Embrace the Future: Unfolding a New Chapter with a Fresh Vision

The Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

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BPI's powerful medications control perilous diseases, bringing relief to patients

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing commissions BPI Pharmaceutical Museum, Freeze-Dryer Machine into service

RESEARCH on medicines must be conducted to produce potent medicines, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday.

The BPI Pharmaceutical Museum and the Freeze-Dryer Machine for anti-snake venom of the Myanmar Pharmaceuticals Enterprise of the Ministry of Industry were launched in Insein Township yesterday morning.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General instructed MPE to assist in the medicine production of private pharmaceutical industries for serving the interests of the State.

He stressed the need to manufacture common medicines for the people sufficiently to meet the domestic demand as medicines are

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SAC Chair Premier Senior General Min Aung Hlaing performs scented water ritual at BPI Pharmaceutical Museum's founding plaque yesterday.

The photo shows trucks loaded with goods near the Chinshwehaw border between Myanmar and China.
PHOTO: CHINESE EMBASSY TO MYANMAR

Sino-Myanmar border trade surges by 60% in last 4 months

THE border trade value between Myanmar and China hit a high of over US$1.38 billion as of 4 August in the current financial year 2023-2024 beginning 1 April, which is an increase of 59.63 per cent ($517.059 million) compared to the similar period last FY, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics indicated.

The Sino-Myanmar border trade was registered at $866.99 million in the year-ago period.

Myanmar links with the neighbouring country China via Muse, Lweje,

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UEC demonstrates Myanmar's electronic voting machine to ministries

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Myanmar banks facilitate petty cash exchange for outbound travellers

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Kachin, Ayeyawady see investment approval, including solar power distribution

NATIONAL

Devotees worship Maravijaya Buddha Image

THE Maravijaya, the world's tallest sitting marble Buddha image in the precinct of Buddha Park in Dekkhinathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw, is crowded with pilgrims. It is open to the public free of charge from 8 and 16 August between 6 am and 8 pm. The monks, nuns and visitors flocked to the pagoda and made donations.

The well-wishers donate vegetable biryani meal boxes to the pilgrims at the pagoda. There will be inspections under security measures for the safety of pilgrims, and apart from the escalator, the buggies for monks, the elderly and the disabled are arranged. Moreover, there are spacious places for the pilgrims and religious organizations to recite Gathas and the people can view the pagodas in 24 special chambers around the platform of the Maravijaya Buddha Image. Similarly, the people can pay homage to the 720 stone plaque chamber pagodas on which Tri Pitaka treatises were curved in Pali and Romanized languages with the use of modern machinery. The Thudhamma public houses constructed with traditional architecture were also packed with pilgrims and the water fountain square and other religious and recreational sites and Sasana Beikman Agga Dhipati ordination hall, with a stand for 900 members of the Sangha and 1,200 laypersons capacity, in Buddha Park were also crowded with throngs of visitors. — MNA/KTZH

Devotees reverently pilgrimage around Maravijaya Image and Sasana Beikman Agga Dhipati ordination hall (images above and left).

Sino-Myanmar border trade surges by 60% in last 4 ...

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Chinshwehaw, Kampaiti and Kengtung for cross-border trade. Muse border saw a majority of the trade worth $884.997 million over the past four months. Meanwhile, the trade value stood at $413.7 million via Chinshwehaw, $54.537 million via Kampaiti, $27.89 million via Lweje and $2.9 million via Kengtung respectively.

Myanmar conducted border trade worth $14.195 million through Muse 105th-mile trade zone with China during a week from 29 July to 4 August, which was down by $3.239 million from the previous week.

Exports of corn, rubber, green gram, butter bean, turmeric, cashew nut, shrimp and fish powder rose that week and exports of rice, broken rice, kidney bean, black-eyed pea, peanut, black sesame, onion, Hydrophilia Phlomoides Nees, castor seed, cotton, eel, crab and various fish fell from the previous week.

Vehicles and auto parts, telephone and communication devices, TV, aircon, wire, chemical, paint and polish were increasingly brought into the country that week, while imports of tractors, computers, equipment, construction materials, petroleum products, fertilizer, tyres and tube, motorcycle parts, dry battery, electronic device, light bulb, seasoning powder, raw materials by CMP enterprises and kitchenware dropped.

Meanwhile, the cross-border trade value of Myanmar's Chinshwehaw border with the neighbouring country China was estimated at $123.853 million in July, with imports ($85.859 million) surpassing exports ($37.994 million). That was an increase of $14.243 million recorded in June.

Myanmar conveyed broken rice, black-eyed peas, kidney beans, rice beans, peanuts, butter beans and lentils, black sesame, fresh ginger, raw rubber, dried konjac, onion, pepper, ethyl alcohol 96 per cent, charcoal pulp paper manufactured under CMP enterprises to China. Imports in capital goods, intermediate goods and consumer goods groups also grew last month.

Sino-Myanmar trade is steadily moving presently, with approximately 200 trucks flowing in and out of the Muse trade zone. — TWA/KK

NATIONAL

Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

1. Emphasis will be placed on ensuring peace and stability and the full rule of law across the whole Union, and on successfully conducting a free and fair multiparty democratic general election.
2. Continued efforts will be made to promote the State economy and enhance the socioeconomic situation of all people through expediting manufacturing businesses rooted in agriculture and livestock to benefit the entire National people.
3. Priority will be given to achieving peace as the essence of the State and stabilizing the results of the peace process in alignment with the agreements in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) to the extent possible.
4. Work processes will be accelerated to ensure a strong disciplined and authentic multiparty democratic system and build a Union founded upon democratic and federal systems.
5. Work will be undertaken to ensure accuracy and fairness in the general election to prevent eligible voters from losing their rights, and upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multi-party democratic elections will be held, and State duties will be handed over to the elected government.

BPI's powerful medications control perilous diseases, ...

FROM PAGE-1

valuable for the life of humans. He praised the Pharmaceutical Factory (Insein) of MPE for producing necessary medicines for the people and contributing much to the health sector of the country.

The Senior General visited the BPI Pharmaceutical Museum.

Before the ceremony, the Senior General heard reports on the plan to promote production of anti-snake venoms, use of quality raw materials for drug production, increased production of medicines to reduce import volume, arrangements for selling medicines at reduced prices to people, further production of new drug items, aims of the museum and installation of the Freeze Dryer Machine of anti-snake venoms by Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than and MPE Managing Director Dr Aung Khaing.

In the anti-snake venom production industry, the Senior General heard reports on the production process, the capacity of the Freeze Dryer Machine and its production processes presented by officials.

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views the displays at the BPI Pharmaceutical Museum in Yangon yesterday.

> BPI has been producing potent medicines sold at fair prices in successive eras for providing healthcare services for the people.

In his speech, the Senior General underscored that using various medicines including anti-snake venoms produced by BPI remarkably helps prevent dangerous diseases harming the life of humans and improves treatment capacity. He recognized BPI for maintaining the high quality of its drugs thanks to the experiences of previous pharmacologists and the relentless efforts of new-generation service personnel.

Former Prime Minister U Nu erected a monument for Myanmar Pharmaceuticals Enterprise (BPI) on 23 April 1954. Former President U Win Maung launched the Burma Pharmaceutical Industry, widely known as BPI, on 23 April 1958 to manufacture 41 kinds of medicines and six kinds of medicines for the pandemic. BPI has been producing potent medicines sold at fair prices in successive eras for providing healthcare services for the people. It extended branches such as Pharmaceutical Factory (Insein), research unit, Pharmaceutical Factory in Ywathagyi, Inyaung, PyinOoLwin and Sagaing, Anti-Snake Venom Production Branch in Hmawby, Horse Ranch in Myitchay, Yanpel and Heho, Tatmadaw Pharmaceuticals Factory (Hmawby), and Universities of Pharmacy in Yangon and Mandalay. In accord with the guidance of the SAC Chairman Prime Minister, the BPI Pharmaceutical Museum was established for the people to observe experiences on medicine production, medicines, production process, medical books, development of human resources and valuable historical events. — MNA/TTA

NATIONAL

The demonstration of Myanmar's Electronic Voting Machine (MEVM) in progress yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

UEC demonstrates Myanmar's electronic voting machine to ministries

THE demonstration of the Myanmar Electronic Voting Machine and trial voting was held yesterday morning at the meeting hall of the Ministry of the Union Government Office in Nay Pyi Taw.

