuska Glacier near Palmer, Alaska in July 2022.
PHOTO: PATRICK T. FALLON / AFP/FILE

HALF of the Earth's glaciers, notably smaller ones, are destined to disappear by the end of the century because of climate change, but limiting global warming could save others, according to a new study.

The findings, published in the journal Science on Thursday, provide the most comprehensive look so far at the future of the world's 215,000 glaciers.

The authors emphasized the importance of restricting greenhouse gas emissions to limit the consequences from glacier melt such as sea level rise and depletion of water resources.

To help orient policy makers, the study looked at the impact of four scenarios on glaciers, where global mean temperature change is 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit), 2.0C, 3.0C and 4.0C.

"Every degree increase produces more melt and loss," said Regine Hock of the University of Oslo and University of Alaska Fairbanks, a co-author of the study.

"But that also means if you reduce the temperature increase, you can also reduce that mass loss," Hock told AFP. "So in that sense, there is also a little bit of hope."

Even if global temperature rise is limited to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels — the most ambitious goal of the Paris Agreement — the researchers estimated that 49 per cent of the world's glaciers would vanish by the year 2100.—AFP

Global investors pressure Glencore over coal production

An open-cast mine. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ INA FASSBENDER / AFP**

KEY investors in Swiss miner Glencore have demanded the company explain how its coal production plans align with global efforts to curb the warming of the planet, shareholders said Thursday.

Glencore, the world's largest coal trader, has said it supports the 2015 Paris Agreement to limit warming to well below two degrees Celsius, and the move to a low-carbon economy.

However, nearly one-quarter of shareholders rejected its 2022 climate plan, and investors have turned up the pressure with the first-ever resolution targeting the company's coal production.

"Investors want clarity on how Glencore's ongoing pursuit of thermal coal projects aligns with the company's public commitment to support the Paris Agreement," said the statement from shareholders from Europe, the United Kingdom, and Australia.—AFP

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

New Indonesia capital imperils ancient Eden with 'ecological disaster'

THE twisting road that leads to Indonesia's future capital is lined with dense rainforest and pockets of plantations, punctuated every so often with monkeys enjoying a laze out on the tarmac.

Located in eastern Borneo -- the world's third-largest island -- Nusantara is set to replace sinking and polluted Jakarta as Indonesia's political centre by late 2024.

But the two-hour drive from Balikpapan city to the sweeping green expanse of Nusantara's "Point Zero" reveals the scale of the new capital's potential impact on a biodiverse area that is home to thousands of animal and plant species.

With construction set to ramp up this year, environmentalists warn building a metropolis will speed up deforestation in one of the world's largest and oldest stretches of tropical rainforest, estimated to be more than 100 million years old.

"It's going to be a massive ecological disaster," Uli Arta Siagian, forest campaigner for environmental group Walhi, told AFP.—AFP

China builds its first holographic digital power grid

CHINA has successfully developed its first holographic digital power grid in the eastern province of Jiangsu. It is expected to greatly improve the smart operations and inspections of the grid, according to the State Grid Corporation of China (State Grid).

The virtual power grid has integrated technologies such as Beidou satellites, cloud computing and artificial intelligence. It has realized the three-dimensional restoration of the local power grid, which includes 100,000 kilometres of overhead transmission lines and 280,000 electric transmission towers.

Unmanned drones have also been deployed to inspect the automatic transmission lines of the electric transmission towers. The drones can fulfill functions such as automatic route planning and real-time monitoring, said Jiang Haibo, deputy general manager of Jiangsu Fangtian Power Technology Co, Ltd, the project's builder.

Jiang said the drones have centimeter-level high-precision positioning capabilities and an inspection efficiency about six times that of manual inspections.—Xinhua

An unmanned drone with centimeter-level high-precision positioning capabilities inspects the automatic transmission lines of the electric transmission towers in east China's Jiangsu Province, 29 Dec 2022.
\PHOTO: STATE GRID JIANGSU ELECTRIC POWER CO., LTD./ HANDOUT VIA XINHUA

HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

China insists Covid data 'transparent' after WHO criticism

CHINA on Thursday insisted it had been transparent with the international community about its Covid data, as it hit back against World Health Organization criticism that its tally of virus deaths was understating the true scale of its outbreak.

