

NATIONAL

Merit-makers flock to pagodas in Nay Pyi Taw on Tabaung Full Moon Day

PAGE-4

NATIONAL

Shwedagon Pagoda marks 2608th anniversary on Full Moon Day of Tabaung

PAGE-6

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Religious titles conferred on Sanghas, nuns, lay devotees



President U Win Myint presents the title of Abhidhaja Maharattha Guru to the presiding monk of Chaungdawn monastery in Myingyan. PHOTO:MNA



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi presents the title of Abhidhaja Maharattha Guru to the leading monk of Pan Ngwe Yon monastery in Madauk, Nyaunglebin. PHOTO:MNA

RELIGIOUS titles were presented to honour the Buddhist monks, nuns and lay devotees for 2020 on the Full Moon Day of Tabaung yesterday at the Sasana Maha Beikman in Uppatasanti Pagoda compound, Nay Pyi Taw. President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho, and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi led the congregation to present honorary titles and offertories.

The ceremony was opened with a religious song that ex-

tolled the virtues of Buddha. After the congregation took the five moral precepts, they listened to the religious advice of a senior monk.

President U Win Myint presented the title of Abhidhaja Maharattha Guru and other requisites to the presiding monk of Chaungdawn monastery in Myingyan Township.

The State Counsellor also conferred the title of Abhidhaja Maharattha Guru on the leading monk of Pan Ngwe Yon monastery in Madauk Town,

Nyaunglebin Township. Vice President U Myint Swe and Vice President U Henry Van Thio presented similar titles to the renowned senior monks.

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, Union Chief of Justice U Htun Htun Oo, Commander in Chief Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Chairman of Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Myo Nyunt offered Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika titles and

accessories to the monks. Then, the senior officials from the executive, legislative and judiciary sectors donated respective religious titles to the monks.

The First Lady and the wives of Vice Presidents, together with senior government officials, and the wives of senior military officers presented the titles to the honourable monks.

The President, the State Counsellor, the wives of Vice Presidents and the spouses

of senior government officials presented honorary religious titles to the lay devotees for their contributions in welfare of communities.

After the titles had been conferred, President U Win Myint and the congregation shared merits, followed by giving alms to the Buddha monks.

For 2020, religious titles were conferred on 322 monks, 24 nuns, 50 male devotees and 91 female devotees.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

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President U Win Myint presents the offertory to the Bhamo Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa. **PHOTO: MNA**

Religious titles conferred on Sanghas, nuns, lay devotees



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than presents the title of Abhidhaja Maharattha Guru to the Rector Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Nanda Mala Bivamsa. **PHOTO: MNA**



Chief Justice U Tun Tun Oo presents Abhidhaja Agga Maha Sadhamma Jotika Daja title to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Panna Vumsa of Ywatha Monastery, Pwintbyu. **PHOTO: MNA**



Constitutional Tribunal Chairman U Myo Nyunt presents Abhidhaja Agga Maha Sadhamma Jotika Daja title to Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Valuriya of Minkyaung Monastery, Myittha. **PHOTO: MNA**



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presents Abhidhaja Agga Maha Sadhamma Jotika title to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vimala of Shweminwon Monastery, NyaungU. **PHOTO: MNA**



Religious titles conferred on Sanghas, nuns, lay devotees

Members of the Sangha and title recipient Sayadaws are seen at the ceremony to confer religious titles to outstanding Sayadaws, nuns and lay persons in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



The congregation led by President U Win Myint and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attend the ceremony to confer religious titles on the outstanding Sayadaws, nuns and lay persons in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Vice President U Myint Swe presents Abhiddhaja Agga Sadhamma Jotika Title to Saydaw Bhaddanta Kovida Dhaja of Kyaukkon Maydini Monastery, Yangon. **PHOTO: MNA**



