

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. X, No. 56, 10th Waning of Nayon 1385 ME

www.gnlm.com.mm

Monday, 12 June 2023

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Five-Point Road Map

1. Priority will be given to fully realizing peace, stability and rule of law throughout the Union to safeguard the socioeconomic life of the people.
2. People-centred development work that enhances socioeconomic well-being will be undertaken to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.
3. Processes will further continue to consolidate a genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system and build a Union based on democracy and federalism.
4. Priority will be accorded to work aligned with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, in order to achieve enduring peace for the entire nation.
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.

Yangon to grow more than 23,000 acres of rain-fed groundnut, corn, vegetables



Photo depicts thriving sunflower plantation. **PHOTO: KANU**

As a plan on cultivation of oil crops and vegetables, local farmers in Yangon Region have an adequate supply of vegetable, 18 townships of the region slate to cultivate rain-fed groundnut, corn and vegetables on 23,007 acres of land this monsoon, according to the Yangon Region Department of Agriculture.

In Taikkyi Township, some 250 acres of land will be placed under rain-fed groundnut plantations and 168 more acres under corn plantations. Additionally, there are ongoing preparations for corn cultivation on 22 acres of land in Hlegu Township and 25 more acres in Hmawby

Township.

Local growers decided to plant groundnuts in coming July and harvest them in September. They will start cultivation of corn plants in June and harvesting in August. Moreover, local farmers are making preparations for cultivation of other crops such as beans, corn and sesame as winter crops at the end of the monsoon.

Currently, pigeon pea, black bean, green gram as well as various species of beans in addition to coffee and corn are marketable across the world. Demands of consumers are high for these crops in both domestic and international markets. As such,

farmers need to strive for cultivation of quality strains of these crops so as to achieve high yields by seeking the best agricultural ways and techniques.

In Myanmar, oil crops are generally cultivated in central Myanmar as well as Ayeyawady, Bago and Yangon regions while vegetables are grown in Ayeyawady and Yangon regions due to plentiful volumes of freshwater. With regard to the statistics on cultivation of oil crops, three million acres of croplands are placed under groundnut plantations, one million acres under sunflower and 3.5 million acres under sesame. But, only groundnut among them can meet the

target production.

As a future prospect, if groundnut, sesame, sunflower and niger can systematically be grow on existing sown acreage of croplands to meet the target acreage, these crops can produce 1.369 million tonnes of edible oil. At the same time, increasing sown acreage of corn and maize are earning incomes of foreign exchange for the State.

That is why local growers need to emphasize cultivation of oil crops and vegetables and increase of per-acre yield of crops so as to produce healthy cooking oil and fresh vegetables to meet the demand of consumers.—GNLM/Nyein Thu (MNA)/TTA

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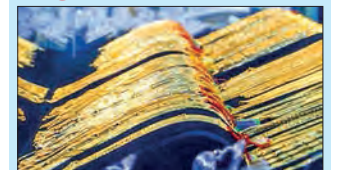
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58 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 11 June, total figure registers 639,662

MYANMAR'S COVID-19-positive cases rose to 639,662 after 58 new cases were reported on 11 June 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

Therefore, a total of 10,733,698 laboratory samples were examined and the confirmed COVID-19 cases reached 639,662.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached 618,566 including 39 new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country registered 19,494 on 11-6-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. COVID-19 information can be browsed on the internet page moh.gov.mm of the Ministry of Health. — GNLM

The people are urged to receive vaccination of Covid-19 without fail as full-time vaccination of Covid-19 and receiving booster shots can effectively mitigate infection of the virus, severe suffering from the disease and increase of death rate due to the disease.

Low Pressure Area Condition

11 June 2023 06:00 MST Today

Low Pressure Area Condition
ACCORDING to the observations at 05:30 hrs MST today, the Well Marked Low Pressure Area over the Southeast Bangladesh weaken into a Low Pressue Area.
This is the last news for the Well Marked Low Pressure Area.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 11 June 2023)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is vigorous over the Andaman Sea and South Bay of Bengal and strong elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 12 June, 2023: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing and Magway regions and Kayah State, fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Upper Sagaing, Mandalay and Bago regions and (Northern and Eastern) Shan and Chin states and widespread in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of regionally heavyfalls in Taninthayi Region and isolated heavyfalls in Upper Sagaing, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions and Kachin, Rakhine and Mon tates. Degree of certainty is (100%).

THE CONDITION OFCUMULONIMBUS CLOUD: The Cumulonimbus cloudsaredevel-
opingin the Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State. The area along the Cumulonimbus clouds
movement, the weather phenomena such as strong winds accompanied with rain, thunder,
lightning and hail may occur and therefore it is recommended to be aware in advance these
phenomena.

STATE OF THE SEA: Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced in Gulf of
Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach
40 mph. Squalls with rough seas are likely at times in Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coast.
Surface wind speed in squalls may reach 35-40 mph. Wave height will be about 9-12 feet in
Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and 9-10 feet in Deltaic, off and along
Rakhine Coast.

Announcement for local and foreign well-wishers to donate cash to cyclonic storm Mocha victims

1. AN announcement has been issued that well-wishers wishing to make donations for people who fell victim to the extremely severe cyclonic storm Mocha which hit Myanmar on 14-5-2023 can donate cash to Myanmar account OA-011834 and foreign account 1DA-0300086.

2. In this announcement, it is duly mentioned that our commitment to receiving donations extends to additional electronic payment systems and mobile payment systems. Further updates and notifications will be made in due course.

3. It has been announced that dona-
- tions can be made to the previously announced phone number and to the account that was opened, and since it can be confusing to donate with a phone number; we have already made it possible to donate with a QR code instead of the phone number.

4. Donations can be made through KBZ Pay or Wave Money. If you wish to donate, please scan the QR codes provided by both KBZ Pay and Wave Money. To contribute, enter the code included within the respective QR codes.

5. People make donations through CB Pay, AYA Pay, OK \$, UAB pay and
- Citizens Pay which are widely used to enhance convenience for donors. To donate, please scan the QR code

and enter the code provided within it.

6. The well-wishers can contact the following persons for further information: -



Nay Pyi Taw	Yangon	Mandalay
Daw Lei Lei Aye Director-General Department of Disaster Management 067-3404050 09-2021491	U Than Soe Director Department of Disaster Management Office of Yangon Region Department 09-250123885	U Aye Min Thu Director Department of Disaster Management Office of Mandalay Region Department 09-420708827
U Win Shwe Deputy Director-General Department of Disaster Management 067-3404048 09-254170011	Daw Than Than Win Deputy Director Department of Disaster Management Office of Yangon Region Department 09-420740160	
Daw Phyu Phyu Win Director Department of Disaster Management 067-3404316 09-43054844		

People need to participate in anti-corruption efforts as a national duty

- Everyone is urged to participate in making anti-corruption efforts as a national duty.
- The government is emphasizing the emergence of a clean government and good governance, improvement of capacity to take prestige and responsibility in administration, and not to harm the society, citizen rights and interests.

(Excerpts from the speech delivered by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the ceremony to mark International Anti-Corruption Day on 9 December 2022)

Union ministers looks into progress in renovation of schools, religious buildings in Sittway

UNION MINISTERS Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung, U Myo Thant and Dr Thet Thet Khine and Rakhine State Chief Minister U Htein Lin inspected repairing of roof, ceiling and doors, water and electricity repair tasks U Ottama Hall of Sittway yesterday morning.

Next, Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung and party supplicated teaching of Pariyatti treatises, renovation of religious buildings and religious affairs to abbot Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita Bhaddanta Meghiya at Dekkhinarama Pariyatti Buddhist Learning Centre in Pyitawtha Ward. At Weluwun Monastic Education School in Satyoekya Ward, they cordially conversed with students and teachers.

They paid homage to head of the school Bhaddanta Khe-mavamsa, and asked learning of students, conditions of school buildings and religious affairs and offered alms to the Sayadaw.



Union Minister Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung and party inspect the repairing of roof, ceiling and doors, water and electricity repair tasks of U Ottama Hall of Sittway on 11 June 2023.



Next, they distributed foodstuffs to the students and viewed the land plot earmarked for the construction of the new school building. A total of 832 students from KG class to Grade-8 class are studying at the monastic school for the

Students are seen at a school in Rakhine State.

2023-2024 academic year.

On arrival at the Sri Sri Moha Dave Bahri (Maha Shiva) Hindu temple, they viewed renovation of damaged parts at the temple and fulfilled the needs as well as donated foodstuff to an official of the temple. They also looked into renovation of the St Mark's Cathedral and donated food to the reverend.

—MNA /KZL

K10 million worth of medicines produced by MPE donated to Mocha victims



Union Minister Dr Charlie Than gives a speech at the event of handing over medicines produced by Myanmar Pharmaceutical Enterprise of Ministry of Industry in Sittway on 10 June 2023.