There is mounting international concern over China's steep rise in Covid infections since Beijing abruptly lifted years of hardline restrictions last month, with hospitals and crematoriums quickly overwhelmed.

More than a dozen countries have imposed fresh Covid rules on visitors from China in the wake of that outbreak, requiring all arrivals to submit negative virus tests with some screening wastewater from flights arriving from the world's most populous nation.

China has only recorded 23 Covid deaths since December, after dramatically narrowing the criteria for classifying such fatalities. Beijing's statistics about the unprecedented wave are now widely seen by other countries as not reflecting reality.

In Geneva on Wednesday, WHO emergencies director Michael Ryan said the global organization was without "complete data" from China.

"We believe that the current numbers being published from China under-represent the true impact of the disease in terms of hospital admissions, in terms of ICU admissions, and particularly in terms of deaths," he said.

An employee packs medicines at a pharmaceutical company in Xi'an, northwest China's Shaanxi Province, 4 Jan 2023. Pharmaceutical companies and medical equipment companies are working to meet the public needs for anti-COVID-19 supplies. **PHOTO: XINHUA/LIU XIAO**

The definition Beijing is using is "very narrow", he added.

Beijing hit back on Thursday, insisting China had "always shared relevant information and data with the international community, with an open and transparent attitude".

"We… hope the WHO secretariat will uphold a scientific, objective and just position, and make efforts to play a positive role for the world's response to the pandemic challenge," foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning told a press briefing.

She also urged countries against imposing fresh travel restrictions on arrivals from China, calling instead for them to "work together to protect the normal movements of people".—AFP

Woman faces UK trial for genital mutilation of girl, 4

A woman appeared in a London court Thursday accused of helping in the genital mutilation of a four-year-old girl, a common but risky practice in parts of Africa, the Mideast and Asia

Amina Noor, 39, who required a Somali interpreter, pleaded not guilty to an offence dating back 16 years to when the alleged victim was aged just four.

Noor, from Harrow in northwest London, faces a single charge of assisting a non-UK resident to mutilate female genitalia while abroad.

The victim, who cannot be identified for legal reasons, is now aged 20 and a British citizen.

A trial will take place in October, the Central Criminal Court at the Old Bailey in central London was told.

The practice is common in some African, Middle Eastern and Asian countries and involves the partial or total removal of a young girl's clitoris and labia.

The procedure — also known as "female circumcision", often under unsterile conditions — can lead to severe complications.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 200 million girls and women alive today have been subjected to the practice.—AFP

A woman in front of a female circumcision poster in Abidjan, in 2005. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ KAMBOU SIA / AFP/FILE**

Thailand says no Covid test needed for travellers from China

China was the largest source of foreign tourists for Thailand before the pandemic, with almost 11 million arrivals in 2019. In this file photo, tourists visit Khai island in the Andaman Sea, taken on 4 October 2019. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

THAI authorities said Thursday that travellers from China could enter the kingdom without pre-departure coronavirus tests, hoping their return would be a shot in the arm for the country's tourism sector recovery.

China has experienced a surge in infections and its hospitals and crematoriums have been inundated after Beijing last month wound back tight restrictions.

The United States, Canada, Japan and France are among the countries that have imposed new rules requiring travellers from China to provide negative Covid tests as concerns grow over the spike in cases.

But Thai authorities on Thursday said all countries should be treated the same.—AFP

Czech farm culls 750,000 hens as bird flu spreads

A Czech farm has been ordered to cull 750,000 hens — 15 per cent of the country's total — as Europe struggles to contain its worst outbreak of bird flu ever, authorities said Wednesday.