Vice President U Henry Van Thio presents Abhiddhaja Agga Sadhamma Jotika title to Saydaw Bhaddanta Cintta Sara of Thangar Yama Monastery, Magway. **PHOTO: MNA**

Religious titles conferred on Sanghas, nuns, lay devotees



U Hla Thein, Chairman of Union Election Commission, presents Agga Maha Pandita title to Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Panna Sami of Aungmingala Monastery, MraukU. **PHOTO: MNA**



Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein presents Agga Maha Sadhamma Jotika Daja title to Sayadaw Bhaddanta Upali of Sasana Vipolla Monastery, Mudon. **PHOTO: MNA**

Job opportunities must be created for local engineers: Union Minister



Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing delivers the speech at the awarding ceremony to mark World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development at the Thingaha Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

FEDERATION of Myanmar Engineering Societies and Myanmar Engineering Council jointly organized an awarding event to mark World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development at the Thingaha Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the ceremony, Patron of Federation of Myanmar Engineering Societies and Myanmar Engineering Council, Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing, first explained the history and present condition of Myanmar Engineering Societies.

He continued that the engi-

neering federation was cooperating not only with ASEAN organizations but also with World Federation of Engineering Organizations.

The role of engineers and engineering works are important for global sustainable development; thus, UNESCO has designated 4th March as 'World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development,' starting from this year.

Out of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), five goals need engineers to lead the projects.

"Therefore, the engineers need to make united efforts for achieving these goals," said the Union Minister, detailing the requirements for achieving the goals by 2030.

That was followed by the speech of Patron of Federation of Myanmar Engineering Societies, and Myanmar Engineering Council, and Union Minister for Construction U Han Zaw.

In his speech, the Union Minister said engineers play a vital role in development of infrastructure, which is required for economic development, making

and using new technologies, fulfilling the basic needs of human beings, food, shelter, clothing and health care, and ensuring clean water, sufficient energy and water resource management.

He also highlighted creating job opportunities for engineers and adapting curriculums to keep in line with changing new technologies.

The Federation of Myanmar Engineering Societies needs to continuously conduct capacity building training and hold workshops. By securitizing and issuing professional skills certificates, the federation can raise the level of competence between engineers, he added.

Dr Charlie Than, Chairman of Myanmar Engineer Council, and Vice President of Federation of Engineering Institutions of Asia and the Pacific (FEIAP), also explained the purpose of observing World Engineering Day and activities of the federation.

Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Union Minister for Education, also explained Myanmar's education reforms, requirements for implementation, vocational subjects, extensive activities, and

participation of the ministry representing Myanmar in UNESCO including the duties of Myanmar as a UNESCO's central executive member.

Chairpersons of Federation of Myanmar Engineering Societies and Myanmar Engineering Council presented awards for World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development to departments, organizations, companies, task-forces and individuals. The donors and sponsors for the event were also honoured at the event.

The ceremony was also attended by Deputy Ministers for Electricity and Energy U Khin Maung Win and Dr Tun Naing, Region/State ministers, members of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee and Yangon City Development Committee, Members of Parliament, Permanent Secretaries, chairpersons and central executive committee members of Federation of Myanmar Engineering Societies and Myanmar Engineering Council, and engineering organizations. —MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Merit-makers flock to pagodas in Nay Pyi Taw on Tabaung Full Moon Day

Pilgrims and Buddhist devotees packed the pagodas and religious edifices in Nay Pyi Taw to do meritorious deeds on Full Moon Day of Tabaung yesterday.

The lotus robes were donated to four Maha Mani Maya Yadana Jade Buddha Images and Maha

Sutaung Pyae Pagoda inside the Uppatasanti pagoda, where a consecration ceremony was held in the morning.

In the evening, ritual chanting of Paritta, Dhammacakkha and Pathana Pali verses were recited, together with donation of 9,000 oil

lights at the pagoda.