UNION MINISTER for Industry Dr Charlie Than visited Win Thuza Shop at the corner of Strand Street and Yedwin Street, Kyay-pingyi Ward, Sittway and Sittway

District Department of Industrial Supervision and Inspection in Satyoekya Ward yesterday morning.

During his visit, he met

staffs and coordinated the necessary repairs for the buildings damaged by storm Mocha.

Next, the Union Minister visited MSME businesses including

Shwengh Bakery in Satyoekya industrial ward, Shwekyar Weaving Industry in Kyamathauk Village and Thant Thant Lay oil mill in North Aungmingala Ward, inspected damage caused by the storm, met business owners, and coordinated with relevant departments.

Union Minister Dr Charlie Than met members of the National Disaster Management Committee Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung, Union Minister for Construction U Myo Thant, Rakhine State Chief Minister U Htein Lin, and deputy ministers from the relevant ministries at the Government Office in Sittway, Rakhine State on 10 June.

During the meeting, the Rakhine State Chief Minister discussed the development of

MSME businesses and their damage conditions in the recent storm and the plans to restore business to the original condition.

The Union Minister clarified the issues related to registration and human resources for MSMEs.

After that, the Union Minister handed over seven kinds of medicines worth K10 million produced by the Myanmar Pharmaceutical Enterprise of the Ministry of Industry for the storm-victims to the Rakhine State Chief Minister.

After that, the Union Minister met with the employees of Rakhine State Department of Industrial Supervision and Inspection and gave K7.5 million as cash assistance to them.—MNA/KZL

Systematic supervision must be made over fishery products meeting standards and norms of customer countries: MoALI Union Minister



Functions of laboratories section under Development and Research Division of Department of Fisheries are under inspection.

UNION Minister U Min Naung of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation oversaw the operations of the Department of Laboratories on Microscopic Analysis and the Development and Research Division under the Department of Fisheries in Shukhinthar;

Thakayta Township, Yangon Region, yesterday morning.

During the inspection, officials presented the process of obtaining the internationally recognized ISO/IEC 17025 certificate for the seventh time, recommendations of the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC), microbiological laboratories and laboratory work, the central laboratory and regional laboratory activities in regions and states, the monthly inspection process of fish and shrimp processing plants in Yangon, and future business plans.

The Union Minister stressed that systematic supervision must be made over fishery products meeting standards and norms of customer countries since it is an important sector in exporting Myanmar's products and to monitor the cleanliness of production stages, including raw materials, chemical residues, and disease-causing materials, in accordance with the national-level chemical residue control measures for Myanmar livestock and fishery products. As laboratory professionals, it is necessary to have more awareness of internationally recognized methods, increase the study of laboratory technologies, and make efforts to produce new generations of professionals, he added.

Afterwards, the Union Minister inspected the stage-by-stage operations from crocodile eggs and hatchlings to adult crocodiles at the Thakayta Crocodile Farm, crocodile breeding operations with earthen tanks and concrete tanks, the activities of the Division of Water Quality Inspection and Freshwater Research under the Department of Fisheries, and discussed business requirements. — MNA/CT

ADVERTISEMENT

China Datang Corporation helps high-quality talent training in Myanmar's power industry

CHINA Datang Corporation is a sponsor of the “Silk Road Business Council-China Committee”. As a Fortune Global 500 company and one of China's top five power generation groups, it is closely connected with the “Lancang-Mekong Water Resources Cooperation Centre” of the Ministry of Water Resources of China and has a long-term cooperative relationship with Hohai University, a famous “water conservancy and hydropower” university in China. China Datang Corporation is invited to be involved in the “Lancang-Mekong Cooperation High-level Water Resources Talents Programme” (including Chinese government scholarship) jointly organized by Lancang-Mekong Water Resources Cooperation Centre and Hohai University every year. Since 2019, it has successfully invited six high-level talents from countries in the Mekong region, including Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and Viet Nam, to study at Hohai University for three consecutive times. The students from Thailand invited in 2019 have completed their studies and returned to Thailand, while the rest are still studying.

DAPEIN (I) Hydropower Company Limited is a joint venture registered in Myanmar by China Datang Corporation and the Ministry of Electric Power of Myanmar. It is committed to serving the investment, construction and operation of power infrastructure in Myanmar, and attaches great importance to the training of the young generation of power talents in Myanmar. In 2022, with the help of the School of International Relations of Yunnan University, the School of International Relations of Yunnan Minzu University, and the FTIC in Mandalay, three outstanding young talents from Myanmar were successfully invited to Hohai University for further study. In 2023, the company has been entrusted again to invite outstanding young talents from Myanmar to study at Hohai University through the relevant departments, the FTIC



in Mandalay and our partners in Myanmar. As in previous years, applicants will be selected for admission to Hohai University in early September through the process of recommendation, application and public interview. DAPEIN (I) Hydropower Company Limited will wholeheartedly provide comprehensive and high-quality counselling and services for outstanding young talents in Myanmar. We welcome more outstanding young people in Myanmar to actively apply for the “Lancang-Mekong Cooperation” water resources high-level talent programme in the future.

Test transmission of natural gas to Newsprint Factory (Thabaung) in progress

UNION Energy Minister U Myo Myint Oo, Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister U Tin Maung Win and officials inspected the annual major maintenance of No 5 Fertilizer Factory (Kangyidaunt) under the Myanma Petrochemical Enterprise (MPE) and the valve station along the Nyaungdon-Thabaung natural gas pipeline in Ayeyawady Region completed by Myanma Oil & Gas Enterprise (MOGE) yesterday.

First of all, the Union Minister and the Chief Minister oversaw the valve station at the Nyaungdon-Thabaung natural gas pipeline and provided the employees with a fruit basket and nutritious foods.

Afterwards, they arrived at the natural gas distribution

station in Newsprint Factory (Thabaung) and paid attention to the presentations of MOGE officials regarding the completion of the pipeline repair works, gas distribution to Newsprint Factory (Thabaung), and timely action to distribute natural gas before the rains.

Then, the Chief Minister discussed the availability of raw materials for the resumption of the Newsprint Factory (Thabaung). The Union Minister also instructed the restoration of damaged farmlands to their original condition and the erecting of pipeline posts.

Natural gas is being supplied to the Newsprint Factory (Thabaung) on test from 9 June. They visited the No 5 Ferti-



Union Minister for Energy U Myo Myint Oo inspects tasks of valve station along Nyaungdon-Thabaung natural gas pipeline in Ayeyawady Region yesterday.

lizer Factory (Kangyidaunt). The Chief Minister said that if more fertilizers are produced, the per-acre yield of crops will increase, which will bring more benefits to the farmers. The Union Minister also urged responsible personnel to focus on safety in the workplace. — MNA/CT

Military senior officers, officials assist in rehabilitation tasks in Rakhine State

UNDER to Section 11 of the Natural Disaster Management Law, the State Administration Council declared the areas damaged by Cyclone Mocha as areas affected by natural disasters and assigned senior military officers to carry out rehabilitation activities in the areas mentioned in the announcement.

Lt-Gen Aye Win, currently in Buthidaung in Rakhine State along with officials, provided supplies to representatives in five village tracts in Buthidaung. Then, he arrived at Shwegyin Monastery and donated corrugated iron



sheets, rice and cash donated by the natural disaster management committee.

Similarly, Brig-Gen Kyaw Kyaw Soe currently in Myebon in Rakhine State met with departmental officials and he instructed that the relief supplies and cash to locals should be timely distributed. — MNA/KZW

Tatmadaw relief teams take part in relief, rehabilitation processes

TO facilitate necessary relief and rehabilitation activities in areas affected by natural disasters, the Tatmadaw deployed relief teams consisting of local security forces. In cooperation with social relief organizations, they are actively providing assistance in the affected areas.

Relief troops in Sittway are cooperating with locals to clean damaged buildings, fallen trees in Padaleik village in Sittway. Similarly, relief troops in Sittway are cooperating with medical staffs to provide medical treatments to locals in Theinganet village.

The relief teams that arrived in Maungdaw, in cooperation with mobile medical teams, provided health care services to the people. Similarly, relief teams in Kyauktaw cleaned fallen trees in the urban area.

The relief teams in Buthidaung cleaned up fallen trees in Myoma ward. — MNA/KZW

Foodstuffs, commodities sold at fairer prices in Mocha-hit Sittway



Locals are seen purchasing foodstuffs at fairer prices in Sittway.

TATMADAW members of the local battalions under the Western Command and officials sell essential foodstuffs at lower prices for the convenience of residents and departmental staff affected by Cyclone Mocha in Sittway to be able to buy foodstuffs at fairer prices.

Foodstuffs such as rice,

edible oil, salt, meat, fish, egg, dairy products, vegetables, onions, garlic, and products of Tatmadaw factories and Myanmar Economic Corporation such as instant noodles, biscuits, and canned food in addition to the foodstuffs, electronic devices and construction materials of private entrepreneurs were sold at lower prices than the market prices at U Ottama Park in Sittway yesterday. The locals and families of the departmental staff enjoyed buying foodstuffs and expressed thanks to officials for selling them at low prices during difficult time. — MNA/KZW



The relief teams with mobile medical teams provide health care services to the people from Maungdaw yesterday.