The poultry farm in the western village of Brod nad Tichou is one of the Czech Republic's largest, Gabriela Dlouha of the Czech-Moravian Union of Poultry Breeders told AFP.

In recent weeks, more than a dozen Czech farms have also been affected by a virus that has wreaked havoc on farms across the EU.

"The situation is very serious. Ten new outbreaks were announced in the Czech Republic in December alone [and] the pace keeps accelerating," the state veterinary administration SVS said in a statement.—AFP

ECONOMY
WORLD

CES gadget gala looks to shake off economic gloom

THE annual CES consumer electronics extravaganza throws open its doors in Las Vegas on Thursday as the industry looks to the latest innovations to help cure the pain from an ailing global economy.

High inflation, lingering supply chain troubles and tech company layoffs provide a dark backdrop for technology's premier trade show where more than 100,000 attendees are expected from around the world until Sunday.

Consumer Technology Association research director Steve Koenig reminded CES-goers of previous innovations from smartphones to high-speed internet that soared to success after the "last big economic downturn" more than a decade ago.

"This time, I think the powerful new waves of technological change that will really remedy inflation and restore global GDP growth will come from the enterprise side," Koenig said during a presentation by the CTA, which runs CES.

These will include robotics to make workplaces more efficient, on-the-job virtual reality, and automated vehicles such as tractors that tend to farmland without drivers on board, according to Koenig.

Technology, thanks to increased productivity, "is a deflationary force in the global economy," underlined Gary Shapiro, president and CEO of CTA.

Spreading out from the Las Vegas convention center to ballrooms in an array of hotels on the famous Sin City strip, CES will have televisions, electric roller skates, self-piloting baby strollers and more aimed at wowing showgoers.—AFP

A product expert demonstrates features on a refrigerator during a preview of Samsung Electronics Co Bespoke Home appliances and SmartThings home technologies ahead of the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, Nevada, on 3 Jan 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

New Zealand's tourism to be greatly boosted with influx of Chinese tourists

THE orderly resumption of outbound travel for Chinese tourists will be "a major boon to New Zealand's tourism industry," said Lisa Li, a travel operator specializing in the Chinese market.

It is great news that the Chinese market will now rebuild, said Li, managing director of New Zealand's largest travel agency, China Travel Service (NZ) Ltd., who also revealed that there were already more inquiries from Chinese tour groups.

As with Li, New Zealand's Chinese tour guide Uncle Rong has been busy communicating with China's travel agencies and customizing the latest tour itineraries to prepare for Chinese tourists visiting New Zealand this summer.

Nearly 36 million Chinese people are looking to New Zealand as a preferred vacation destination, showed a survey conducted by Tourism New Zealand at the end of 2019.

"The New Zealand tourism industry is very excited about the upcoming arrival of Chinese tourists," Rong said.

Grant Bradley, a senior reporter of NZ Herald, deems the re-opening of China crucial for New Zealand's tourism, saying the decision made by China could send a wave of Chinese tourists to destinations like New Zealand.

Spending by international tourists increased 30.6 per cent in the year ending March 2022, and New Zealand is looking forward to seeing another jump in the year ending March 2023, said Tourism Minister Stuart Nash on Monday.

"Our regions have already seen a boost in tourism spending and this looks set to continue in the summer months," said the minister.— Xinhua

People arrive at International Arrivals of Auckland Airport, New Zealand on 28 Feb 2022. **PHOTO: ZHAO GANG/XINHUA**

Dubai announces plan to 'double' its economy in 10 years

People visit the China Pavilion at the Expo 2020 Dubai site in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, on 10 Jan 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA/WANG DONGZHEN**

DUBAI announced on Wednesday a bold plan aiming to boost foreign trade and investment in the United Arab Emirates' financial hub and "double the size" of its economy by 2033.

The Gulf emirate's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, unveiled in a series of tweets the Dubai Economic Agenda, dubbed "D33", with targets totalling 32 trillion dirhams (€8.2 trillion).