Moreover, many Buddhists came to other significant pagodas for doing meditation and other meritorious deeds on the remarkable occasion.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Surveillance and investigation of COVID-19

Updates at 8 pm; 8 March 2020

1. The Ministry of Health and Sports is closely monitoring and conducting surveillance at international gateways, at the public hospitals, community-based monitoring and private healthcare facilities.

2. In doing so,

(a) a 26-year-old man living in Latha Township, Yangon, arrived back from Thailand to Myanmar on 28 February. He began suffering fever, cough and headache on 2 March. He was taken to Yangon General Hospital on 7 March, and transferred to the Waibargi hospital where he was quarantined as the person under investigation. His specimens will be taken to the National Health Laboratory in Yangon for laboratory tests. He is not found with symptoms of acute respiratory diseases.

(b) An 18-year-old girl who was studying in Bangkok, Thailand, returned home at Hpa-an Township in Kayin State on 6 March. She began suffering fever and cough on 7 March. She was quarantined as a person under investigation at Hpa-an hospital on 8 March. Her specimens will be taken to the National Health Laboratory in Yangon for laboratory tests. She is not found with symptoms of acute respiratory diseases.

(c) A 25-year-old assistant male doctor at ICU of Mandalay General Hospital began suffering fever and tonsillitis on 7 March. He was not found with the symptoms of acute respiratory diseases. However, he gave medical treatments to a 35-year-old man from Wetlet Township, Sagaing Region, who was quarantined as person under investigation at Kandawnadi hospital beginning 6 March. Specimens of doctor will be taken to the National Health Laboratory in Yangon for laboratory tests.

(d) A 24-year-old pregnant woman from Shwepyitha Township, Yangon, began suffering fever, cough and

trouble breathings beginning 5 March. She was taken to the Insein General Hospital on 6 and 8 March. Although she never visited the COVID-19 infected areas, she was found with acute respiratory disease, and that was quarantined as a person under investigation since 8 March. Her specimens will be taken to the National Health Laboratory in Yangon for laboratory tests. She was not found with symptoms of acute respiratory diseases.

(e) A 52-year-old Korean man who lives in Seoul, South Korea, arrived in Myanmar via Bangkok on 4 March. He began suffering fever and sore throat beginning 7 March. He was taken to the Yangon General Hospital on 8 March. His specimens will be taken to the National Health Laboratory in Yangon for laboratory tests. He was not found with symptoms of acute respiratory diseases.

(f) A 38-year old man who is a native of Amarapura Township, Mandalay, arrived back to Myanmar from Gyal Gaung city of Yunnan province, China, on 28 February. He started suffering fever and trouble breathing one month ago. He had got haemoptysis on 8 March. He was admitted to the Mandalay General hospital on 8 March. Although he was not found contact with the suspected patients, he was diagnosed with acute respiratory diseases. He was transferred to Kandawnadi hospital for medical treatment as a person under investigation. His specimens will be taken to the National Health Laboratory in Yangon for laboratory tests. He was not found with symptoms of acute respiratory diseases.

3. Until 8 March afternoon, the results from NHL have shown that—

(a) a 30-year-old women, a native of Hakha Township, Chin State, is now at Waibargi hospital

(b) a 40-year-old, living in Minhla Township of Magwe Region, is under investigation at Linkal Station hospital.

(c) a 37-year old man who lives in Yedashe Township, Bago Region, is quarantined for medical treatments

(d) a 35-year old man at Kandawnadi hospital

(e) a 71-year-old man who lives in Mahaaungmyae Township, Mandalay, and at Kandawndadi

(f) a 30-year-old man, living in Thakayta township, Yangon, is under investigation at Waibargi hospital They are tested negative of COVID-19.

4. A 26-year-old man who had close contact with a confirmed patient in Singapore and his spouse 29-year. They were also found negative after the second tests.