UEC member U Ko Ko Lwin first explained the Myanmar electronic voting machine (MEVM). Subsequently, the UEC official explained the construction of MEVM, the control unit, the ballot unit, the verification unit, ballot boxes and batteries. He dwelt on installed machines and their purposes, counting the results from the voting machine, packing, storing and security of the voting machine.

UEC member U Aung Lwin Oo also briefed all on the objectives of building the MEVM before the discussions were followed up. Officials then observed the Myanmar electronic voting machine and conducted test voting.

In the afternoon, UEC officials visited the Ministry of Industry and held briefings and demonstrations of the voting through MEVM and 85 personnel carried out voting trials. — MNA/KZL

KNU/KNLA-PC members, families provided with foodstuffs, textbooks, fertilizers

KAYIN State Chief Minister U Saw Myint Oo on Monday provided bags of rice, textbooks, teacher handbooks, stationeries and fertilizer to members of KNU/KNLA-PC and their families in Htokawkoe of Kawkareik Township of Kayin State where the KNU/KNLA-PC is located.

The event was launched with the greeting speeches of the chief minister and chairman of KNU/KNLA-PC Saw Htaw Lay.

The chief minister then presented 3,980 pairs of KG to Grade 12 textbooks, 3,980 dozen of notebooks, 160 teacher handbooks, 1,128 dozen of pencils, and 200 dozen ball pens provided by the Ministry of Education for a total of 3,980 students from 36 schools operated by KNU/KNLA-PC, including rice and stationeries of the Ministry of Border Affairs, 200 bags of urea fertilizer and 100 bags of natural fertilizer of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

The chief minister and party inspected the completion of a 60-foot Bailey bridge, an emergency bridge constructed after heavy rainfall that destroyed the approach road of a 20-footbridge on the Htokawkoe-Kyawkoh road section. They also headed to basic education high school in Nabu Village and provided 100 dozens of books and K500,000 for the students and teachers.

On arrival at the 16-bed Nabu station hospital, they comforted the patients and provided foodstuffs and cash to the patients and health staff. — Saw Myo Min Thein (IPRD)/KTZH

4 special civil appeal cases heard

A special appeal tribunal consisting of Chief Justice of the Union U Thar Htay and Judges of the Supreme Court of the Union U Kyi Thein, U Tin Hone, U Thaung Naing and U Thein Ko Ko was convened yesterday morning at the Supreme Court of the Union and it heard a total of four special civil appeal cases: No 13/2023 (Ayeyawady), 40/2022 (Sagaing), 3/2023 (Shan), and 4/2023 (Shan), and it judged to dismiss a special civil appeal case – No 13/2023(Ayeyawady), following COVID-19 prevention and control guidelines. — MNA

CBM revokes money changer licences of 13 companies

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) declared on 14 August that, based on the resolution of the executive committee's meeting, 13 money changers have had their money changer licences revoked due to their non-compliance with established regulations and directives.

Those companies are Prime Residence Co Ltd, West Line Co Ltd, IMA Co Ltd, Great Father Great Sons General Trading Co Ltd, Gold Foil Co Ltd, Big Lion Gems Co Ltd, Global International Investment & Development Co Ltd, World Fortune International Finance Group Shares Co Ltd, Myat Nan Yone Services Co Ltd, LP Holding Co Ltd, Golden Myanmar Asia Crown Travels & Tours Co Ltd, Yangon KSA Travel & Tours Co Ltd and Balance Co Ltd. — MNA/MKKS

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NATIONAL

Myanmar delegation leaves for 7th China-South Asia Expo, 27th China (Kunming) Export/Import Expo & related events

A Myanmar delegation led by Dr Kan Zaw, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, U Maung Maung Ohn, Union Minister for Information, and U Aung Naing Oo, Union Minister for Commerce, departed from Yangon for the People's Republic of China yesterday to participate in the 7th China-South Asia Expo Trade Fair, mark the inauguration of the 27th China (Kunming) Export/Import Expo, engage in the 2023 Greater Mekong Sub-Regional Economic Corridor Forum, and partake in other associated events.

The Myanmar delegation is pictured at Yangon International Airport before departing for China yesterday.

Hosted by the Ministry of Commerce of the PRC and the People's Government of Yunnan Province, the ceremony is scheduled to take place in Kunming from 16 to 20 August.

To be held under the theme of "Solidarity Coordination & Coordination for Common Development", the 7th China-South Asia Expo will feature 15 multi-sector galleries and host over 10 forums concurrently. Among these are the 4th China-South Asia Cooperation Forum, the 2023 GMS Economic Corridor Governors Forum, the 16th China-Southeast Asia Business Forum, the 4th Forum on China-South Asia Technology Transfer and Collaborative Innovation, the 11th China-South Asia & Southeast Asia Arts Week, the 4th Lancang-Mekong Audiovisual Week, and the China-South Asia Expo digital platform, which will be presented online simultaneously.

This event serves as an avenue to further bolster cooperation and exchange among Southeast Asian nations, fostering discussions on collaboration and friendship. Additionally, the 27th China (Kunming) Export/Import Exhibition will be unveiled during this comprehensive trade fair, solidifying ties between China and South Asian countries. — MNA/TS

Illegal and smuggled goods, three-wheel motorbike, vehicles confiscated

A Customs on-duty team nabbed six kinds of goods worth K11.58 million including ownerless 300 Heffey toners and two sets of Volvo air filters that were piled up at the top of the detour near Namawan village in Hsenwi township on 13 August. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

In addition, the Customs on-duty teams conducted inspections on the same day and captured a Canter truck (approximate value of K10.5 million), that was overturned near the 300-foot-long bridge on Kamaing-Phakant road in Kamaing township, carrying 432 gallons of illegal diesel worth K4.32 million, a Lifan three-wheel motorbike (estimated value of K3 million) without official documents at No 321 light infantry regiment checkpoint in Waingmaw township and two Super Customs, a Pajero and a Noah (estimated value of K12 million) without official documents at the Seinlon combined checkpoint in Momauk township. The action was taken under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law and the Export and Import Law.

A combined team made a surprise check near Thingannyinaung village in Myawady township on 14 August and impounded a Toyota HiAce (approximate value of K19 million) carrying 450 kilogrammes of shrimp without official documents. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Similarly, a total of 1.294 tonnes of illegal teak, 0.828 tonnes of illegal hardwood and 0.782 tonne of other illegal timbers worth K1,323,504 was captured in Nyaunglebin district on 14 August. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

A total of 12 arrests were made on 13 and 14 August, with an estimated value of K63,973,504, as reported by the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

Public Awareness Exhibition on Mekong-Lancang Cooperation held

The documentary group photo of the Exhibition for Public Awareness on the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

AN Exhibition on the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation for Public Awareness, organized by the Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies under the auspices of the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (MLC), was held at the Thingaha Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on 14 August 2023. The Exhibition was inaugurated by Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Myo Htut and Minister Counsellor Dr Zheng Zhihong of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China. Also present on the occasion were officials from the respective Ministries that implemented the projects funded by the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (MLC) Special Fund provided by the People's Republic of China.

The deputy minister cut the ribbon to signify the opening of the exhibition and toured the exhibition. Then, the Talk and Quiz Competition on Mekong-Lancang Cooperation for students from ten Basic Education High Schools in Nay Pyi Taw, and the award-presenting ceremony were followed.

The exhibition will continue at Thingaha Hotel until 15 August and will showcase the cooperation activities that were implemented under the MLC Special Fund in Myanmar and other MLC member countries namely Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Viet Nam. — MNA

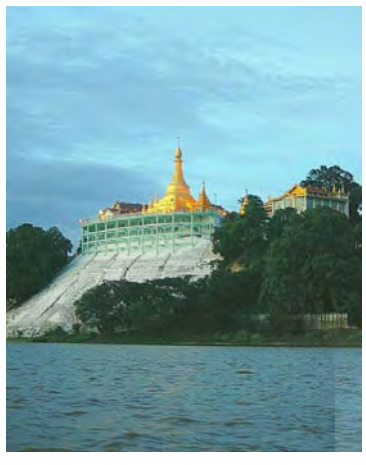
CURRENT AFFAIRS

Magway Myathalun Pagoda Festival to be held for 20 days

THE Magway Myathalun Pagoda Board of Trustees plans to hold Myathalun Pagoda Festival, Magway Region, for 20 days with the offering of 9,000 oil lights and 9,000 flowers to the Pagoda at the night of Thadingyut full moon day during the Pagoda Festival.