The plan would "double the size of Dubai's economy in the next decade and consolidate its position among the top three global cities", Sheikh Mohammed said in a post that was accompanied by a marketing video.

The objectives would be achieved through "100 transformative projects", he said in Twitter posts using infographics.

The new economic agenda would also add 400 cities to Dubai's list of trading partners, increasing foreign trade in the coming decade by 44 per cent to 25.6 trillion dirhams.

It would also see foreign direct investment in Dubai exceed 650 billion dirhams within 10 years, according to Sheikh Mohammed. The ambitious plan comes as much of the world reels from doom-laden financial forecasts.— AFP

German exports slump as trade with China slows

GERMAN export numbers fell in November, official data showed Thursday, as trading activity with its biggest commercial partners, including China, slowed.

Germany exported 135.1 billion euros' ($143.2 billion) worth of goods in November, a 0.3-per-cent drop on the previous month, according to seasonally-adjusted figures from federal statistics agency Destatis.

The dip surprised analysts surveyed by FactSet, who had expected a slight jump in exports.

Destatis, however, revised figures for October upwards, showing a 0.8 increase on the previous month, instead of the 0.6-per-cent drop previously announced.

Exports in November 2022 were also 13.3 per cent above their level of 2021, according to the stats body.

Outgoing trade with EU countries fell by 0.4 per cent to 73 billion euros, as the bloc suffered an economic slowdown related to the war in Ukraine and the high price of energy.

Exports to non-EU countries fell by 0.1 per cent overall. In particular, exports to China fell by 1.5 per cent to 8.8 billion euros, as the Asian giant was battered by new waves of coronavirus infections.

The United States likewise imported 1.5 per cent fewer goods "made in Germany", for a total of 13.7 billion euros.

Moving in the other direction, German imports fell by 3.3 per cent to 124.4 billion euros, with a 7.8-per-cent drop in goods from China.—AFP

Auto industry posts worst US sales year in over decade: reports

WITH supply chain issues, high interest rates and low inventory in full swing, analysts are projecting an estimated total of around 13.7 million new vehicles sold in the United States last year, the lowest figure in over a decade.

While an eight-per-cent drop was recorded in 2022 compared to 2021, the projection for 2023 isn't much better: sales figures are expected to remain well below pre-pandemic levels, with around 17 million new cars expected to be sold, said The Wall Street Journal on Wednesday.

"The drop-off marks a reversal for a sector that started the year hoping historically low interest rates and an end to parts shortages would fuel a rebound in sales," said auto news portal Jalopnikin in its report of the negative development.

Instead, vehicles continued to be in short supply as car makers mostly waited for scarce computer chips, it said, noting that Russia's military action in Ukraine, a key supplier of auto parts, added to the supply-chain troubles.

To make the scenario worse, a new survey from consulting firm Deloitte showed that US consumers are being kept away from electric vehicles (EV) by ever-rising prices, despite their desire to buy.

Nearly seven out of 10 prospective EV buyers in the United States hope to pay less than 50,000 US dollars for their next vehicle, a number that's hard to achieve with most of the EVs available on the market today, according to the survey. — Xinhua

Vehicles continued to be in short supply as car makers mostly waited for scarce computer chips. The Cadillac Motor Car Division is a division of the American automobile manufacturer General Motors that designs and builds luxury vehicles. **PHOTO: PHOTO BY MICHAEL STRONG/XINHUA**

Japan tuna price soars past $270,000 at New Year auction

THE top-selling tuna at Tokyo's traditional New Year auction sold for more than $270,000 on Thursday, nearly double last year's price, breaking a pandemic trend of slumping demand.

Michelin-starred sushi restaurant Onodera Group and Japanese wholesaler Yamayuki forked out 36.04 million yen ($273,000) for the 212-kilogramme bluefin tuna in the auction at Tokyo's Toyosu fish market.

The figure was still only a fraction of the 2019 record price but marks a recovery for the symbolic auction after three years in which prices slumped.