5. Until 6 pm 8 March, a total of 6 patients are being given medical treatments at the respective hospitals.

6. A pilot reported 13 Myanmar citizen who lived in Daegu City, South Korea, landed at Yangon International Airport on 8 March. They were found with neither fever nor other acute respiratory diseases. They had no contact with the confirmed patients. They have been kept under hospital quarantine at women and children hospital in South Okkalapa Township and Waibargi Hospital for investigation.

7. Although there is no laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 until 8 March, the ministry is conducting round-the-clock surveillance in upward momentum. As the COVID-19 is spreading in 94 countries, people are suggested to strictly follow health awareness of the Ministry of Health and Sports on prevention of the disease. —MOHS

(Translated by Aung Khin)

MoALI, Ayeyawady government discuss flood control measures

CHIEF Minister of Ayeyawady Region U Hla Moe Aung held a meeting with Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw on preparations for prevention of flood and other rural development programmes on 6 March.

The meeting at the head office of Ayeyawady Government discussed measures on the resistance of dams and dykes, and other infrastructural development programmes of rural road networks, water supply, electrification and people-centred projects in the region in 2020-2021 financial year.

At the meeting, the deputy minister inspected the water supply project jointly implemented by the Department of Rural Development and the Regional Development Committee with the ODA loan of Japan International Cooperation Agency.

He also looked into construction of rural road in Kandaungtyi



Deputy Minister U Hla Kyaw and officials inspecting the preparations for prevention of flood and other rural development programmes on 6 March. PHOTO: MNA

Township and a 10-acre model agricultural farm developed by the broadcast seeder machine in Kankalay village-tract of Kyaunggone Township.—MNA (Translated by Aung Khin)

Three returnees taken back to village

THREE returnees from an IDP camp in Bangladesh were taken to their place of origin after officials provided them aid yesterday. One man and two women of a family were accepted at the Taungpyo Letwe Reception Centre in Maungtau Township, Rakhine State, on 7 March. Immigration officials issued National Verification cards to the returnees.

Afterwards, they were provided with healthcare and aid and taken to the Hlaphoe-khaung Transit Centre yesterday. At the Transit Centre, officials provided them rations, including rice, cooking oil, salt, peas, and kitchen utensils.

The three returnees were then taken to the Kanyintan (Myoma) Village in the township and handed over to the village administrator at 11.30 a.m.—Thet Lwin Soe (District IPRD)

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Shwedagon Pagoda marks 2608th anniversary on Full Moon Day of Tabaung

A ceremony to mark 2608th anniversary Tabaung Festival of Shwedagon Pagoda was held on the Full Moon Day of Tabaung yesterday, where the influx of Buddhists performed meritorious-deeds from dawn till dusk. A total of 108-members of Sangha, led by senior monks of the board of trustees, recited Pali verses of consecration at the upper terrace of pagoda.

During the merit-sharing ceremony, a senior monk delivered the nine moral precepts to congregation. After the offertories have been donated to the monks, the Buddhist devotees shared the merits. On the Full Moon Day of Tabaung, pilgrims flocked to the significant pagodas in Yangon and other areas of the country for merit-makings.—MNA



The ceremony to mark 2608th anniversary Tabaung Festival of Shwedagon pagoda being held on the Full Moon Day of Tabaung yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Buddhist devotees perform meritorious deeds at religious sites in Mandalay

ON the Full Moon Day of Tabaung, Buddhist people did meritorious deeds at the pagodas and temples in Mandalay.

Led by Bhadanta Okahathe, the presiding monk of Maha Muni Buddha Image's board of trustees, the Buddhist people offered water and gold-foil robe to the Buddha image. They also kept the Sabbath and donated offertories to the monks.

At the Maha Lawka Yan Hnein in Chanayethazan Township, many pilgrims made Thanakha lotion to wash the face of Buddha image.