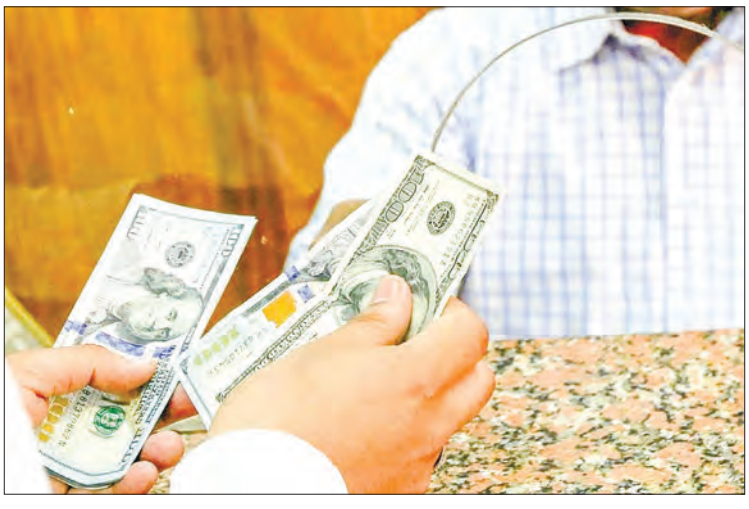
The Pagoda Festival will be started on the 10th waxing of Thadingyut with over 70 shops to be built for the festival period and the registration of shops will be done until 10 September.

The Magway Myathalun Pagoda Buddha Pujaniya Festival had been held yearly in the past but it is the first time that the present Festival will be held again in three years after the Covid-19 pandemic. — TWA/MKKS



The picture shows devotees worshipping reverently the Magway Myathalun Pagoda.

Myanmar banks facilitate petty cash exchange for outbound travellers



A bank employee is selling petty cash in foreign currency to a customer.

THE Central Bank of Myanmar has reported that banks with authorized dealer licences (AD-licensed banks) have disbursed petty cash ranging from US$300 to US$500 to each of 2,956 individuals who are preparing to travel abroad.

CB Bank, A Bank, and Tun Commercial Bank have communicated through their social media platforms that individuals planning to work, study, or undergo medical treatment abroad can now acquire petty cash in foreign currencies.

With the directive from CBM, the AD-licensed banks have been instructed to provide individuals with petty cash between US$300 and US$500 per person (or its equivalent in other foreign currencies), based on the submission of requisite documents following the specific purpose of their overseas travel.

This initiative was launched on 31 May, and as of 8 August, a total of US$789,806 has been distributed to 2,603 individuals. Furthermore, 2,454,550 Thai baht has been provided to 301 persons, 9,861 Singapore dollars to 27 individuals, 16,738 Malaysian ringgit to 20 individuals, and 1,450 euros to five individuals.

Transactions have been carried out at rates of K2,500 or K2,600 per USD, and K75 to K85 per Thai baht. These rates vary based on the daily average exchange rate prevalent in the market.

Participating in this effort are CB Bank PCL (CB), KBZ Bank, AYA Bank PCL (AYA), Ayeyawady Farmers Development Bank (A Bank), Myanma Apex Bank (MAB), Yoma Bank (YOMA), UAB Bank (UAB), Asia Green Development Bank (AGD), Myanmar Oriental Bank (MOB), Global Treasure Bank (GTB), Tun Commercial Bank (TCB), Shwe Bank, First Private Bank (FPB), Innwa Bank Limited (Innwa), and Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB). These banks have publicly disclosed the available counters for purchasing foreign currency on their respective websites and Facebook pages. — TWA/CT

Kawthoung border trade dips sharply in last four months

MYANMAR carried out border trade worth US$35.8 million with Thailand via Kawthoung border post as of 4 March in the current financial year 2023-2024 beginning 1 April, comprising exports worth $28.138 million and imports worth $7.665 million, as per the statistics released by the Ministry of Commerce.

The trade figure dropped from $55.588 million recorded in the corresponding period last FY 2022-2023.

Kawthoung border saw fisheries exports worth $0.706 million on 7 and 8 August, while imports were valued at $0.08 million. Fisheries are the main export items at the Kawthoung border under the FOB system.

Furthermore, cashew nuts, oil palm, and various fish including small-head ribbon fish, shrimp, squid, crab and corn were primarily exported. Only charcoal powder was imported via the Kawthoung border.

Myanmar's border trade with the neighbouring country Thailand increased to US$2.147 billion over the past four months from $1.8 billion registered in the year-ago period.

Myanmar carries out cross-border trade with Thailand via Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee and Mawtaung borders. The majority of the trade was conducted via the Hteekhee border. — TWA/KK

The photo shows fishery products to be exported to Thailand via the Kawthoung border.

ARTICLE
ADVERTORIAL

Varieties of rice are well organized for sale in the market in Yangon.

Soaring Rice Prices Spark Consumer Concerns

BY NN

THE domestic market has been bracing for the persistent rise of high-grade Pawsan rice from the Shwebo area, touching K140,000 per sack at present, according to Myanmar Rice Wholesale Centre (Wahdan).

The notification about the Central Bank of Myanmar's issuance of the new K20,000 note on 31 July drove rice prices upward trends.

The price of Shwebo Pawsan rice increased to K140,000 per sack on 14 August from K115,000 per sack on 24 July, indicating a sharp increase of K25,000 in the past three weeks.

Similarly, the prices of other rice varieties are on a continuous rise. The prices of old Pawsan rice touched a high of K105,000-110,000 per sack depending on producing areas (Myaungmya, Pathein, Pyapon and other regions), while rice prices stood at K95,000 per sack of Kunni, K69,000 for Ngasein, K95,000 for Pawkywe K69,000 for Aemahta and rice grown under the intercropping system, K67,000 for Aemahta (25 per cent broken) and K107,000 for new Pawsan rice variety, as per the price data released by Myanmar Rice Wholesale Centre (Wadan).

Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) notified on 7 August that it would sell off 170,000 rice sacks in August, comprising 50,000 rice sacks of Aemahta variety, 20,000 sacks of Pawsan rice and 100,000 sacks of short matured rice Aemahta variety (90 days). The federation will increase the sales quota when necessary.

The MRF launched a subsidy scheme for Pawsan and Aemahta rice varieties on 7 August at Wahdan and Bayintnaung Commodity Wholesale Centres.

Additionally, the MRF is preparing to designate shops in some townships such as Hlaingthaya, Shwepyitha, Insein, South Dagon, North Dagon, South Okkalapa, North Okkalapa, Dala, Twantay, Hmawby and Mingaladon and operate mobile market trucks, as per the public suggestions. The MRF will keep the consumers apprised of that scheme.

The MRF will systematically distribute 50 sacks of Aemahta rice per retail shop in Yangon Region every two weeks. The retail shops can register with the MRF for that and door-to-door service will be included after making payment with KPay.

The rice prices are set at K110,000-120,000 per sack of Pawsan from the Shwebo area, K94,000-97,000 for Pawsan from Ayeyawady, K65,000 for Aemahta (10 per cent broken) and K60,000 for Aemahta (25 per cent broken) respectively.

The consumers are entitled to buy a sack of Pawsan rice and a sack of Aemahta rice per month, presenting the citizenship scrutiny card.

Moreover, the staff from government departments, factories and companies can buy the rice with official letter by sending a purchase letter to admin@mrf.com.mm.

For further detail, consumers can contact the MRF through Ph: 09 400067260, 09 400067270 and Wadan Depot via Ph: 018 221448, 018 220131, 018 210287 and Bayintnaung depot via Ph: 09 769029428.