Pricey catch: Sushi chefs looking at a bluefin tuna - which was bought earlier in the day for over US$270,000 at the first tuna auction of the New Year - after it was unloaded outside the Sushi Ginza Onodera main store in Omotesando in Tokyo. **PHOTO: AFP**

"It has all the qualities of a good tuna," sushi master and Onodera head chef Akifumi Sakagami told reporters after the auction.

"We have had years of gloom (during the pandemic). I hope that we can deliver happiness to everyone by using opportunities like this."

Last year's top-selling tuna, bought by the same pair of bidders, went for just 16.88 million yen, with observers blaming subdued demand as a Covid wave ripped through Japan in early 2022. —AFP

Amazon to cut more than 18,000 jobs, CEO says

AMAZON announced Wednesday it will cut more than 18,000 jobs from its workforce, citing "the uncertain economy" and the fact that the online retail giant had "hired rapidly" during the pandemic.

"Between the reductions we made in November and the ones we're sharing today, we plan to eliminate just over 18,000 roles," said CEO Andy Jassy in a statement to his staff. The company had announced 10,000 layoffs in November. Jassey said the company's leadership was "deeply aware that these role eliminations are difficult for people, and we don't take these decisions lightly. "We are working to support those who are affected and are providing packages that include a separation payment, transitional health insurance benefits, and external job placement support," he said. Some of the layoffs would be in Europe Jassey said, adding that the impacted workers would be informed starting on 18 January. —AFP

The Global New Light of Myanmar
www.gnlm.com.mm

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V RICH SEAWAY VOY.NO. (042N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V RICH SEAWAY VOY.NO. (042N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **7-1-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CHANG DA 218 VOY.NO. (JD2222)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CHANG DA 218 VOY.NO. (JD2222)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **7-1-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES (S'PORE) PTE LTD

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Ukraine ceasefire calls grow ahead of Orthodox Christmas

CALLS for a ceasefire in Ukraine came from inside Russia and abroad on Thursday, days after the deadliest reported loss of the war for Moscow's forces.

Russia occupies parts of eastern and southern Ukraine after 11 months of fighting, but Kyiv has reclaimed swaths of its territory and this week claimed a New Year's strike that killed scores of Moscow's troops.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has good relations with Moscow, urged his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin to declare a "unilateral ceasefire".

In a surprise move, Russian President Vladimir Putin on 5 January ordered a 36-hour ceasefire in Ukraine in observance of Orthodox Christmas. **PHOTO: IGOR PALKIN /MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE/AFP/ FILE**

"Calls for peace and negotiations should be supported by a unilateral ceasefire and a vision for a fair solution," Erdogan was quoted as telling the Russian leader in a telephone call.—AFP

'Sacred goal': Russia paints Ukraine assault in spiritual terms

RUSSIAN Orthodox Patriarch Kirill, a powerful ally of President Vladimir Putin, is embracing the rhetoric of the mediaeval crusades in urging support for Moscow's offensive in eastern Ukraine.

When Pope Urban ordered the first crusade to the Middle East in 1095, he told Christians to rise up and defend fellow believers, promising that their sins would be wiped away.

Nearly 10 centuries later, Kirill has called on believers to support pro-Russian "brothers" during Moscow's offensive in eastern Ukraine.

In a sermon in September, he said that dying in Ukraine "washes away all sins".

As humiliating military setbacks for Russia in Ukraine pile up, authorities in Moscow seem increasingly willing to depict the campaign in religious terms.

Keen to ensure public support, Putin declared during his midnight address on New Year's Eve that "moral, historical rightness is on our side".

He had initially said that the fellow Orthodox Christian nation needed to be "demilitarized" and "de-Nazified".—AFP

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

US, Japan to expand cooperation on key technologies beyond chips

An artificial intelligence robot with a humanistic face is presented prior to an exhibition entitled "AI: More than Human" at the Barbican Centre in London on 15 May 2019. **PHOTO: BEN STANSALL/AFP/FILE**

THE United States and Japan have agreed to expand their cooperation on critical emerging technologies beyond semiconductors to include areas such as artificial intelligence and biotechnology, Japanese industry minister Yasutoshi Nishimura said Thursday after meeting with his US counterpart.