Moreover, other pagodas



People paying homage to the Maha Muni Buddha Image in Mandalay on the Full Moon Day of Tabaung yesterday. **PHOTO: TIN MAUNG (MANDALAY SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)**

and temples were filled with the visitors for their meritorious deeds, including ritual chanting and meditation.—Tin Maung

(Mandalay Sub-printing House)
(Translated by Aung Khin)



Rakhine ethnic people hold the traditional sand pagoda on the Ngapali beach yesterday. **PHOTO: TIN TU (IPRD)**

Rakhine traditional sand pagoda festival held in Sittway

RAKHINE religious associations and youths celebrated the traditional sand pagoda festival by building sand replicas of pagodas yesterday, the Full Moon Day of Tabaung, on the Ngapali beach in Thandwe.

The festival celebrates the teachings of the Buddha. Buddhist devotees believe that observing the festival would bring prosperity and peace to the country. — Tin Tu (IPRD)
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Thailand-Myanmar border trade climbs to \$1.59 bln in current FY

THE value of the border trade between Myanmar and neighboring Thailand increased slightly to US\$1.59 billion as of 28 February in the current fiscal year from \$1.54 billion registered in the corresponding period of the previous FY, according to data released by the Commerce Ministry.

Between 1 October and 28 February in the 2019-2020FY, Myanmar's exports to Thailand were pegged at over \$1 billion, while imports were estimated at \$478.9 million.

Of the seven border trade points between Myanmar and Thailand, the Myeik and Hteekhee gates witnessed a decline in trade in the current financial year, while the remaining showed a slight increase.

Last year, the Hteekhee gate

saw the largest trade among the Myanmar-Thailand checkpoints. This year, trade at the gate dropped by over \$164.79 million.

The value of trade stood at \$55.97 million at Tachilek, \$788.347 million at Hteekhee, \$493.47 million at Myawady, \$88.66 million at Myeik, \$156.227 million at Kawthoung, \$2.036 million at Maese, and \$10.878 million at Mawtaung.

Myanmar primarily exports fishery products such as crab, fish, and shrimp, as well as onions, sesame, dry tea leaves, coconut, and turmeric to Thailand. It imports capital goods such as machinery, raw industrial goods such as cement and fertilizers, consumer goods such as cosmetics, and food products from the neighboring country. —GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Workers work at a fish processing factory in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Dollar exchange rate continues to decline on weak global cues

THE US dollar has been sliding against the Kyat in the local currency market, with the exchange rate dropping to K1,360 per dollar on 6 March, tracking the weak sentiment in the global market amid the coronavirus outbreak, said money exchangers.

While the US dollar index touched 96 in the global market, the exchange rate slipped to K1,360 on 6 March and then continued to dip, reaching K1,355-1,370 on 8 March in the local forex market.

The US central bank has slashed interest rates in response to mounting concerns about the economic impact of the coronavirus. Following the news, the dollar exchange rate has fallen in the local forex market.

"At present, the dollar is falling in the market. The dollar rate is likely to remain cool and

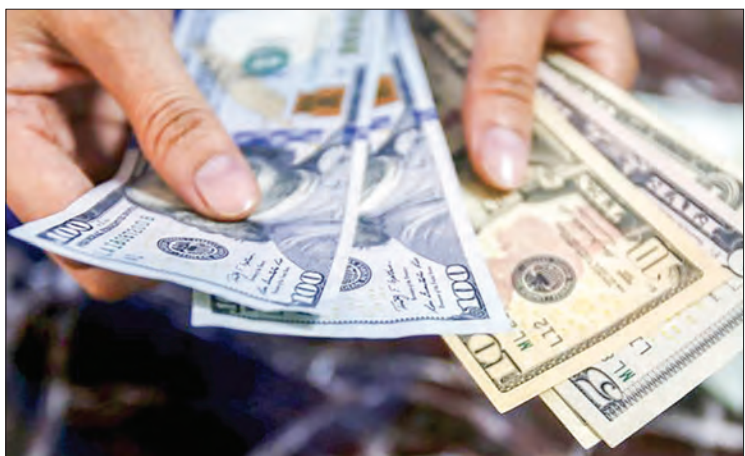
it seems it may not climb up," said a money exchanger.