Myanmar has achieved self-sufficiency in rice and only the excess rice is exported systematically. At present, rice crops are being harvested in the northern Bago Region and central Myanmar Region. With the electricity supply improving, rice mills could run operations fully. Therefore, the production meets the consumption for sure. Nevertheless, those unscrupulous are spreading malicious rumours and fake news to trigger consumers' concerns and spark panic buying. The federation hereby requested on 28 July the consumers stop panic buying and buy rice when they need it.

Myanmar Rice Federation will endeavour to stabilize the rice price and steer the market for the right price and the right product. The MRF will join hands with the rice millers, rice traders and companies. The federation called on them to balance the short-term and long-term benefits in trading, as per the MRF's notification dated 24 April.

Individuals and family entities can contact the rice wholesale centres for fair prices and the right products. For any difficulties, please contact the office of the MRF, as per the statement.

Myanmar Rice Federation notified on 24 April that tips-off about those manipulators who spread malicious rumours on digital platforms to spark concerns of the consumers and raise the rice prices can be done for the sake of the long-term benefit of the rice industry. The federation will forward the reports of those manipulators to the relevant authorities if they refuse to be persuaded. Those stakeholders in the supply chain need to exert concerted efforts in this as well.

Translated/EM

ADVERTORIAL

Dapein (1) Hydropower Company Limited Actively Promoted the Construction of Local Talents

RECENTLY, in order to further promote the training of new Myanmar employees to make them adapt to the post requirements, Dapein (1) Hydropower Company Limited (hereinafter referred to as the Company) has carried out phased training for new Myanmar employees on probation, so as to form the characteristics of local talents training as soon as possible.

Up to now, the Company has completed the first phase of training for new employees. After testing the outcomes received during probation, the employees have obtained great progress. They not only have certainly strengthened their understanding towards the rules and regulations, safety procedures, work contents and basic production knowledge in related positions but also have greatly improved their Chinese language skills, which has created favourable conditions for their barrier-free cross-cultural communication with Chinese employees.

Next, the Company will start the second-phase training plan to carry out the training on production technology and skills and Chinese language study. The fine tradition of "Master Teaching Apprentices" will be given full play and the "Occupational Tutors" system will be leveraged to help select excellent experts in aspects of management, technology and skills as internship tutors. The practices of "The Experienced Teaching the Green Hand" and "Experience Passing-on" should be made to provide new employees with personalized guidance and training, so as to stimulate their potential and creativity to improve the work efficiency on probation and help them adapt to the enterprise culture faster.

The Company wishes to promote the construction of local talents featured with high quality, broad international vision, high localization rate and reasonable structure, so as to increase the local employment rate and drive economic development, as well as make progress in power cooperation between China and Myanmar and accelerating the high-quality and sustainable development of the "Belt and Road Initiative".

OPINION

Prioritize majority will and emphasize minority voices in democracy

AT the heart of a democratic system lies the fundamental principle of aligning actions with the desires of the majority while still acknowledging and respecting the perspectives of the minority. Striking this delicate balance is crucial, as it ensures that the majority's wishes are fulfilled without marginalizing the minority's concerns. Conversely, decisions favoured by the majority should be held in abeyance, providing room for the integration of minority viewpoints when deemed appropriate.

The essence of a democratic system seeks to cultivate equality, liberty, and justice within a nation, eradicating all forms of discrimination. In Myanmar, every citizen must internalize the concept of unity, recognizing their shared identity and working collaboratively towards common objectives. In this way, both sides should not harm and bring loss to each other. It is because they all are comrades by upholding the esprit de corps to build the Union and preserve the national character with endeavours of preventing any dangers for the nation.

> To preserve its cultural identity, Myanmar must embrace a democratic system that aligns with its distinct characteristics. The democratic framework inherently encompasses a variety of political parties with diverse stances. Additionally, various ethnic groups have been preserving unique traditions and customs for hundreds of years. Therefore, the implementation of the democratic system cannot be confined to specific individuals or ethnicities. Actually, it must mirror regional aspirations and prioritize the majority's desires.

Within this framework, there is no need for the majority to carry any guilt for their nation-building endeavours, and the minority need not lament their contributions to developmental projects. Both sides share the responsibility of constructively critiquing any missteps in projects led by opposing factions. This approach allows for timely corrections and the elimination of potential blemishes from the annals of history.

Legislative bodies should be seen not as adversaries, but as potential allies and fellow compatriots. Nurturing a sense of camaraderie is essential for all undertakings. Constructive criticism should remain a constant feature of their activities, centring on solutions rather than unnecessary conflicts.

To preserve its cultural identity, Myanmar must embrace a democratic system that aligns with its distinct characteristics. The democratic framework inherently encompasses a variety of political parties with diverse stances. Additionally, various ethnic groups have been preserving unique traditions and customs for hundreds of years. Therefore, the implementation of the democratic system cannot be confined to specific individuals or ethnicities. Actually, it must mirror regional aspirations and prioritize the majority's desires.

This approach will empower Myanmar to fully adopt a genuine and disciplined multiparty democratic system while building a Union founded on democratic principles and federalism. As a result, the government and the populace must collaborate to cement the multiparty democratic system and construct a Union rooted in democratic values and federalism. This endeavour ultimately paves the way for a peaceful, prosperous, and progressive nation.

ARTICLE
Weather report

Should I Take a Multivitamin, Just in Case?

By A Pattern

The true path to vitality lies in a balanced diet. A healthy lifestyle triumphs over vitamin supplements. Say goodbye to the vitamin craze and choose a delectable, nourishing banquet for your body. PHOTO: PIXABAY

IN a world where health trends pop up like mushrooms after rain, one tiny hero has captured everyone's attention - the multivitamin! In a post-pandemic world obsessed with health, multivitamins have taken centre stage, promising miraculous benefits from eternal youth to superhero-like strength. But is this multivitamin really a magic cure, or just a colourful placebo?

The origin of supplements dates back to the 1930s and 1940s when they were introduced as a way to address nutrient deficiencies during the Second World War. However, their popularity surged in recent years as people sought to counteract poor lifestyle choices. Enter multivitamins, the sidekicks to our bodies' superheroes - a pill for every deficiency, from Vitamin D for sunlight-deprived souls to Vitamin A for better eyesight.

While they may look like tiny capsules of hope, there's little evidence to suggest that multivitamins actually deliver on their promises. Studies, such as the Physician's Health Study with over 14,000 participants, have failed to show any clear health benefits. The real superhero in this tale might actually be the placebo effect, where people adopt healthier lifestyles after taking multivitamins, not due to the pills themselves.

The multivitamin industry has soared from $37 billion in 2017 to a jaw-dropping $300 billion by 2024, resembling a superhero blockbuster breaking box office record. But is this blockbuster worth the hype, or are we all just victims of clever marketing?

First, let's decode the multivitamin formula. Tens of vitamins and minerals as well as trace elements, it's like assembling a superhero dream team! They contribute to enzyme production and hormonal balance, and even keep our immunity strong like an impenetrable shield. But here's the twist - the nutrient composition varies between brands, making each capsule a unique blend. It's like they can't decide on their superhero uniform!

But just like any superhero team, multivitamins have their weaknesses. The supplement world isn't as strictly regulated as a Marvel movie script. Some capsules might pack more punch than they claim, while others might fall short of their promises. It's like they've got a secret identity, and we're the clueless audience trying to figure them out.

Before we start popping these pills like candy, beware of their potential dark side. In the UK, over 23,000 emergency room visits are linked to supplements each year. One study says they're the heroes preventing heart attacks and cancer, while another says they're mere bystanders, cheering from the sidelines.

Multivitamins have even dabbled in brain function and eye health, acting like secret agents, improving memory in older adults and influencing moods like undercover spies. But hold your horses! High doses of vitamins and minerals can be dangerous, like giving the Hulk too much gamma radiation. Pregnant folks need to be extra careful with vitamin A intake, and smokers should avoid certain multivitamins like the plague. It's like they're dancing on a tightrope, trying not to trip over their own powers.

So, why are these colourful capsules flying off the shelves? Well, the multivitamin market is like the Wild West - unregulated and chaotic. You can buy them without a prescription, without supervision, and often without clear instructions on how to take them safely. With social media experts peddling every health gimmick under the sun, it's no wonder people are turning to multivitamins as a panacea.