သတင်းစာ ဂျာနယ် စာစောင်များကို နှိုင်းတာကလပ်ချိန်စီ ပုံနှိပ်လိမ္မော် ဆက်သွယ်နိုင်ပါသည်

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CURRENT
AFFAIRS

Aung Bar Lay lottery announces
online lucky winners' payments
limited to K1 million via online
transactions

THE Department of Internal Revenue has announced that Aung Bar Lay Lottery online winners will be required to make online payments of up to K1 million. More than K1 million will have the previous prize distribution system.

The winners of the Aung Bar Lay online lottery will receive a prize of up to K1 million which will be directly transferred to the payment platform they used to participate in the lottery. If the lucky winner uses KBZ Pay for the lottery, the prize will go to their KBZ Pay accounts. Similarly, if they use AYA Pay, the prize will flow into

their AYA Pay accounts.

The 52nd Aung Bar Lay ticket lottery and Aung Bar Lay online lottery will be jointly held on 1 July, and 70 per cent proceeds in sales of both kinds will be allotted as prizes.

The highest prize is K500 million and the lowest one, K10,000. It has been announced that lottery tickets valued at above K1 million will follow the prize distribution process of Aung Bar Lay Lottery Directorate. These tickets are available for purchase at the Aung Bar Lay Lottery Directorate in Yangon and Mandalay. —TWA/KZW



An official issues cash award to K500 million prize winner at 51st Aung Bar Lay lottery on 6 June

Palm oil market price rises by above K2,000
more than reference price

THE price of palm oil touched a high of K6,000 per viss in Yangon's wholesale market on 10 June 2023, indicating a sharp rise of K2,200 per viss compared to the reference price.

The wholesale reference price of palm oil was set at K4,790 per viss for a week from 10 to 23 April 2023. Then, the price dropped to K3,790 per viss, showing a decrease of K1,000 per viss over a month.

The international palm oil price was high at K1,025 per tonne on 18 April 2023. Then, it drastically dropped to K797.5 per tonne on 10 June. The figures indicated a decline of \$228 per tonne. Despite the drop in Yangon's wholesale reference price and international palm oil price, it peaked at K6,000-K6,100 per viss, said



an edible oil dealer.

Approximately 11,000 tonnes of palm oil were imported between 6 and 9 June. Regardless of the sharp drop in international palm oil prices and reference prices and the steady inflow of palm oil from foreign countries, the market price is still too high. The market price hit only K5,150 per viss at the end of December 2022, while the international price

was \$965 per tonne and the reference price was set at K4,360 per viss.

The authorities concerned issued the reference price of palm oil and fuel oil for Yangon. Fuel oil can be bought as per the daily set rates. Nonetheless, palm oil cannot be purchased at the reference rate and the market price was K2,200 per viss higher than the reference rate. — TWA/EM

Customs duty taxes on SKD, CKD
vehicles eased

THE Customs Department has issued an announcement that the easing of customs duty taxes on domestically-assembled SKD and CKD vehicles has been made.

With the permission of the Myanmar Investment Commission, the customs rates of imports of domestically produced semi-knocked-down (SKD) and completely knocked-down (CKD) system vehicles were relaxed from 1 June 2023 to 31 May 2024.

According to the statement of the Customs Department, the tax rate for SKD system passenger cars with above 2000 CC and 2001 CC has been reduced from 7.5 per cent to 5 per cent, and the rate for CKD system passenger cars with above 2000 CC and 2001 CC has been reduced from 5 per cent to 3 per cent.

Permits to import new vehicles from abroad have been suspended since September 2021. Although car import policies have been released for 2022, car sales centres have not yet been approved to import. Currently, only commercial vehicles are allowed to be imported at a rate of five vehicles per week. — TWA/CT

Maubin University UDE to resume convocation, supplementary day exams



THE convocation and supplementary day examination of the Maubin University Distance Education, which were temporarily postponed due to the earthquake, will be resumed, according to the announcement of Maubin University.

The rehearsal for the convocation of Distance Education will be held on 14 June and the Distance Education

Convocation on 15 and 16 June, the Maubin University stated on 9 June.

In addition, the supplementary day examination of first-year courses (2022-2023) will be resumed from 12 to 17 June.

The Maubin University's convocation hall was partially damaged by the earthquake on 7 June. — TWA/MKKS



Some damaged parts seen at eastern wing of Maubin University Convocation Hall hit by the earthquake on 7 June.

LOCAL BUSINESS

Gold ornament displayed at gold outlet in Yangon at high prices

THE price of pure gold remains high at around K3.1 million per tical (0.578 ounce or 0.016 kilogramme) in the unofficial domestic market on 3 May as the spot gold price rallied at \$1,961 per ounce and Kyat against green-back depreciates at K2,960 in the grey market.

Consequently, YGEA hiked the reference rate to over K2,310,000 per tical. There is a large price difference of over K700,000 per tical between the YGEA's reference price and the price in the unofficial market.

YGEA calculated the price depending on the Central Bank of Myanmar's reference exchange rate of K2,100, with some addition, while the US dollar is exchanged at K2,960 in the un-

official forex market.

The US dollar exchange rate weighs on domestic gold prices. The YGEA requested sellers to make gold transactions below K2.9 million per tical on 27 April when the gap between the reference price and the market price is wide.

Following the bankruptcy of the US bank in early March, the gold price soared. Despite the gold gain in the global market, Myanmar's forex market sees no movement at all. Consequently, YGEA requested its members not to buy them competitively, tracking the upward trend in the gold spot price, as per YGEA's statement released on 20 March.

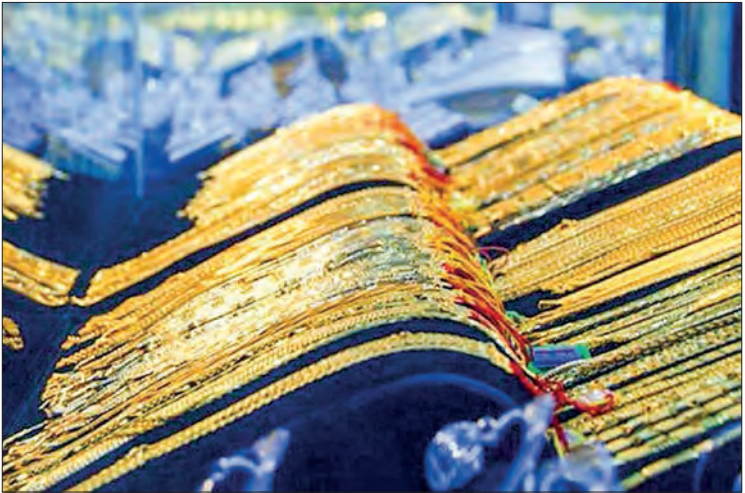
Afterwards, the YGEA called for the members to make

gold transactions with only immediate payment and avoid verbal transactions over calls without having any physical stocks.

The YGEA is not bound to have any responsibilities for market manipulation in the unofficial market. As a result of this, its members are asked to strictly adhere to the rules and regulations of the association while making gold transactions.

At present, the authorities concerned are attempting to deal with market abuse and inspecting and prosecuting market manipulation is being undertaken.

Moreover, the Central Bank of Myanmar will inspect those manipulators who interfere with market stability through digital platforms, according to the no-



Gold ornaments being displayed at the gold outlet in Yangon gold market.

tification dated 20 March.

The soaring dollar exchanging at over K4,500 drove the pure gold price up to a record-high of K3.7 million per tical in late August 2022.

For the gold price to decline, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation has been selling gold ingots

under the competitive bidding system in Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw.

With an aim at reducing gold prices, the YGEA and Mandalay Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association sold gold bullion supplied by the executive members and the members as well. — NN/EM

MRF-PITC meeting to boost bilateral economic cooperation

MYANMAR Rice Federation (MRF) met with officials of the Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC) during its visit to the Philippines, MRF announced.

The 25-member Myanmar delegation led by MRF's chair went to the Philippines between 6 and 9 June, intending to promote trade, deepen ties of the business persons between the two countries, accelerate interconnection of the institutions and exchange market information.

They discussed exclusively with eight Philippines companies that are purchasing Myanmar's rice, broken rice, corn and green gram.

During the visit, they met PITC's President & CEO USEC Emmie Liza Perez-Chiong, DMD under the Department of Trade and Industry of the Philippines and signed a Memorandum of Agreement-MOA for the cooperation between the PITC and MRF.

Afterwards, the Myanmar delegation discussed with Mr George Barcelon, President of the Philippines Chambers of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) and Filipino entrepreneurs at the head office of PCCI in Manila on 9 June, highlighting the promotion of bilateral economic integration, working together for private sector development and strengthening relations of the entrepreneurs of the two countries as ASEAN member countries in the ASEAN Economic Community, MRF stated.