On semiconductors, Rapidus Corp, a new Japanese government-backed company, and US tech giant IBM Corp, which have partnered in developing next-generation semiconductors, also plan to work together on marketing and promoting human resources development, according to the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

The moves represent the latest efforts by the close allies to address potential economic vulnerabilities amid intensifying competition between the United States and China over technology and other issues.— Kyodo

Six women in Peru embark on transoceanic voyage on paddle board

SIX women are attempting to paddle 8,000 kilometres (5,000 miles) across the Pacific Ocean to raise awareness about how sport can help cancer patients overcome emotional distress.

These women — one from Spain and the others French — set off on Wednesday from Lima with their single board and paddles heading for Mo'orea in French Polynesia.

"We're going to attempt an unprecedented challenge: connecting Lima to Mo'orea on a board. We're six water women," Stephanie Geyer Barneix told AFP from the Lima Rowing Club before setting off.

"It is a project that has been three years in the making. Today it is being realized," added the 47-year-old, a survivor of breast cancer.

"We're going to paddle day and night to try to arrive at the end of March in Mo'orea."

The women will take turns on one board, swapping places every hour, to paddle standing up while the other five rest in a catamaran travelling behind it with first aid personnel aboard. —AFP

Emmanuelle Bescheron, Itziar Abascal, Margot Calvet, Marie Goyeneche, Alexandra Lux and Stephanie Geyer Barneix pose with their paddle board ahead of their attempt to cross the Pacific Ocean. **PHOTO: AFP**

Canada court approves class action alleging discrimination in Facebook ads

A Canadian court of appeal will allow a class action suit to be brought by social media users accusing Facebook of age, gender and race discrimination in online advertisements, the plaintiffs' lawyer said Wednesday.

The class action could see the social media giant paying damages to thousands of residents in Canada's Quebec province who have used the platform to search for jobs and housing since 2016, according to court documents.

In an email to AFP, lead lawyer Audrey Boctor alleged "widespread discriminatory practices" in Facebook's targeted ads.

"Algorithmic discrimination that prevents certain groups of people, such as women and older workers, from receiving job advertisements is just a modern form of the same type of discrimination that is prohibited" in Canada, she said.—AFP

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

US in crisis amid once-in-a-century political standoff

THE US House of Representatives plunged deeper into crisis Thursday as Republican favourite Kevin McCarthy failed again to win the speakership — entrenching a three-day standoff that has paralyzed the lower chamber of Congress. McCarthy, a favourite of his party's establishment but a bete noire of the far right, has made sweeping concessions to quell a rebellion of around 20 hardliners blocking his bid to be the country's top lawmaker.

But his overtures have fallen on deaf ears and he failed to win over a single renegade Republican across five ballots staged on Thursday before the House agreed to adjourn until noon (1700 GMT) Friday.

The final round of voting was the 11th in total since the chamber opened for a new term under a narrow Republican majority this week. No speakership contest has gone more than nine rounds since the Civil War era.

Before Thursday's defeats, McCarthy had already been humiliated by failure to secure the gavel six times in a chaotic 48 hours, losing each round to Democrat Hakeem Jeffries.

"It's my hope that today the House Republicans will stop the bickering, stop the backbiting and stop the backstabbing so we can have the backs of the American people," Jeffries, who is also short of the required majority, told reporters.—AFP

House Clerk Cheryl Johnson presides as voting continues for speaker at the US Capitol in Washington. **PHOTO: AFP**

Seoul says N Korean drone entered crucial no-fly zone

South Korean soldiers patrol along the line through the Demilitarized Zone in Hwacheon County, August 2015. **PHOTO: AFP /FILE**

SOUTH Korea's military confirmed on Thursday a North Korean drone had breached the key no-fly zone around the presidential office during a rare incursion last month it had previously denied. Military tensions on the Korean peninsula rose sharply last year as the North conducted sanctions-busting weapons tests nearly every month, including firing its most advanced intercontinental ballistic missile ever.