In this multivitamin superhero saga, we must embrace the art of balance. A little sprinkle of vitamins can be beneficial, but relying solely on them for good health is like expecting Batman to save the world alone. So, let's face it, these tiny capsules aren't turning anyone into the Hulk. Instead of relying on an army of vitamins, the real hero in the quest for good health is a balanced diet. Fruits and vegetables should be the stars of the show, not colourful sugar-coated pills.

So, what's the verdict? Are multivitamins a fact or a fad? Well, they're a bit of both - a colourful mix of science and marketing! If you're still convinced that you need a pill, consult your doctor - they earned their degrees for a reason and can guide you towards making an informed choice.

In a world seeking quick fixes and magical solutions, it's essential to remember that there's no secret formula to good health. Embracing the power of a balanced diet is the real key to well-being. No amount of vitamin sprinkles can replace the value of a healthy lifestyle. It's time to bid farewell to the vitamin circus and opt for a delicious and nutritious feast for our bodies.

Let's raise our glasses, not filled with multivitamins, but with a dose of humour - the true superhero power that keeps us all sane in this health-obsessed world. Whether you're Team Multivitamin or Team Balanced Diet, the journey to a healthier and happier you lie in finding your own path to well-rounded wellness.

Depression symptoms are lessened by social media interventions: Study

ACCORDING to a recent study by UCL researchers, receiving therapy for problematic social media use can be effective in improving the mental well-being of people with depression.

The research, published in the Journal of Medical Internet Research, found that social media use interventions could help adults for whom social media use has become problematic or interferes with their mental health.

Problematic use occurs when a person's preoccupation with social media diverts them from important duties and causes them to overlook obligations in other areas of their life.

According to prior research, social media use can become problematic when it begins to negatively impact a person's everyday life and results in mental health problems like sadness, anxiety, tension, and loneliness.

Enhancing Mental Well-being

To address these issues, and improve users' mental health, social media use interventions have been developed and evaluated by researchers. Such techniques include abstaining from or limiting the use of social media, alongside therapy-based techniques such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).

The researchers analyzed 23 studies which featured participants from across the globe, between 2004 and 2022. They found that in more than a third of studies (39 per cent), social media use interventions improved mental well-being.

Improvements were particularly notable in depression (low mood), as 70 per cent of studies saw a significant improvement in depression following the intervention.

Therapy-based interventions were most effective – improving mental wellbeing in 83 per cent of studies, compared to 20 per cent of studies finding an improvement where social media use was limited and 25 per cent where social media was given up entirely.

Insights from Lead Author

Lead author, Dr Ruth Plackett (UCL Institute of Epidemiology & Health), said, "Mental health issues are on the rise, as is the number of people who use social media. "Health and care professionals should be aware that reducing time spent on social media is unlikely to benefit mental wellbeing on its own.

"Instead, taking a more therapy-based approach and reflecting on how and why we are interacting with social media and managing those behaviours could help improve mental health." Study author and GP Dr Patricia Schartau (UCL Institute of Epidemiology & Health), added, "As primary care physicians, we should proactively explore social media use and its effects on mental health in patients who present with anxiety and/or low mood in order to give those patients the opportunity to benefit from treatment including some of the more effective interventions outlined in our review." In 2022 it was estimated that 4.59 billion people globally used at least one form of social media and the sites have dramatically changed how people communicate, form relationships and perceive each other.

SOURCE: ANI

the research highlights that interventions targeting social media use can alleviate mental health issues in adults grappling with its adverse impact on their daily life. **PHOTO: PIXABAY**

Flood Bulletin

(Issued at 08:30 hrs MST on 14-8-2023)

Flood Condition of Chindwin River

ACCORDING to the 07:30 hrs MST observation today, the water level of

Chindwin River at Phaungpyin has exceeded by about one inch above its danger

level. It may continue to rise the present water level by about one foot during the next

one day and may remain above its danger level.

Advisory

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low

lying areas in Phaungpyin Township, to take precaution measure.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 14 August 2023)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 15 August 2023: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Lower Sagaing and Magway regions and Kayah State, scattered in Mandalay Region, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin and northern and southern Shan states and widespread in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of regionally heavyfalls in Mon State and isolated heavyfalls in Bago and Ayeyawady regions. Degree of certainty is (100%).

NATIONAL

Myanmar film experts to attend Fly Post-Production Workshop

MYANMAR film professionals will attend the Fly Post-Production Workshop, which will be jointly organized by South Korea's Busan Film Commission and the Asian Film Commission (AFCNet), according to U Chan Thar Kyi Soe, information officer of the international relations committee of the Myanmar Motion Picture Organization.

The workshop to be held in Viet Nam from 11 to 14 November is part of the Fly Project 2023 jointly organized by the Busan Film Commission of South Korea and the Asian Film Commission (AFCNet).

"Myanmar has been invited for the post-production workshop. It's done by Fly. Fly is an organization from the Busan Film Commission, which is an organization that spends money on the new generation of young filmmakers and creators in Asia. They also ask children from ASEAN countries to make short stories. And they are now doing Post-Production Workshops.

"In this programme, two people from Myanmar will have the opportunity to attend. For those who are allowed to attend, all expenses will be covered by the Busan Film Committee. It will be done in Viet Nam. The workshops will last four days. The Myanmar Motion Picture Organization has already selected two people to attend the ten-day event as they were invited to participate in a programme organized by Fly last month. The Myanmar Motion Picture Organization always has international information about films and film festivals.

"I would like all to visit the Myanmar Motion Picture Organization's page often because we are always connecting with international film-related opportunities," U Chan Thar Kyi Soe said.

Those who wish to attend the Fly Post-Production Workshop must be a director or producer or the one with experience in post-production and must have produced at least one film. People who have experience in creating and producing films and television series can also join the event by submitting evidence.

Those with experience in Busan Asian Film School AFIS or Busan Asian Film Academy BAFA will be given priority, and the Busan Film Commission will cover the cost of travel and living expenses for the two selected candidates. — ASH/KZL

Myanmar-Indonesia collaboration enhances energy, EVs, edible oil, and mining

The documentary group photo is taken after the discussion at the Indonesian Embassy in Yangon.

ACCORDING to the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), cooperation will be increased in the renewable energy, electric vehicles, edible oil, and mining sectors between Myanmar and Indonesia.

Discussions to increase cooperation between Myanmar and Indonesia were held at the afternoon tea party that took place at the Indonesian Embassy (Yangon) on 13 August between members of ASEAN-BAC Myanmar led by UMFCCI President U Aye Win (Chair, ASEAN-BAC Myanmar) and Mr Dicky Komar, Charge d'affaires of the Indonesian Embassy in Yangon.

In addition, the discussion will be continued at the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit 2023, and members of ASEAN-BAC Myanmar representing the private sector, led by UMFCCI President U Aye Win (Chair, ASEAN-BAC Myanmar), will attend the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit 2023 to be held in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 3 and 4 September 2023. — ASH/CT

Kachin, Ayeyawady see investment approval, including solar power distribution

ACCORDING to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, three joint venture foreign investment businesses and three citizen-owned investment businesses, including one solar power generation and distribution business in Kachin State and Ayeyawady Region, were approved in July.

In Kachin State, macadamia and passion fruit production and two rubber production and sales operations were allowed to operate in July. These two businesses are joint ventures with foreign investment and will be able to provide employment opportunities to 1,067 workers in Kachin State. Kachin State Investment Committee meeting 3/2023 approved the two aforementioned projects to be carried out by foreign joint venture investment in Kachin State.

Similarly, Ayeyawady Region Investment Committee approved one rice production, storage, sales and export business to be carried out by joint venture foreign investment, one electricity generation, transmission and distribution business using solar energy that is solely related to the Myanmar investment and two rice milling and exporting businesses totalling four businesses in July.

The aforementioned businesses in the Ayeyawady Region were approved by the 3/2023 meeting of the Ayeyawady Region Investment Committee. — ASH/KZL

One of the rice mills in Ayeyawady Region.