MRF aims to achieve a rice export target of 2.5 million tonnes in the current financial year 2023-2024, generating an income of US\$1 billion.

Myanmar exported 2,261,203 tonnes of rice and broken rice to foreign trade partners in the 2022-2023 FY, bagging \$853.472 million. The Philippines was ranked fourth among those countries, with over 202,000 tonnes of rice and broken rice.

Myanmar has been exerting concerted efforts to grow 10 per cent yearly in the rice export sector. To raise foreign income, it has been prioritizing the exportation of high-grade rice and boosting export volume, MRF stated. — NN/EM

Black gram price rockets to above K2.4 mln per tonne



THE prices of black gram hit K2.45 million per tonne (FAQ/RC) and K2.69 million per tonne (SQ/RC) in Yangon's market on 10 June 2023, while the FOB price was \$950-970 per tonne when it is calculated on the dollar exchange rate at K2,488.

The current price has reached the highest record since 2015. The prices stood at K2.456 million per tonne (FAQ/RC) and K2.656 million per tonne (SQ/RC). The FOB price was \$1,820-1,850 (dollar exchange rate at K1,285). During the chaos in the pulses market in 2008, the price of black gram was only K700,000 per tonne in mid-August and plunged to K360,000 per tonne. The pulses import was tem-

porarily restricted and the industry was battered by those policy changes. The prices fell to K425,000 per tonne on 16 October 2017 and K382,000 per tonne on 4 May 2018.

The price rebounded to K2.1 million per tonne on 31 August 2022. Then, the price declined to below K1.7 million per tonne in January 2023. The price rose again to K2.115 million per tonne on 26 April 2023. One month after that, the price jumped to above K2.4 million per tonne. Due to Kyat depreciation against the US dollar, the FOB price of black grams on 10 June 2023 was half of that recorded on 17 October 2015. The price is expected to rise in the Yangon market. Meanwhile,

the FOB price of pigeon peas was \$1,230-1,250 per tonne.

India is importing pulses to fulfil their demand amid the low output this year. India's authorities are observing the import and market stock to steer the volatile price. Those traders in the Yangon market keeping the stocks in hand are closely observing India's market. The pigeon pea (red gram) is rocketing in recent days. It is K800,000 per tonne higher than that of black gram.

Myanmar bagged \$1.4 billion from various pulses exports of 0.97 million tonnes in the 2022-2023 Financial year. This year, the earnings from pulses exports are likely to go up. — TWA/EM

Save lives of child labour from miseries

As a tradition of Myanmar society, children should be under the care and management of parents, guardians and relatives. Parents are responsible for looking after their offspring till 18 years of age.

Parents do not be decisive to let their children work at businesses if not necessary. In fact, children under 18 are too young for Myanmar society to earn income from working at businesses. If necessary, those children have to learn education without worries under the care of their parents.

But, some children who may be orphans or come from needy families or have many reasons are unavoidably working at businesses by earning lesser salaries or wages as a burden for their lives. They are earning incomes for the daily costs of food, clothing and shelter. Such regrettable happenings can be seen in Myanmar as well as across the world.

Global people and law enforcement bodies have to protect children from their workplaces against mental pains and create chances for them to see a brighter future. International labour organizations need to save the enslaved lives of child labour from the miseries.

for World Day in 2023 is ‘Social Justice for All. End Child Labour!’

To mark the World Day against Child Labour which falls on 12 June 2023, all global people are calling for reinvigorated international action to achieve social justice, particularly under the envisaged Global Coalition for Social Justice, with child labour elimination as one of its important elements. Universal ratification of ILO Convention No 138 on Minimum Age, which, together with the universal ratification of ILO Convention No 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour achieved in 2020, would provide all children with legal protection against all forms of child labour.

Global people and law enforcement bodies have to protect children from their workplaces against mental pains and create chances for them to see a brighter future. International labour organizations need to save the enslaved lives of child labour from the miseries.

Practising Screen-Free Days to Nurture Well-being in A Digital World

By Min Zan

I am a heavy screen user. I wake up at about 3:30 am in the early morning and do my personal small things for about 15 minutes. Then I say my prayers at about quarter to 4. After a while, I think half an hour, I sit in front of my desktop computer and start my daily work. It takes me about an hour and I take a rest for 15 minutes. Then, I have my early breakfast and I start my online class at 6 a.m. sitting in front of my laptop. There are 5 or 6 periods of online classes a day. I also think it seems not just me who is using computer screens and phone screens but there may be so many people who are using the screens in any way without fail. Now, the period of screen use has been long, and my vision has warned me that it needs a rest. I wrote this article for those who are in similar trouble to me.

In this modern digital age, computers, and screens have become an integral part of our daily lives. From work tasks to entertainment, we rely heavily on the convenience and efficiency they provide. However, prolonged exposure to screens can have detrimental effects on our physical and mental well-being. If we have noticed that our vision has become strained and our overall convenience has diminished, it may be time to consider incorporating screen-free days into our routine.

Screen-free days are a simple yet effective way to give our

eyes and minds a much-needed break from the constant glare and stimulation of digital devices. By deliberately stepping away from screens, we allow our eyes to rest, rejuvenate, and recover from the strain caused by prolonged use. Additionally, it presents an opportunity to engage in activities that can be truly refreshing and beneficial for our overall well-being.

So, how can you make the most of your screen-free days? Here are some ideas to get you started:

1. Embrace the Outdoors: Spend your day exploring nature, whether it's going for a hike, taking a leisurely stroll in a nearby park, or simply enjoying a picnic in the fresh air. The beauty of nature can provide a much-needed respite from the digital world and allow you to reconnect with the natural wonders around you.
2. Read a Book: Dust off that book you've been meaning to read but haven't found the time for. Immerse yourself in a captivating story or expand your knowledge with a non-fiction book. Reading stimulates the mind, improves focus, and can transport you to different worlds without the need for a screen.
3. Pursue a Hobby: Use your screen-free day to indulge in a hobby that brings you joy. Whether it's painting, playing a musical instrument, knitting, gardening, or cooking, engaging in activities that



Screen-free days provide a valuable opportunity to rest and rejuvenate our eyes and minds by taking a break from the continuous exposure to digital devices and their stimulating glare.

you love can be incredibly therapeutic and fulfilling. Not only will it provide a break from screens, but it will also give you a chance to express your creativity and discover new passions.

4. Connect with Loved Ones: Spend quality time with family and friends. Engage in meaningful conversations, play board games, or organize a get-together. Connecting with loved ones in person can be immensely rewarding, and it allows you to forge deeper relationships that go beyond virtual interactions.
5. Practice Mindfulness: Dedicate some time to mindfulness

and self-reflection. Engage in activities such as meditation, yoga, or journaling to calm your mind, reduce stress, and enhance your overall well-being. These practices can help you recharge and refocus, allowing you to approach the digital world with a clearer and more centred mindset.

Remember, screen-free days don't have to be limited to just one day a week. You can gradually increase the frequency based on your needs and lifestyle. It's all about finding the right balance between the digital and real worlds, ensuring that your well-being remains a top priority.

Incorporating screen-free days into your routine may initially feel challenging, especially if you heavily rely on screens for work or entertainment. However, the benefits far outweigh the temporary inconvenience. Giving your eyes and mind regular breaks from screens can improve your overall vision, reduce eye strain, and foster a healthier relationship with technology.

What is more, in a society driven by technology, screens have become an inseparable part of our daily lives. We spend countless hours peering into the glow of smartphones, tablets, and com-

puters, often unaware of the toll it takes on our well-being. However, by intentionally carving out screen-free days in our routines, we can unlock a multitude of benefits that promote our physical, mental, and emotional health.

1. Rest and Rejuvenation for Your Eyes: Our eyes work tirelessly as we stare at screens for extended periods. The bright lights and constant focus required can lead to eye strain, dryness, and fatigue. Taking regular screen-free breaks allows your eyes to rest, reducing the risk of digital eye strain and improving overall eye health. By giving your eyes a chance to recover, you can maintain clearer vision and reduce discomfort.

2. Enhanced Mental Focus: Continuous exposure to screens bombards our brains with information, notifications, and distractions. This constant influx of data can lead to mental overload and hinder our ability to concentrate and focus effectively. By practising screen-free days, you create an environment that promotes mental clarity and allows you to engage in deep work, creative thinking, and problem-solving without constant digital interruptions.

3. Improved Sleep Quality: The blue light emitted by screens interferes with our natural sleep patterns, making it harder to fall asleep and achieve restful slumber. By abstaining from screens in the evening and dedicating screen-free days, you can establish healthier sleep routines. This promotes

better sleep quality, allowing you to wake up feeling refreshed and energized.