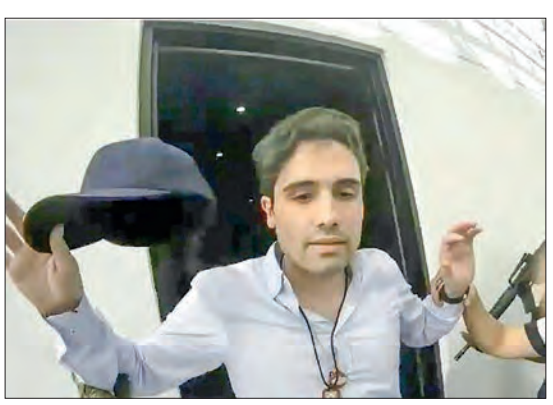
Pyongyang then sent five drones across the border into South Korean airspace on 26 December, the first such incident in five years, prompting Seoul to scramble jets to respond.

South Korea's military had already apologized after failing to shoot down any of the drones, despite a five-hour operation, which it blamed on the drones being "too small". — AFP

Mexico arrests son of notorious drug kingpin 'El Chapo'

MEXICAN security forces on Thursday captured a son of jailed drug kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, scoring a high-profile win in the fight against powerful cartels days before US President Joe Biden visits.

Ovidio Guzman, nicknamed "El Raton" (The Mouse), was caught in the northwestern city of Culiacan and flown to Mexico City on a military plane, Defence Minister Luis Cresencio Sandoval told reporters. He said the arrest was the result of six months of intelligence work tracking down the 32-year-old, who has allegedly helped to run his father's operations since El Chapo was extradited to the United States in 2017.—AFP


An image of Ovidio Guzman released by the Mexican government in October 2019 when he was briefly captured but freed after his cartel waged all-out war. **PHOTO: CEPROPIE/AFP**

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Colombia government weakened by 'truce' mishap: analysts

IN announcing a "bilateral" ceasefire before it existed, Colombian President Gustavo Petro may have weakened his government in ongoing peace talks with armed groups, experts say.

Petro's New Year's Eve declaration was hailed by the United Nations and others as a step towards the "total peace" Colombia's first-ever leftist president has vowed to bring to the country.

But the ELN guerrilla group poured cold water all over Petro's declaration just three days later, denying the group had entered into any such deal, and the government conceded that nothing was signed.

Whether a calculated ploy to pile pressure on the ELN or mere miscommunication, Petro's move was a "mistake" that harmed "the legitimacy of the peace negotiations," conflict expert Laura Barrios of Rosario University told AFP. — AFP

Iraqi Kurds bury activist killed in Paris attack

MOURNERS gathered Thursday in Iraqi Kurdistan for the politically charged funeral of activist Emine Kara, one of three Kurds killed in a December attack in Paris.

Members of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has been waging a decades-long insurgency against Türkiye, were among the dozens at the procession in Sulaimaniyah, an AFP correspondent said.

Kara, a veteran of the fight against the Islamic State (IS) group according to relatives, and a leader of the Movement of Kurdish Women in France which has ties to the PKK, was shot dead on 23 December along with Abdurrahman Kizil and Mir Perwer.

A xenophobic gunman, William Malet, has been charged over the attack in the French capital's 10th district, home to a large Kurdish population, which also wounded three others and fomented fear in the community.

Kara's coffin was flown into Sulaimaniyah, the second-largest city of Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region, and arrived early Thursday, two days after a procession in Paris. —AFP

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Myanmar's Falcon Esports to face ONIC Esports in M4 Upper Bracket today

PHOTO: MLBBM

MYANMAR'S Esports Icon Falcon will take on ONIC Esports of Indonesia in the Upper Bracket stage of the M4 Esports tournament today.