WORLD NEWS DIGEST

Families with babies in Japan facing steeper price hikes

DIAPERS, formula and other baby items have seen greater price surges than other consumer goods since the beginning of this year, causing a heavy burden on child-rearing households as Japan battles a declining birthrate, a recent think tank analysis showed.

The prices of baby-related goods were up 9.3 per cent in June from a year earlier, much higher than the 3.3 per cent increase for consumer products overall, and are likely to remain elevated for a while, Hamagin Research Institute said.

The rate of increase in the "baby price index" comprising diapers, formula, infant clothes, dolls and toys, in June was at its highest since January 2015, when prices were significantly lifted by a consumption tax hike.

Price rises for child-rearing necessities excluding dolls and toys came to a slightly lower 7.2 per cent in June, but it was still the highest since 1991 when figures necessary to calculate the index became available, it said.

"The increase in the baby price index is expected to remain high for some time as the weakening yen, soaring material prices and increased logistics costs from last year are gradually passed on to consumers," said Yuki Endo, senior researcher of the institute.

In creating the baby price index, Endo used the government's monthly CPI data and extracted the five key childcare-related items.

In a related report highlighting difficulties faced by financially-strapped families raising children, 80 per cent of respondents said their budgets had become "very tight" due to recent price surges, a nonprofit organization supporting such families said.

The online survey conducted from late May to early June on 1,538 people by Kidsdoor also found that 85 per cent of such households saw no wage increases this summer compared with the previous year.

File photo taken on 15 December 2022, shows babies in a room for newborns in Kumamoto, Japan. **PHOTO: KYODO**

When asked about the specific impact of price hikes, many said they are avoiding using air conditioning to save on electricity bills and have become unable to save money, the organization said.

The government has cited soaring childcare expenses as one of major factors behind the downtrend in the number of births in Japan, which plummeted to a historic low in 2022. — Kyodo

'No more water': Iraq drought claims lakeside resort

IRAQI merchant Mohamed has never seen such a grim tourist season: years of drought have shrunken the majestic Lake Habbaniyah, keeping away the holidaymakers who once flocked there during summer.

"The last two years, there was some activity, but now there's no more water," said 35-year-old Mohamed, asking to be identified by his first name only.

He laid out inflatable water floats, nets and shirts in front of his lakeside shop, but expected few if any customers.

"This year, it's dry, dry!" Mohamed told AFP, his shirt soaked in sweat in the inhospitable heat of nearly 50 degrees Celsius (120 Fahrenheit).

Shorelines at Habbaniyah, about 70 kilometres (45 miles) west of the capital Baghdad, have receded by several dozen metres after four consecutive years of drought ravaged parts of the country.

The United Nations ranks water-stressed Iraq as one of five countries most impacted by some effects of climate change. — AFP

A picture shows empty tourist facilities by the Habbaniyah lake affected by severe drought in Iraq's Anbar province, on 11 August 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

A rendezvous with vibrant blooms in Asia's leading flower market

People visit the Kunming Dounan Flower Market in southwest China's Yunnan Province, 31 January 2023. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

WHILE many Chinese cities are currently experiencing scorching heat, the essence of spring lingers in the Dounan Flower Market in Kunming, southwest China's Yunnan Province.

An array of blossoms, including lotuses, roses and sunflowers, grace the scene here, ready to embark on a journey across the nation, adorning shopping malls, conference halls, wedding venues and the cozy corners of people's homes.

About 30 years ago, the Dounan Flower Market was just a street with roadside stalls selling flowers, but today it has become Asia's largest fresh-cut flower trading market. Its floral beauty reaches more than 40 countries and regions, with the export value hitting 520 million yuan (about 71.7 million US dollars) in 2021, ranking first nationwide. Yunnan's fresh-cut flower growing area totalled 21,700 hectares in that year.

"This is a market for all people, where everyone can buy their favourite flowers at the lowest price," said Shi Jinlong, a seller hailing from the northwestern Shaanxi Province.

The Dounan market springs to life around 5 am every day. Upon entering the bustling market, Shi starts his day by looking through the array of flowers brought by wholesalers and jotting down price details as he goes. — Xinhua

"Barbie" tops North American box office for 4th straight weekend

WARNER Bros Pictures' fantasy comedy "Barbie" took the top spot at the North American box office for fourth consecutive weekend with an estimated three-day cume of 33.7 million US dollars, showed figures from the measurement firm Comscore on Sunday.

The live-action film, directed by American female filmmaker Greta Gerwig, has grossed 526.3 million dollars in North America through Sunday.

"The film has captured the imagination of moviegoers around the world and the results are incredibly impressive with a massive global cume through this weekend of 1.184 billion dollars," wrote Comscore senior movie analyst Paul Dergarabedian in an email to Xinhua.

Based on the iconic Barbie fashion dolls, "Barbie" features an all-star cast including Oscar-nominees Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling.

Universal Pictures' biographical drama "Oppenheimer," directed by Christopher Nolan, came in second with 18.8 million dollars on its fourth weekend for a North American total of 264.3 million dollars. — Xinhua

ECONOMY
WORLD

People visit the booth of Chery at the GAIKINDO Indonesia International Auto Show (GIIAS) 2023 in Tangerang of Banten province, Indonesia, 14 August 2023. The GIIAS 2023 will last till 20 August. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Viet Nam's seafood exports to reach $9 bln in 2023

VIET Nam will likely see a decline in seafood exports with total exports forecast at nine billion US dollars this year, although market prospects are better than last year's end, according to the Viet Nam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers (VASEP).

This is, however, equivalent to a decline of 15-16 per cent compared to 2022, local newspaper Vietnam News reported on Monday, citing the association.

Seafood exports in the first seven months of this year were estimated to reach nearly five billion dollars, down 25 per cent year on year, according to VASEP. In July alone, the value of seafood exports was estimated at 830 million dollars, down 11 per cent year on year. The most obvious recovery signal was in the Chinese market with a year-on-year increase of 45 per cent in export value to 180 million dollars in July.

Exports to other key markets in July plunged between 5 and 40 per cent year on year, including the United States, South Korea and the European Union, the newspaper reported. — Xinhua

A seafood vendor sorts her catch at a morning fish market in Quang Nam province on 13 April 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

Sri Lanka earns $219 million from tourism in July

SRI Lanka earned 219 million US dollars from tourism in July, a top tourism official said on Monday, citing Central Bank of Sri Lanka data.

Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) Chairman Priantha Fernando told the media that 143,039 tourists visited the country last month, compared to 47,293 visitor arrivals a year earlier, which generated some 85 million dollars in tourism income.

He added that 1.09 billion dollars were earned from tourism in the first seven months of this year, compared to 764.6 million dollars recorded a year earlier.

According to him, 51,594 tourists arrived between 1 and 10 August, and Sri Lanka has received over 800,000 tourists so far this year.

Sri Lanka's tourism industry is aiming to attract two million visitors in 2023, compared to the previous target of 1.5 million.

Tourism, as one of Sri Lanka's leading foreign exchange earners, has suffered a setback due to the COVID-19 pandemic and economic and political crises in the South Asian country. — Xinhua

Customers arrive for the re-opening of the Century 21 flagship department store in New York City on 16 May 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

US stocks dip ahead of retail sales, earnings

WALL Street stocks slipped early Monday, extending a lacklustre August ahead of US retail sales data and earnings from large shopping chains.

This week's calendar includes the July US retail sales report, as well as quarterly results from Walmart, Home Depot and other big box retailers.

After a buoyant run in the first seven months of 2023, all three major equity indices have lost ground in August, a period known for meager trade volumes with many on Wall Street taking summer vacations.

About 15 minutes into trading, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 0.1 per cent at 35,237.84.

The broad-based S&P 500 slipped 0.1 per cent to 4,460.67, while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index also shed 0.1 per cent to 13,637.25.

United States Steel surged 25 per cent after announcing that it received an unsolicited bid from Cleveland-Cliffs to acquire the company.