4. Increased Productivity and Creativity: Screens can be both a tool and a source of distraction. It's all too easy to get caught up in endless scrolling, social media notifications, and mindless browsing. By setting aside screen-free days, you reclaim valuable time that can be used for more productive and creative pursuits. You may find yourself delving into new hobbies, working on personal projects, or simply enjoying the present moment without the constant pull of digital distractions.

5. Connection with the Real World: While screens offer a window to a vast virtual world, they can also isolate us from the tangible experiences and connections in our immediate surroundings. Screen-free days provide an opportunity to engage fully with the physical world. You can connect with nature, spend quality time with loved ones, and cultivate meaningful relationships without the constant lure of online interactions. This reconnection with the real world fosters a sense of fulfilment, belonging, and overall well-being.

6. Improved Posture and Physical Health: Prolonged screen use often leads to poor posture and sedentary behaviour. Taking regular breaks from screens encourages physical activity and movement, reducing the risks associated with a sedentary lifestyle. Whether it's going for a walk, practising yoga,

or engaging in outdoor activities, screen-free days promote a healthier body and contribute to overall physical well-being.

7. Mental and Emotional Balance: Constant exposure to screens can contribute to feelings of stress, anxiety, and information overload. By stepping away from screens, you create space for introspection, self-reflection, and mindfulness. Screen-free days allow you to reconnect with yourself, listen to your inner voice, and nurture your mental and emotional well-being. It's an opportunity to prioritize self-care and find balance in a world that often feels overwhelmingly digital.

Incorporating screen-free days into your routine may initially require discipline and conscious effort, especially if screens play a significant role in your work or personal life. However, the benefits that come with these dedicated breaks from technology are invaluable. By prioritizing your well-being, you can optimize your physical health, enhance mental focus, foster creativity, and cultivate meaningful connections with the world around you.

So, let's take the leap and embrace screen-free days. Let's give ourselves the gift of clarity, convenience, and a deeper connection with the world around us. Our eyes and mind will thank us for it!

Reference: Spotlight Magazine 2023

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ECDC, EMA recommend COVID-19 vaccine update

The EMA's Emergency Task Force recommends updating the vaccines to target the XBB strains -- a subgroup of Omicron -- that have become dominant in Europe and other parts of the world.

THE European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the European Medicines Agency (EMA) on Wednesday recommended updating the antigen composition of COVID-19 vaccines to target the currently dom-

inant Omicron XBB strains in autumn 2023.

In a joint statement, the agencies said that although the currently authorized vaccines continue to be effective at preventing hospitalization, severe disease and death, protection

against the virus declines over time as new SARS-CoV-2 variants emerge.

The EMA's Emergency Task Force recommends updating the vaccines to target the XBB strains—a subgroup of Omicron—that have become dominant

in Europe and other parts of the world.

The agencies also note that monovalent vaccines — those targeting only one strain, such as XBB.1.5 — are a reasonable choice to provide protection against currently dominant and emerging strains. They said that people aged 60 years and above, those with weakened immune systems and underlying condi-

tions putting them at higher risk of severe COVID-19 irrespective of age and those who are pregnant are recommended groups for vaccination this autumn.

Vaccination of healthcare workers should also be considered because of their likely increased exposure to new waves of SARS-CoV-2 and their key role in the functioning of healthcare systems.

Source : Xinhua



A staff member (L) guides people to receive the COVID-19 vaccine outside a vaccination centre in Frankfurt, Germany, on 25 November 2021. PHOTO: LU YANG/XINHUA

ENVIRON WORLD

Last artisanal fishermen of Brazil’s Copacabana seek revival

EACH day at dawn, Manoel Reboucas launches his small motor boat into the sea off Copacabana, a reminder of the century-old fishing collective established here long before it became Rio de Janeiro’s most famous beach.

But these days Reboucas and his colleagues are struggling to keep their livelihood afloat in the face of industrial fishing and a waning interest from young people.

After sailing a few kilometers and scanning the horizon, Reboucas turns off the engine and begins to collect the net that he has placed the day before, where several croakers and anchovies have been trapped.

“The shoals have decreased a lot, they are no longer coming like before,” laments Reboucas, 63, president of the Z13 Copacabana fishermen’s collective, founded in 1923.

Unsustainable fishing practices from both artisanal fishers and commercial trawlers, combined with difficulty attracting young people, is threatening the profession, says Reboucas — though not for his son Manasi, 34.

Even when the fishing is poor, “the feeling of being here is renewing,” he says.

On the boat, the noise of Rio is but a distant murmur, as the surrounding hills paint a panoramic postcard. — AFP



Long before acquiring its high-rises and international fame, Brazil’s Copacabana beach was home to artisanal fishermen, who still ply the waters today. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

In Cyprus no-man’s land, owls come to the rescue of farmers

STANDING amid ears of wheat growing tall in the buffer zone dividing Cyprus, farmer Christodoulos Christodoulou can rest easy.

The rodents that once ran rampant in the decades since the no-man’s land was created and destroyed his crops are being driven out by owls.

“Our village was full of rats and mice. They ate our crops, nibbled on our tyres,” recalls Christodoulou, who owns a farm in the demilitarized corridor that splits the internationally recognized Republic of Cyprus and the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. “Then we set up these boxes for the owls,” he said.

Around 50 light wooden boxes with circular openings have been installed on tree trunks as part of a 10-year-old initiative led by the BirdLife Cyprus non-governmental organization and the Cypriot government.

BirdLife says the objectives of the project are to encourage farmers to abandon using poison and to help repopulate the barn owl population of Cyprus, which has been in decline across Europe. — AFP

Storm at Baltic beauty spot over Germany’s gas plans



To replace lost Russian supplies, the German government has been frantically installing LNG terminals along its coast. **PHOTO: AFP**

MELANIE Schmid grows walnuts and keeps sheep at her organic farm by the cliff’s edge above the port of Mukran on the German island of Ruegen in the Baltic Sea.

The view across the bay to the resort town of Binz brought her here, but Germany’s plan to park two ships at the port for the import of liquefied natural gas may drive her away from the popular beauty spot.

To replace lost Russian supplies, the German government has been frantically installing LNG terminals along its coast. Over the last months, Berlin has inaugurated several with fanfare, and is planning for Mukran to be the next.

Berlin sees the new terminal as insurance against the risk of a potential gas shortage but residents remain unconvinced.

Due to the thrum of machines turning LNG back into gas, 59-year-old Schmid says she fears she “simply won’t be able to sleep here anymore”.

Noise pollution is however only one concern for the organic farmer, who has joined a campaign to stop the project that brings together environmental groups and local politicians worried about the effect on the destination’s health and prosperity.

“Are there not other locations on the Baltic coast or the North Sea that would have less of an impact on nature, on people, on tourism as the island of Ruegen?” Binz mayor Karsten Schneider tells AFP.

Piled up next to the port, the pipes that would connect Mukran to the gas network are leftovers from the construction of Nord Stream 2. — AFP

Thousands evacuated as Philippine volcano spews ash, rocks

THOUSANDS of people living near a Philippine volcano have taken shelter in evacuation centres as officials warned Sunday of health risks from ash and toxic gases spewing from the rumbling crater.

Seismology researchers said they had recorded at least one volcanic earthquake in the past 24 hours and red-hot rocks were falling from Mount Mayon in the central province of Albay.

More than 12,800 people have been moved to evacuation centres, the Philippine civil defence office said, most from farming villages at or near the foot of the volcano.



Mount Mayon spews white smoke on Thursday. **PHOTO: KRISTIN MORAL/AFP**

“There is a concomitant health risk while being close to the eruption because of inhaling sulphur dioxide gas or the particulate matter of ashfalls,” Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa told a press briefing Sunday.

Mayon, about 330 kilometres (205 miles) southeast of the capital Manila, is considered one of the most volatile of the country’s 24 active volcanoes. — AFP

Instagram ‘most important platform’ for child sex abuse networks: report

INSTAGRAM is the main platform used by pedophile networks to promote and sell content showing child sexual abuse, according to a report by Stanford University and the Wall Street Journal.

“Large networks of accounts that appear to be operated by minors are openly advertising self-generated child sexual abuse material for sale,” said researchers at the US university’s Cyber Policy Center.

“Instagram is currently the most important platform for these networks with features like recommendation algorithms and direct messaging that help

connect buyers and sellers.” According to the Journal, a simple search for sexually explicit keywords specifically referencing children leads to accounts that use these terms to advertise content showing sexual abuse of minors.

The profiles often “claim to be driven by the children themselves and use overtly sexual pseudonyms”, the article detailed.

While not specifically saying they sell these images, the accounts do feature menus with options, including in some cases specific sex acts.

Stanford researchers also



Protesters hold quilts bearing portraits of young children outside the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles, California, on 1 February 2013, one day after the release of personnel files of priests accused of sexual misconduct. PHOTO: PIX FOR VISUAL PURPOSE/ FREDERIC J. BROWN/AFP/FILE

spotted offers for videos with bestiality and self-harm.