The match will start from 1:30 pm to 5 pm Myanmar Standard Time.

Myanmar MMA star Aung La N Sang has encouraged the Falcon team for the battles ahead.

"I have been following MLBB M4 Tournament very closely and I have got a chance to speak to the Falcon team," Aung La N Sang stated on his social media.

"As someone who has a big fight coming soon too, I can't wait to check with the Falcon team to see how they feel and how they are doing on their side also. Check out their videos and see what we talked about!

"Meanwhile, do save the dates for MLBB M4 Tournament until 15 January 2023 on both Facebook and YouTube and cheer up for our Myanmar team!

"For everyone here, let's stay tune for MLBB M4 Tournament until 15 January 2023 to wish Myanmar good luck," the Myanmar MMA icon added. — KZL

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

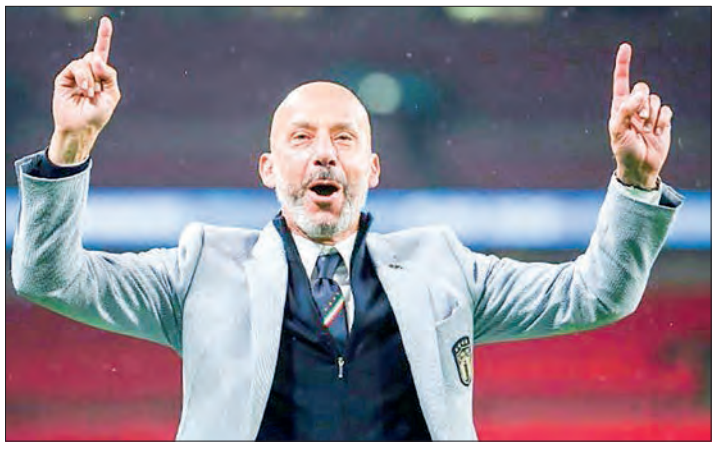
(a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
(b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National peoples and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national characteristics.
(c) To enhance the health, fitness and education quality of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

Italian football great Gianluca Vialli dies

FORMER Juventus, Chelsea and Italy striker Gianluca Vialli has died aged 58 of pancreatic cancer, his former clubs announced on Friday.

Vialli was diagnosed with cancer in 2017 but was still able to play a significant role in Italy's European Championship title-winning campaign in 2021 assisting long-time Sampdoria strike partner and national coach Roberto Mancini.

However, the signs were not good when he announced a temporary leave from his role with the national team in December to focus on his health. Vialli spent eight seasons at Genoa-based Sampdoria before joining Juventus in 1992 for a then world record 16.5 million euros.—AFP



Gianluca Vialli played 59 times for Italy. **PHOTO: POOL/AFP/FILE**

Grealish admits problems adapting to life at Manchester City

Jack Grealish says he has found it harder to adapt to being one of many stars at Manchester City than when he was the undisputed number one at Aston Villa. **PHOTO: AFP**

JACK Grealish says it has taken longer than he thought it would for him to adapt to a different role at Manchester City than he had at Aston Villa.

It took the England international midfielder less than four minutes to set up Riyad Mahrez for the only goal in City's win over Chelsea on Thursday.

It was one of three assists the 27-year-old has to his name this term — as many as in his entire first season for City — but he said he had hoped the goals would flow more freely at the reigning champions.

Grealish made the England World Cup squad despite not having yet lived up to the £100 million ($118 million) fee that City paid for him but was largely reduced to a substitute role by Gareth Southgate in Qatar.

"When I came here, I'll be honest with you, it was so much more difficult than I thought," Grealish told Sky Sports after combined with Mahrez shortly after both were sent on by Pep Guardiola.

"In my head I thought I was going to the team sitting top of the league and I was going to get so many goals and assists and obviously it isn't the case. "A lot of teams tend to sit in against us and that wasn't the case at Villa."—AFP