The dollar has depreciated even though the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) has purchased dollars from private banks to govern the market. On 6 March, the CBM had set the reference exchange rate (weighted average market rate) at K1,370.6 per dollar.

In October last year, the dollar exchange rate had hit a high of K1,600. Thereafter, the dollar has been falling in the local currency market.

With the Kyat gaining against the dollar in the internal forex market, the domestic gold price plunged to K1.215 million per tical (0.578 ounces, or 0.016 kilograms) on 5 March from a record high of K1.3 million in early September, 2019. — Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



US dollar exchange rate in Myanmar continues to drop.

Ayeyawady Integrated Food Industry Complex likely to be completed in 2021

THE Ayeyawady Integrated Food Industry Complex, which is being implemented on 900 acres of land in Pantanaw Township, is expected to finish in 2021, according to news released online by the Commerce Ministry. Ninety per cent of goods produced at the complex will be meant for the export market, it stated.

Global Earth Agro and Aqua Public Company, established by the Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF), are implementing the project after obtaining a permit from the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC). The company will conduct aqua feed processing, fish breeding, fish processing, and set up a laboratory at the complex. Drying factories, fish and aqua feed processing factories, breeding stations, packaging factories,

cold storages, fish disease diagnostics laboratory, warehouses, and apartments for workers will be included in the project.

"Fish production, once the complex is completed, is estimated to be 500 to 1,000 tons per day. Myanmar commercial attachés assigned in other countries are endeavoring to explore foreign markets," said U Than Myint Oo, director of the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization under the Ministry of Commerce.

He made the remarks during a visit to the Ayeyawady Integrated Food Industry Complex, accompanied by five commercial attachés in mid-February.

"The project will provide a comprehensive service to the food industry, from breeding to production. At present, it has created more than 2,000 jobs.

Within five years, it will employ over 7,000 workers, and its production value is estimated around US\$200 million. An aqua feed processing factory, with a capacity of 1,600 tons per day, and warehouses which can handle 50,000 tons of raw materials and 4,000 tons of finished products are part of the project. To fulfill the requirement of raw materials for the feed processing factory, 80 per cent of raw materials, such as soy bean cakes, wheat bran, and rice bran, will be purchased from the domestic market," said U Htay Myint from the MFF. "Fish hatcheries in the zone aim to breed striped catfish the whole year. Good water supply and drainage and automated feeding systems are being installed," he added. — GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Trade deficit widens, crosses \$1 bln in Oct-Feb

MYANMAR'S trade gap increased in the five months since October in the current financial year to more than US\$1 billion from \$806 million registered in the corresponding period of the 2018-2019FY, according to data provided by the Ministry of Commerce.

Between 1 October and 28 February in the current fiscal, Myanmar's external trade increased to over \$16.3 billion from \$14.05 billion recorded in the year-ago period. While exports were estimated at \$8.66 billion, imports were valued at \$7.65 billion. Com-

pared to the previous fiscal, exports showed an increase of \$1.03 billion, while imports climbed up by \$1.233 billion.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods, while it imports capital goods, intermediate goods, CMP raw materials, and consumer goods. The country's export sector relies more on the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. While export earnings from the CMP (cut, make, and pack) garment businesses are rising, the country's reliance on

natural resources, such as natural gas and jade, is lessening. The government is trying to cut the trade deficit by screening luxury import items and boosting exports. Myanmar's trade deficit was pegged at \$1.14 billion in the 2018-2019 fiscal year, \$1.3 billion in the previous mini-budget period (April-September, 2018), \$3.9 billion in the 2017-2018FY, \$5.3 billion in the 2016-2017FY, and \$5.4 billion in the 2015-2016FY, according to statistics released by the Central Statistical Organization. — Mon Mon

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Patient safety is paramount

WHILE healthcare has brought huge benefits to mankind, it is not without its own challenges and risks. Patient safety is a serious global public health issue and a critical component of healthcare quality. Unsafe patient care is associated with significant morbidity and mortality across the world.