“At a certain price, children are available for in-person ‘meet-

ings’,” the article continued. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Syrians turn plastic waste into rugs to make a living

AT a rubbish dump in northwest Syria, Mohammed Behlal rummages for plastic to be sold to recyclers and transformed into floor rugs and other items in the impoverished rebel enclave.

In rebel-held Syria, recycling is rarely an environmental impulse but rather a grim lifeline for needy residents looking for work or items they otherwise could not afford.

Braving the stench, insects and risk of disease, 39-year-old Behlal hacks through the rubbish pile with a scythe and his bare hands. He and two of his six children earn a living sifting through the refuse in Idlib province’s village of Hezreh, earning \$7 to \$10 a week each.

“It’s tiring... but what can we do, we have to put up with this hard labour,” said Behlal, who was displaced from neighbouring Aleppo province during Syria’s civil war. — AFP

Deadly dreams: record Everest season among most dangerous

SCALING Everest is always dangerous, but expedition organizers have warned that a combination of extreme weather, corner-cutting on safety, and inexperienced and “impatient” foreign climbers has resulted in one of the peak’s deadliest mountaineering seasons.

As the last search and rescue teams hang up their boots and the tent city at base camp packs up for the year, expert climbers say several of the 17 people killed or missing and presumed dead this season could have avoided disaster.

“This season was very bad overall,” said expedition organizer Mingma Gyalje Sherpa, of Imagine Nepal Trek and Expedition, whose team was responsible for opening the route to the summit.

“The main reason is that the weather was extremely cold... but there was also carelessness.”

Higher death numbers were recorded in past seasons, but those tolls included several killed in single large-scale disasters.

In 2014, 16 Nepali guides were killed by an avalanche, with climbing closed for the season thereafter. — AFP

Premature, low birthweight babies suffer fewer fractures than others: Study

PRE-TERM and low birthweight newborns have fewer fractures in childhood than full-term and normal-weight neonates, according to a recent study from the University of Eastern Finland and Kuopio University Hospital.

Data from the National Medical Birth Register, the Care Register for Health Care, and Statistics Finland were used in the Finnish register-based cohort study. The study contained data from one million children and over 100,000 fractures.

Children born very pre-term or with extremely low birth weight are known to be at risk of metabolic bone disease of prematurity, as the foetal accumulation of minerals occurs



Pre-term and low birthweight newborns refer to infants who are born before completing 37 weeks of gestation and/or have a birth weight of less than 2,500 grams (5.5 pounds), respectively. PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ PURFFO.COM/ANI

mainly in the third trimester of pregnancy. Some earlier smaller studies have also reported an increased risk of fractures in childhood in children born pre-

term. Furthermore, an earlier study from Finland found that pre-term infants continue to have lower bone mineral density even in adulthood. — ANI

Patients’ portal use is influenced by insurance, access, health status: Study

RESEARCHERS found people who sign up for and use their healthcare provider’s online portal differ in certain crucial features from those who do not use patient portals.

This study was published in the journal, ‘Medical Care.’

According to the new research, led by Naheed Ahmed, PhD, MA, MPH, of NYU Grossman School of Medicine, “Our

findings suggest that access to healthcare along with ongoing patient health needs influence usage of patient portal platforms.”

Having health insurance and establishing a relationship with a primary care provider (PCP) appear to be key factors in having a patient portal account.

What factors contribute to disparities in patient portal use?

Online patient portals have many benefits, including increased engagement in care and improved health outcomes. Yet most Americans do not use their healthcare provider’s patient portal, or even sign up to create an account. Low rates of portal use are not simply explained by patient preferences or by a lack of Internet access. — ANI

ECONOMY WORLD

China-Laos Railway carries over 4 mln tons cross-border goods



The China-Lao freight train leaves Shenyang on 22 April 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

THE China-Laos Railway has transported over 4 million tons of cargo since it was put into operation in 2021, the Lao local media said.

Since the railway opened in December 2021, freight trains had carried 4,097,300 tons of imported and exported goods, the Lao News Agency (KPL) reported on Thursday.

Of this amount, about 3,450,000 tons were shipped from Laos to China and 650,900

tons from China to Laos.

Goods shipped from Laos to China mostly comprised rubber, iron ore, zinc ore, lime, fruit, potato flour and barley. Meanwhile, products ferried from China to Laos included electrical equipment, spare part and household goods.

In the first five months of 2023, 1,580,680 tons of freight were shipped from Laos to China, and 160,910 tons of goods were ferried from China to Laos.

Business operators in Laos, Thailand, Viet Nam, Cambodia and Myanmar are using the China-Laos Railway to ship goods to and from China and beyond, according to the report. Thailand is shipping increasing amounts of freight to China by rail, mainly agricultural produce. The time taken to ship goods by rail is three days, much faster than the previous transport route by road. — Xinhua

African business leaders chafe at obstacles to trade

MORE than four years ago, African countries gave the ceremonial push to a deal to scrap internal trade barriers — a historic scheme that would create a continent-wide single market worth trillions of dollars.

But African business leaders say cross-border trade remains entangled in customs duties, administrative hurdles and varying national regulations.

Costs and delays are hampering African corporations fighting to compete with low-cost rivals, they say.

“Each country has its own laws — it’s very complex,” Jeremy Awori, head of Ecobank, a bank that operates in 30 countries, said at a business conference in Abidjan this week.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) was signed in 2019 by 54 out of the African Union (AU)’s 55 states, who together accounted for GDP



Ivory Coast Prime Minister Patrick Achi addresses the audience during the opening ceremony of the 2023 Africa CEO Forum in Abidjan on 5 June 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

last year of \$3 trillion.

It formally began operations on 1 January 2021 with the goal of achieving 90 per cent cuts in tariffs within five to 10 years.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) says this would unlock a real increase of 10 per cent in per-capita GDP and a

50-per-cent rise in intra-African commerce.

To give one example of the potential gains, an AU study in 2014 found that sending a vehicle from Japan to Ivory Coast was three times cheaper than sending the same vehicle from Ivory Coast to Ethiopia. — AFP

Nigeria security forces detain suspended central bank chief

NIGERIA’S security services have detained the country’s suspended central bank chief as part of an investigation into his office, the national domestic security agency said on Saturday.

The arrest of Central Bank of Nigeria governor Godwin Emefiele came shortly after new President Bola Ahmed Tinubu’s government suspended him following nearly a decade in the post.

Tinubu, who came to power at the end of last month following a highly contested February presidential election, had promised reforms to help Africa’s largest economy emerge from financial troubles.

“The Department of State Services (DSS) hereby confirms that Mr Godwin

Emefiele, the suspended Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) is now in its custody for some investigative reasons,” the DSS internal security agency said in a statement.

The DSS did not give any further details, but one of Tinubu’s government spokesmen earlier said that Emefiele had been suspended immediately as part of an “ongoing investigation of his office and the planned reforms in the financial sector”.

The bank’s deputy governor will step into the director’s role pending the conclusion of investigations, the statement said.

The central bank did not immediately return calls seeking comment. — AFP



The arrest of Central Bank of Nigeria governor Godwin Emefiele came shortly after new President Bola Ahmed Tinubu’s government suspended him following nearly a decade in the post. **PHOTO: AFP**

Egypt toughens visa requirements for Sudanese

EGYPT has announced that as of Saturday it requires all citizens of neighbouring Sudan, engulfed in bloody conflict since mid-April, to obtain a visa before they can cross the border.

Since fighting broke out between two rival generals vying for control in Sudan, some 200,000 Sudanese nationals have entered Egypt, most of them through land crossings, Cairo said.

Egyptian authorities had so far exempted Sudanese women of all ages, children under 16 and anyone over 50 from having to obtain a visa prior to arrival at a point of entry.

Cairo’s foreign ministry is-

sued a statement on Saturday announcing the new regulations, justifying the move as a crackdown on “illegal activities” including fraud.

The authorities introduced visa procedures aimed at regulating “the entry of the brotherly Sudanese (people) into Egypt after more than 50 days of crisis” in their country, the statement said.

It said that the new requirements were not designed to “prevent or limit” the entry of Sudanese nationals, but rather to stop “illegal activities by individuals and groups on the Sudanese side of the border, who forged entry visas” for profit. — AFP

Ukraine coal propped up by miners who fled Russian occupation

UKRAINE’S energy sector is under attack.

Kyiv power stations have been targeted by cruise missiles, the Kakhovka hydroelectric dam has been breached and the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant is under Russian occupation.

Of the 89 coal mines that were in newly-independent Ukraine at the break-up of the Soviet Union, 71 are in the eastern Donbas region, now partly held by Russian forces.

But the remaining mines — which power 30 percent of Ukraine’s grid — are working hard, thanks to an influx of new recruits fleeing the Russian-occupied east.

In the build-up to the war, some in Moscow argued Russia had a duty to defend Russian speakers in the Donbas from alleged persecution by Ukrainian nationalists.

But in February last year, when Russia launched a full-scale invasion and tightened its grip on the east of the country, many civilians fled west into Kyiv-held towns.