US Steel has begun "a comprehensive and thorough review of strategic alternatives" after "receiving multiple unsolicited proposals" from prospective buyers of the company or some assets, said Chief Executive David Burritt. — AFP

China's State Council stresses optimizing foreign investment environment

People visit a match-making event of the 6th China International Import Expo (CIIE) at the National Exhibition and Convention Centre (Shanghai) in east China's Shanghai, 26 July 2023. The 6th CIIE is scheduled to be held in Shanghai from 5 to 10 November. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

CHINA'S State Council has recently issued a statement outlining its guidelines regarding further optimizing the foreign investment environment and intensifying efforts to attract foreign investments.

The guidelines urged to improve the overall balance between domestic and international situations and foster a world-class business environment that is market-oriented, law-based, and internationalized.

They also called for giving full play to the strengths of China's enormous market, making more efforts in attracting and utilizing foreign investment and doing it more effectively to make contributions to promoting high-standard opening up and building a modern socialist country in all respects.

Under the guidelines, 24 specific measures in six aspects have been put forward, according to the State Council.

These aspects include improving the quality of foreign capital utilization, guaranteeing the national treatment of foreign-invested enterprises, strengthening the protection of foreign investment, improving the facilitation of investment and operation, increasing fiscal and tax support, and improving ways to promote foreign investment.

The statement also said that all regions are encouraged to adopt supporting measures in light of local conditions to enhance policy synergy.

The Ministry of Commerce should strengthen guidance and coordination with relevant departments on policy promotion, implement the policies and measures timeously, create a more optimized investment environment for foreign investors, and effectively boost foreign investment confidence. — Xinhua

Agnelli family buys 15-per-cent stake in Philips

ITALY'S Agnelli family has acquired a 15-per cent stake in Dutch medical technology firm Philips, the latest move into the health sector for the storied industrial dynasty, the two groups said Monday.

The investment was made via the family's Dutch-based Exor holding company, which will also have one seat on Philips's supervisory board.

Exor told AFP the deal was worth around 2.6 billion euros ($2.8 billion) "at current market prices".

Talks between the companies began late last year, shortly before Philips CEO Roy Jakobs unveiled in January 2023 a new strategic plan for the group.

He also announced 6,000 job cuts worldwide as Philips struggles to recover from massive losses due to recalls for faulty sleep respirators, prompting several lawsuits in the United States that have dented its reputation.

"The path of change taken by Philips in recent years has created a company that combines two areas — healthcare and technology — to which we are committed," Exor boss John Elkann said.

The Agnelli family, owners of Italian icons Ferrari and the Juventus football club, has recently expanded into healthcare, with stakes in the French biotechnology group Merieux and the Italian hospital operator Lifenet.

The deal was well received by investors, with Philips stock climbing 4.6 per cent to 19.34 euros in morning trade in Amsterdam. — AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (097N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (097N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **15-8-2023** 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 NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ALS SUMIRE VOY.NO. (104N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ALS SUMIRE VOY.NO. (104N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **15-8-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** 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 SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SITC HUIMING VOY.NO. (2316S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SITC HUIMING VOY.NO. (2316S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **15-8-2023** 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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NEGAR VOY.NO. (SCY1155)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NEGAR VOY. NO. (SCY1155)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **15-8-2023** 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 LAND AND SEA INTERMODAL LOGISTICS SDN BHD LINE

ROLLING UPDATES
WORLD

This undated photo released from North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on 14 August 2023 shows North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un (C) during a visit to an important munitions factory at an undisclosed location in North Korea. **PHOTO: STR / KCNA VIA KNS / AFP**

DPRK top leader inspects munitions factories, urges war preparations

KIM Jong Un, top leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), inspected some major munitions factories on Friday and Saturday, and urged the country's armed forces to step up war preparations, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported Monday.

During the inspection, Kim asked the tactical missile factory to drastically boost its existing capacity, and urged the factory that produces tactical missile transporter-erector-launchers to speed up the production of modern and highly efficient launching vehicles, said the report.

Kim drove a newly-developed armoured multi-purpose vehicle when inspecting the country's armoured fighting vehicles factory, and during his inspection of the large-calibre controllable rocket artillery shell factory, he requested an "exponential increase" in shell production to enhance the combat capabilities of the frontline forces, it said.

Kim also demanded that the country's armed forces should possess overwhelming capabilities to respond to any war at any time, and to be on high alert, it added. — Xinhua

New Zealand fortifies bread, flour with folic acid against birth defects

ALL non-organic bread-making wheat flour in New Zealand will be fortified with folic acid from Monday to prevent birth defects.

The measure is to prevent neural tube defects, such as spina bifida. In New Zealand, these occur in about 10.6 per 10,000 live births and are associated with lifelong disability.

With the announcement that folic acid will be added to bread-making flour, New Zealand has joined more than 70 countries that already require folic acid to be added to a food staple to prevent neural tube defects, said Kathryn Bradbury, senior research fellow at the University of Auckland's School of Population Health.

Studies have shown that folic acid supplements can reduce the occurrence of these neural tube defects during pregnancy by up to 70 per cent.

Folic acid supplements must be taken before conception to be fully effective, but more than half of pregnancies in New Zealand are unplanned.

"Adequate folate intake in pregnancy is also a health equity issue," said Louise Brough, senior lecturer in Nutrition Science at the Massey University, adding Maori, Pacific people, young mothers and those on lower incomes are less likely to take folic acid supplements, especially preconception due to high levels of unplanned pregnancy.

A 2011 New Zealand survey showed only one-third of women consumed folic acid supplements prior to pregnancy.

Bread is an excellent vehicle for providing folate as it is widely consumed throughout New Zealand, with higher intakes among those on lower incomes, Brough said.

Fortification of bread with folic acid became mandatory in Australia in 2009, and it is estimated that neural tube defects were reduced by 14 per cent among all women, but by 74 per cent among Aboriginal Australians, she said.

There are also concerns around "mass medication" and the effects of higher folic acid intake on other population groups, Brough said. However, she said flour has been fortified with folic acid in the United States for over two decades and neural tube defect-affected pregnancies have reduced, without any demonstrable adverse outcomes in the population.

"Folate, also known as vitamin B9, is an important vitamin that many of us do not get enough of," said Associate Professor Lynne Chepulis of the University of Waikato. — Xinhua

S Korean fishing boats stage rally against Japan's radioactive wastewater discharge plan

A group of South Korean fishing boats on Monday staged a maritime parade in waters off the country's western port city of Incheon as part of the efforts in recent months by local fishermen to express their firm opposition to Japan's planned discharge of radioactive wastewater into the ocean.

Over 50 fishing vessels set out from a pier in Incheon on a parallel voyage, sailing around for about one and a half hours with banners attached on the vessels that read "Use the Fukushima contaminated wastewater as drinking water in Japan," and "The ocean is not a dumpster for the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated wastewater."

Amid wide criticism from both home and abroad, the Japanese government has been pushing to dump the nuclear-contaminated wastewater into the ocean this summer from the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, which was hit by a massive earthquake and an ensuing tsunami in March 2011.

Before the sea route demonstration, over 150 fishermen rallied on land against Japan's release plan, saying in a statement that they had suffered from a decrease in domestic seafood consumption, caused by the planned discharge of the radioactive wastewater from the Fukushima plant.

"It would be difficult for fishermen to make a living. It's worse than expected. We didn't expect the situation would be this serious, but our people's serious perception of the contaminated wastewater led to the price drop in marine products," Kim Jong-ok, a fisherman in Incheon who participated in the rally, told Xinhua. — Xinhua

Fishing boats sail to protest against Japan's planned discharge of radioactive wastewater into the ocean, in waters off Incheon, South Korea, 14 August 2023. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

SPORTS

50-km Endurance Equestrian Contest to kick-start in Nay Pyi Taw

THE 50-kilometre Endurance Equestrian Contest organized by the Myanmar Equestrian Federation will be held in Nay Pyi Taw on 20 August.

"The category included in this competition is an international equestrian sport. It is a qualification test to compete in the XXXIII SEA Games. The sport will be included in the Southeast Asian Games to be held by Thailand. Therefore, according to the World Equestrian Federation's methodology, the competition is defined as (One Star). To get the One Star level, all of them have to compete four times. This is the first time.