Meanwhile, mines in Russian-occupied areas or close to the frontline closed and some were flooded as power to their water pumps was cut.

Further inside Ukraine, there was another problem. — AFP



A coal mine worker in a mine the eastern Donbas region in Ukraine. PHOTO: AFP

Leading UK hedge fund boss quits after sex assault claims

HIGH profile British hedge fund boss Crispin Odey has quit the firm he founded following sexual assault claims by eight women, the fund said Saturday.

Odey, a vocal Brexit supporter and Conservative party donor, denies the allegations, which first emerged in the Financial Times newspaper on Thursday. “We, the executive committee of Odey Asset Management LLP, are announcing that Mr Crispin Odey is leaving the partnership,” a statement said. “As from today, he will no longer have any economic or personal involvement in the partnership. “As we have said previously, the executive committee takes all allegations of misconduct extremely seriously,” it added. A further five women alleged they had been abused or harassed by Odey, the business daily said.

Odey, 64, well known for making huge sums from betting heavily against the British pound and UK government bonds in recent years, has described the allegations as “rubbish”. — AFP

China’s Chongqing opens faster import route for Thai durians

SOUTHWEST China’s Chongqing on Sunday welcomed the first direct cold-chain train of Thai durians that reached the megacity via the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor.

The 150,000 durians from Thailand were first transported by road to Laos, where they were loaded on a train that travelled into China via the China-Laos Railway.

The entire journey took four days, down from 8-10 days on previous sea-road routes, said Deng Haoji, chief operating officer of Hongjiu Fruit, the company that purchased the fruits.

“For fruit importers, time is money and every hour is precious. This durian train has reduced costs, as well as losses during the transportation,” Deng said.

The majority of the durians will enter markets in Chongqing, while the rest will continue the train journey to reach the neighbouring province of Sichuan.

Durians are among a growing number of agricultural products from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) that have expanded entry into the Chinese market thanks to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement and improvement of cross-border transport infrastructure.

In 2022, China imported 825,000 tonnes of durian, of which 780,000 tonnes came from Thailand, according to customs data. — Xinhua



Photo taken on 5 May 2022 shows durians at a durian processing factory in Chanthaburi Province, Thailand. PHOTO: XINHUA/WANG TENG

High inflation rattles UK home loan market

BRITAIN’S retail lenders are withdrawing fixed home-loan products, as elevated inflation sparks fears of more Bank of England interest rate hikes and worsens the cost-of-living crisis.

UK banks mostly offer mortgages with a fixed interest rate for a set period — typically two to five years — but after expiry this becomes variable or a new rate is fixed in line with prevailing market conditions.

However, recent inflation data sparked speculation that the central bank will ramp up its key interest rate even higher to contain stubbornly high inflation.

That could further squeeze living standards and spell more gloom for Prime Minister Rishi Sunak’s Conservative government before a general election expected next year.

Mortgages pulled

“Mortgages are being pulled, and then coming back to the market at a higher rate,” said Sarah Coles, head of personal finance at stockbroker Hargreaves Lansdown.

HSBC joined the fray on Thursday, suspending certain home loans as it also sought to cope with significant new demand but stressed there was no change for existing customers. — AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V TI2 APPLE VOY.NO. (023E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V TI2 APPLE VOY.NO. (023E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **12-6-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S TI2 LOGISTICS PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SITC DANANG VOY.NO. (2312S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SITC DANANG VOY.NO. (2312S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **12-6-2023** 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 SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Japan extends destruction order despite end of N Korea launch window

THE Defence Ministry said Sunday it has extended an order instructing the Self-Defence Forces to destroy any North Korean projectile that could fly over Japanese territory, despite the expiration of a period in which Pyongyang said it would launch a satellite-carrying rocket.

The decision indicates Japan will remain vigilant given North Korea has indicated it plans to make an attempt in the near future following the failure of a launch late last month.

North Korea notified Japan and the International Maritime

Organization in late May that it was planning on launching a satellite between 31 May and midnight Saturday.

Japan considers any North Korean launch of a rocket carrying a satellite as equivalent to that of a ballistic missile test and thus in violation of UN Security Council resolutions aimed at thwarting Pyongyang's nuclear and missile development.

On 31 May, North Korea attempted to launch a military reconnaissance satellite into orbit but the operation failed due to "serious defects," according to

the country's state media.

On 4 June, North Korea indicated the next launch would be made without giving advance notice, rapping the IMO for adopting a resolution criticizing it over the 31 May launch, the Korean Central News Agency said.

With the extension of the Japanese ministry's destruction order, originally issued on 29 May, the SDF will continue to deploy ground-based Patriot Advanced Capability-3 interceptor missiles on the main island of Okinawa Prefecture as well as on Miyako and Yonaguni islands. — Kyodo



Japan Air Self-Defence Force Patriot Advanced Capability-3 interceptor missiles are deployed on 11 June 2023. **PHOTO: KYODO**

US capital sputters as federal workers stay home



Pennsylvania Avenue, in the heart of Washington, is seen in July 2022. **PHOTO: DANIEL SLIM/AFP**

WASHINGTON'S role as the US capital makes it reliant on government workers for its economic success — and many are choosing to stay home, perhaps for good, leaving vast federal of-

fices empty and the city struggling.

From restaurants hosting federal lobbyists to world-class cultural centres, the city's fortunes have long been tied to the

government employees who operate the machinery of the state.

Now, more than three years after the Covid-19 pandemic forced the United States government to rely on telework, long-term remote work is having painful consequences for the local economy.

Washington's workers are coming into the office less than half what they were before the pandemic, according to Kastle, which manages entry badges for 40,000 companies across the country.

"The DC office market is dying," Chris LeBarton, director of market analytics at the real estate data company CoStar told AFP in an interview at the company's offices downtown. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Trump took secret docs, put national security at risk: indictment

FEDERAL prosecutors unsealed a wide-ranging indictment of Donald Trump on Friday, accusing the former US president of endangering national security by holding on to top secret nuclear and defense documents after leaving the White House.

The 76-year-old Trump, the frontrunner for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, took hundreds of classified government documents in cardboard boxes to his Mar-a-Lago residence in Florida, the 49-page charge sheet said.

Trump kept the files — which included records from the Pentagon, CIA and National Security Agency — unsecured at Mar-a-Lago, which regularly hosted large social events, the indictment said.

On at least two occasions, Trump showed classified documents on US military operations and plans to people not cleared to see them at his Bedminster, New Jersey, golf club, it said.

Trump faces 37 separate counts in the indictment including 31 counts of "willful retention of national defence information" relating to specific documents. A conviction on each count carries up to 10 years in prison. "We have one set of laws in this country, and they apply to everyone," said Special Counsel Jack Smith, who brought the historic indictment against Trump, the first former US president ever to face federal criminal charges. — AFP

UK opposition demands election amid Johnson 'farce'

UK opposition leader Keir Starmer on Sunday demanded a general election as three MPs from the ruling Conservative Party, including Boris Johnson, quit parliament following a probe into Covid lockdown-breaking parties.

Labour leader Starmer tweeted that Prime Minister Rishi Sunak "must finally find a backbone, call an election, and let the public have their say on 13 years of Tory failure."

"This farce must stop. People have had enough of a shambolic Tory government



Britain's main opposition Labour Party leader Keir Starmer delivers his keynote address to delegates, at the annual Labour Party conference, in Liverpool, north west England, on 27 September 2022. **PHOTO: OLI SCARFF / AFP/FILE**

and a weak prime minister no one voted for."

Johnson announced on Friday he was leaving as a member of parliament, claiming he had been forced out in a stitch-up by his political opponents.

The 58-year-old Johnson has been under investigation by a cross-party committee about whether he deliberately lied to parliament over parties when he was in office.

As the committee prepares to make public its findings, Johnson said they had contact-

ed him "making it clear... they are determined to use the proceedings against me to drive me out of parliament".

By quitting, Johnson avoids the consequences of a humiliating fight to remain an MP in his Uxbridge and South Ruislip constituency in north-west London where he holds a slim majority of just over 7,000.

He denounced the committee, chaired by veteran opposition Labour MP Harriet Harman, as a "kangaroo court". — AFP

Embassy of Honduras inaugurated in Beijing

STATE Councilor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang attended the inauguration ceremony of the embassy of the Republic of Honduras in Beijing with visiting Honduran Foreign Minister Enrique Reina on Sunday.

Extending warm congratulations on the opening of the Honduran embassy in Beijing, Qin said the establishment of diplomatic ties on the basis of the one-China principle has opened a new era of China-Honduras relations.

Noting that bilateral relations got off to a strong start over the past two months, Qin said that the rapid development of bilateral relations has fully proved that adherence to the one-China

principle is recognized by the international community, reflects the trend of the times and the aspiration of the people, and serves the fundamental interests of the two countries and two peoples.

Echoing Qin's remarks, Reina said that the establishment of diplomatic relations with China opens a new era in Honduras' relations with the world and offers a chance for Honduras to become a great and prosperous country.

The Honduran side will firmly abide by the one-China principle, and believes bilateral relations will continue to strengthen and yield fruitful results for the benefit of the two peoples, he added. — Xinhua



Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang attends the inauguration ceremony of the embassy of the Republic of Honduras with visiting Honduran Foreign Minister Enrique Reina in Beijing, capital of China, 11 June 2023. PHOTO: XINHUA/LI TAO

NEWS IN BRIEF

Viet Nam may see record coffee exports on soaring prices as El Nino to hit supply

VIET NAM expects its coffee exports this year to hit a fresh record high as global production will fall short of demand, resulting in soaring prices amid El Nino-induced extreme weather conditions, Vietnam News Agency reported.

"The now-widely expected transition to El Nino conditions in the third quarter of 2023 has fuelled fears of reduced production in Viet Nam and Indonesia, both major robusta coffee producers," Fitch Solutions' research unit BMI said in a report dated 24 May.

Other large producers like Brazil and Colombia will also be negatively impacted by drought as well, the report said.

Viet Nam, Indonesia and Brazil are the largest producers of robusta, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization.

The El Nino weather pattern was likely to form in Viet Nam during the last half of the summer, with a 70-80 per cent chance of the phenomenon persisting into 2024, said Mai Van Khiem, head of the National Centre for Hydro-Meteorological Forecast.

El Nino typically suppresses rainfall, thus the average rainfall across Viet Nam is expected to drop 25-50 per cent, the expert said. — Xinhua

Mexican and Russian oil shipments ease Cuban fuel crisis

WITH oil tankers docking from Mexico and Russia in recent days, Cuba could see its severe fuel shortage ease for the near future.

Since the end of March, endless lines of cars queuing for gasoline have been a common site on the Communist Party-ruled island, and service stations have created WhatsApp groups to organize customers.

Cuba, under US embargo, is going through its worst economic crisis in three decades. It only produces a third of the fuel it needs each day, while residents navigate blackouts and food shortages.

According to shipping tracker Vessel Finder, Mexican tanker Bicentenario, with an estimated



The Mexican oil tanker Bicentenario is docked at the Nico Lopez oil refinery in Havana, on 8 June 2023. PHOTO: YAMIL LAGE / AFP

cargo of 265,000 barrels of oil, arrived at the port of Havana on Tuesday. The ship was anchored at the Nico Lopez refinery in the capital, AFP confirmed.

At the end of May, Cameroonian-flagged supertanker Limo, en route from Russia, arrived at

the port of Matanzas with some 800,000 barrels.

Vicente de la O Levy, minister of energy and mines, had in recent weeks declared "there will be a recovery" from fuel shortages, "and a decrease in uncomfortable queues." — AFP

Israel reinvents kibbutz by embracing of new industries



An economic crisis in Israel in the 1980s led many kibbutzim to fall into debt and undermined their cooperative model. PHOTO: MENAHEM KAHANA/AFP

ENTREPRENEURS are repurposing the Israeli kibbutz into hubs for creative and hi-tech industries, after decades of decline in the rural communities once considered models of socialism.

Founded on ideals of communal living and agriculture, the kibbutzim — whose residents often shared work, accommodation and possessions — were crucial to Israeli society in the 20th century.

Today, standing in a former metal factory in Hanita, a kibbutz

in Israel's north, Yuval Vakrat is surrounded by shops, an art gallery and a distillery.

"We can still see a bit of oil on the walls," said the 43-year-old, who returned to his birthplace a few years ago, selling toys and wooden objects he crafts in the former factory.

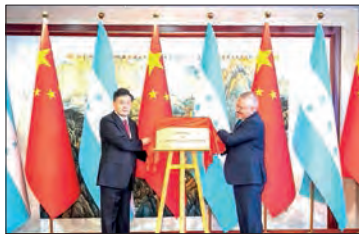
"Projects began to emerge for young people and they answered our needs," he added.

Vakrat praised the quality of life and proximity to nature in Hanita, which is surrounded by

trees and just a few kilometres (miles) from the Mediterranean Sea. "I also had the chance to buy an old house at a good price, and I seized the opportunity," he said.

Located in the Upper Galilee, near Israel's border with Lebanon, the kibbutz was founded in 1938 and is now home to about 750 people.

Across Israel, there are about 270 kibbutzim. Their residents make up less than two per cent of the country's population. — AFP



SPORT

Athletes who competed in XII ASEAN Paralympic Games come back home

THE Myanmar Sport Team who won the sixth position with 15 gold medals, 22 silver medals, and 19 bronze medals in the XII Paralympic Games held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia led by the Chairman of the Myanmar Paralympic Sports Federation Maj-Gen Hla Moe arrived back at the Yangon International Airport on 10 June.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, Deputy Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs U Myo Hlaing, regional ministers, departmental officials, Myanmar Paralympic Sports Federation officials, and the public welcomed back the sports team.

The Team Myanmar stood in the sixth place with total medals



Myanmar athletes who have taken part in XII ASEAN Paralympic Games are seen at the Yangon International Airport yesterday.

of 56 including 12 golds, 13 silvers, and ten bronzes in the track and field events, three gold, six silver and four bronze medals in the swimming event, and two bronze

medals in chess event, three silver medals and two bronze medals in the weightlifting event and one bronze for Goalball. — MNA/KZL

‘Incredible’ as history-making Djokovic claims record 23rd Grand Slam triumph

NOVAK Djokovic created history on Sunday when he captured a record-breaking 23rd Grand Slam title with a third French Open triumph, reinforcing his case to be crowned the greatest player of all time.

The 36-year-old Serb brushed off an early wobble to defeat Casper Ruud of Norway 7-6 (7/1), 6-3, 7-5 and snap the tie

of 22 Slams he shared with career-long rival Rafael Nadal.

“It’s an incredible feeling to win 23. I’m beyond grateful and blessed to be standing here with so many incredible achievements,” said Djokovic as Nadal immediately described his rival’s victory as “an incredible achievement”. Victory for the third time in Paris, after 2016 and 2021, adds

to Djokovic’s 10 Australian Open titles, seven at Wimbledon and three at the US Open. “It’s no coincidence that my 23rd Grand Slam title has come here because it has been the hardest one for me to win in my career. I am very emotional right now and I am very, very proud,” added Djokovic who fired 11 aces and 52 winners in total past Ruud. — AFP

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Twelve 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 prioritize 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.
- (d) To ensure peace, stability, rule of law, and the safe and smooth functioning of transport networks across the Union.

2. Economic affairs

- (a) To enhance development based on agriculture and livestock using modern production techniques and to 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 assure support for the sustainability of Micro-, Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) that prioritize import substitution, export production, and the use of domestically produced raw materials, in order to increase domestic production and generate employment opportunities.
- (d) To advance the socioeconomic life of the people, in order to ensure the country’s prosperity and food security.

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 people and preserve and safeguard their faiths, beliefs, culture, and characteristics of patriotic nationalism.
- (c) To strengthen basic health care in order to achieve the emergence of a health system that enhances the longevity and health of the entire nation.
- (d) To comprehensively promote the education sector to make it capable of producing the human resources necessary for building a modern, developed, and progressive democratic nation.

Man City Champions League victory defines new era in European football

PEP Guardiola laughed when it was put to him that Manchester City could go on to chase down Real Madrid’s record tally of European Cups after their victory over Inter Milan in Saturday’s Champions League final.

“Be careful Real Madrid! If you sleep a little bit we will catch you,” he joked in the wake of City’s first triumph in Europe’s elite club competition, which also saw them complete a treble after they won the Premier League and FA Cup.

A Rodri strike gave City a 1-0 win at the Ataturk Olympic Stadium as they became European champions for the first time after several near misses in recent years.

The Abu Dhabi-owned club have a long way to go to catch Real’s record haul of 14 victories, and it would be some achievement if they ever get there. Yet it is tempting to look at Saturday’s success in Turkey and wonder if it might definitively mark the start of a new era in European football.

Real, the great aristocrats of the sport, have resisted the rise of City and Paris Saint-Germain, teams backed by Gulf riches, to win the Champions League five times in the last decade. The Spaniards were blown away by City in this season’s last four, though, and Guardiola’s side — beaten by Chelsea in the 2021 final — may take some stopping now they have claimed their first title. —AFP



Pep Guardiola takes in Manchester City’s victory in Saturday’s Champions League final. PHOTO: AFP

Lopez downs previously unbeaten Taylor to win light-welter title

AMERICAN Teofimo Lopez defeated Britain’s previously unbeaten Josh Taylor by unanimous decision on Saturday to capture the World Boxing Organization light-welterweight title.

Judges handed the 25-year-old Brooklyn fighter the victory by scores of 115-113, 115-113 and 117-111.

Lopez improved to 19-1 while dropping the 32-year-old Scottish southpaw, the former undisputed world champion in the division, to the same record. — AFP