"It will be 50 kilometres long. The rules of the race are to ride twice between 50 km and 80 km. Between the next 80 km and 100 km long routes, horsemen have to ride twice. The rider who completes all four times will be recognized the One Star level. Then that player has the right to enter the international competition," said U Htay Kyaw, general secretary of the Myanmar Equestrian Federation. Horsemen from Meiktila and Bagan of Mandalay Region, and Yangon Region and 23 other players will compete in the tourney. — Bala Soe/KZL

Since horse race is a popular sport in Myanmar, horse riders practice regularly. **PHOTO: BALA SOE**

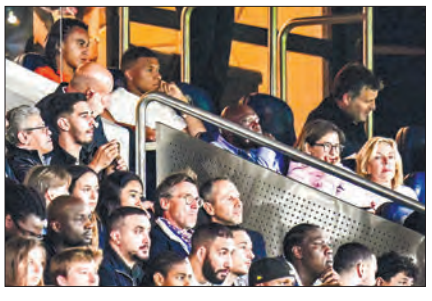
Neymar 'in negotiations' over Saudi move as Mbappe returns to PSG good books

NEYMAR was "in negotiations" on Sunday to become the latest football superstar to decamp for Saudi Arabia, leaving Paris Saint-Germain just as Kylian Mbappe was brought back in from the cold by the French champions.

A source close to PSG told AFP that 31-year-old Neymar "no longer figures in the club or manager's plans" with the Brazilian immediately linked to Al-Hilal in the Gulf kingdom.

Another source in Saudi Arabia said that "direct negotiations" between Neymar's agents and the Public Investment Fund (PIF) were ongoing.

"If we reach an agreement with him in the coming hours, we would start negotiating with PSG immediately. He would play for Al-Hilal if a deal is sealed," said the source. — AFP



Paris Saint-Germain's French forward Kylian Mbappe attends from the stand the French L1 football match between Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) and Lorient at the Parc des Princes Stadium in Paris on 12 August 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

Spain 'goosebumps' on eve of historic first World Cup semi-final

SPAIN'S first Women's World Cup semi-final in their history on Tuesday is reward for years of sacrifice, veteran forward Jennifer Hermoso says, admitting to "goosebumps" at the thought of reaching the final.

Opponents Sweden are regulars at this stage of the World Cup — without ever going on to lift the trophy — but for Spain they are into uncharted waters.

"If you don't feel any nerves before a game like this then something is not right," the 33-year-old Hermoso said on the eve of the semi-final in Auckland.

"It gives you goosebumps thinking about how close we are to the final, but first of all we have the game tomorrow and Spain will come out more determined than ever."

Hermoso, who plays her club football in Mexico, has been representing her country for more than a decade and won her 100th cap earlier in the tournament.

"Tomorrow's game is the consequence of millions of training sessions, of so many moments we have been through, of spending time far from our families and loved ones, of so much sacrifice," she said.

"We have worked so hard to get here and I just want to enjoy it. I want the whole team to enjoy it and for the whole of Spain to be behind us."

Spain and Sweden drew 1-1 in a friendly last October, just after 15 Spanish players told their federation they no longer wished to be considered for selection in protest at coach Jorge Vilda. — AFP

Spain's players attend a training session at the North Harbour Stadium in Auckland on 14 August 2023, ahead of the Australia and New Zealand 2023 Women's World Cup semi-final football match against Sweden. **PHOTO: AFP**

Barca held, Real Madrid win in La Liga opening weekend

FC Barcelona were held to a goalless draw by Getafe in their La Liga debut on Sunday evening.

Both sides finished with 10 players, after Raphinha's dismissal for elbowing Getafe defender Gaston Alvarez in the first half, while Getafe's Jaime Mata received a red card after the interval.

Barca's coach, Xavi Hernandez, was also shown the red card due to his apparent discontent with Getafe's fouling and time-wasting tactics. This frustration was evident as the referee added a whopping 10 minutes of added time in the first half and over 15 in the second. That period culminated with VAR dismissing what seemed a valid Barcelona penalty appeal.

Real Madrid secured a 2-0 victory against Athletic Bilbao on Saturday, thanks to first-half goals from Rodrygo and debutant Jude Bellingham. Rodrygo utilized open space to score in the 28th minute, followed by Bellingham's goal from a corner, despite mishitting his shot, which fortuitously looped over Athletic's keeper Unai Simon.

However, Madrid's triumph was overshadowed by Eder Militao's knee ligament injury revelation, coming just days after Thibaut Courtois was confirmed to be out for the season with a similar issue.

Willian Jose's dramatic 95th-minute header earned Betis a win at Villarreal. With assistance from newcomer Isco, Ayoze Perez netted in the 20th minute. Jorge Cuenca equalized with a 61st-minute header, but it was the Brazilian striker who sealed the victory for Betis. — Xinhua

DPRK top leader inspects munitions factories, urges war preparations
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WORLD

Tues trains, flights cancelled as Typhoon Lan heads to western Japan

Monitors at JR Nagoya Station on 14 August 2023, show planned Shinkansen bullet train service cancellations due to the approach of Typhoon Lan. **PHOTO: KYODO**

SOME shinkansen bullet train services and flights are set to be cancelled as a strong typhoon remains on course to make landfall on the Pacific coast of western Japan on Tuesday, affecting many people during the annual Bon holidays, the weather agency and operators said.

With Japan bracing for the arrival of Typhoon Lan, Central Japan Railway Co said all of its services on the Tokaido Shinkansen Line between Nagoya and Shin-Osaka stations will be cancelled Tuesday, as will West Japan Railway Co for its bullet train services between Shin-Osaka and Okayama stations.

JR Central has said shinkansen services between Tokyo and Nagoya stations will be greatly reduced Tuesday and the bullet trains will mostly operate without seat reservations.

Although service suspensions were not planned for Monday and Wednesday, the operator warned passengers of the possibility of sudden changes.

Japan Airlines Co said 19 flights, including to and from Itami airport in western Japan, had been cancelled on Monday, with 240 flights on Tuesday also cancelled, affecting around 24,800 people.

All Nippon Airways Co said 310 flights will be cancelled Tuesday, with most to and from Itami airport.

Meanwhile, Universal Studios Japan's theme park in Osaka will be closed Tuesday, its operator said, adding that although the park plans to be open on Wednesday, the opening time may be delayed.

At 5 pm, the typhoon was located around 150 kilometres southeast of Cape Shionomisaki in Wakayama Prefecture and moving northwestwards.

It had an atmospheric pressure of 970 hectopascals with winds packing up to 180 km per hour, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. — Kyodo

S Korean activists urge calling off military exercises with US

A group of South Korean peace activists on Monday urged calling off the country's joint military exercises with the United States scheduled to be held later this month.

"The Korean Peninsula is now again at the crossroads of war and peace. The stop of South Korea-US joint military exercises could be a decisive step in preventing war and opening a door to dialogue again," the Korea Peace Appeal, which organized the peace rally, said in a statement.

The activists shouted for peace during the rally, staged in front of the presidential office in Seoul, where the defence ministry is also headquartered.

"This extremely dangerous show of force, which raises a possibility for military conflict, will just end up in a disaster," said the Korea Peace Appeal, which is composed of hundreds of civic and religious groups in South Korea as well as dozens of overseas anti-war groups. The organizer called on the governments of South Korea and the United States to ease military tensions and make all-out efforts to prevent armed conflict on the Korean Peninsula.

The Ulchi Freedom Shield (UFS) exercise between the two allies, a summertime joint military exercise involving large-scale field maneuvers, was slated to be held from 21 to 31 August, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). — Xinhua

Death toll from heavy rain in north India rises sharply to almost 50

AT least 49 people were killed, nine of them in a temple collapse, and dozens more were feared missing after intense rains caused floods and landslides in India, officials said Monday.

Days of torrential downpours have washed away vehicles, demolished buildings and destroyed bridges in the northern Himalayan states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Flooding and landslides are common and cause widespread devastation during India's treacherous monsoon season, but experts say climate change is increasing their frequency and severity.

In Himachal Pradesh, 41 people were killed in the past 24 hours, up from an earlier toll of 16, an official toll showed. That included at least nine killed in the collapse of a Hindu temple in the state capital, Shimla.

At least 13 others were missing, it said. — AFP

A portion of college building is seen collapsed along the river Maldevta after heavy rains in Dehradun on 14 August 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**