Last year, the World Health Organization reported that 40 per cent of patients in primary and outpatient care around the world are harmed by medical errors. Another 10 per cent acquire infections in hospital settings.

Our country, which has little practical evidence of patient safety culture and associated factors, should make efforts to encourage and strengthen them.

Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe's pledge to include patient safety in the national healthcare policy, which is being re-written, is a welcome step.

At the same time, we need to raise awareness on patient safety at health facilities and urge everyone to commit to making healthcare safer in the country.

When it comes to patient safety, we need to go deep into the causes of errors and weaknesses in efforts to prevent them in the future, rather than putting the blame on each other.

The existing guidelines and rules on patient safety should be updated to meet modern standards and should be made available for all health professionals and facilities.

modern standards and should be made available for all health professionals and facilities.

Patient safety must remain paramount. Because, if we can't provide surgical operations and post-surgical treatment in a systematic manner, patients can face associated risk factors which can lead to deaths.

We believe that our health professionals are doing their best at every step, starting from the time of consultation about the history of a patient to the day the patient is discharged from the hospital after recovery.

Healthcare still has a prevalent culture of silence. We should not hesitate to address medical errors.

Life is too fragile a thing to take chances. And it's true, to err is human. But, to do as little as has been done in many years to reduce preventable harms is inexcusable.

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Traditional Writing "Tablets"



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visits a shop selling slate tablets during her visit to Ywalut Village, Chaungzon Township in Mon State on 4 April, 2019. PHOTO: MNA

By Lokethar

THIS morning I watched a video presentation on the MRTV about a small/medium industry enter-

prise in the Mon State which is making traditional writing slates that we used in our primary school days to write on. The slates, we were informed, are being distributed all over the country. Hence

there is a market for the slates as an alternative to the modern day electronic "Tablets" which serves basically the same purpose as far as the primary students' needs are concerned, but are only acces-

sible to those who can afford them.

Convenient for practising writing

Unlike exercise books, the writing on slates with the accompanying scribe, could be just wiped clean and the slate written on again and again. This is very convenient for practising writing as well as solving mathematical problems. Mistakes could be easily erased and the writing started all over again.

Speaking of "writing" I remember that in our primary school days we were taught "Penmanship" which is the art of proper writing. I wonder if it is still being taught these days considering the poor "penmanship", both English and Burmese, even among the learned people we encounter nowadays. If not, I would like to suggest that it be reintroduced in the primary education curriculum.

Getting back to the topic of "slates", considering that the new National Education Law makes primary education compulsory, more and more schools will need

to be established to accommodate the increasing number of students expected to undergo primary education. With the increasing number of schools and students, books will be needed including exercise books for the students to use. However due to limitation in resources as well as production facilities meeting all the needs of exercise books would be difficult. Especially in the Rural areas, the poorer people would be hard put to providing books and particularly exercise books for their school going children. The "slates" would serve to fill in the needs for exercise books. It seems from what was said in the video as mentioned above, there is a big market for "slates". Hence the particular small/medium industry in Mon State and elsewhere should be promoted and possibly improved.

A more safe technology

In the video we observed that the slates are being made from blocks of "slate stones" through a process of cutting, grinding and buffing. The whole process generates a lot of "slate" dust which can

cause lung diseases if exposed to for long lengths of time. Besides the production machines are driven from a single "power source" using belt drives for "power transmission" to the individual machines. Serious injuries may result if hands or clothing gets accidentally entangled by the exposed belting. In fact here are many small and medium Rice, Oil and Timber Mills all over the country that use the same power transmission technology. It would be well if all these industries are upgraded to use a more safe technology. This would probably be possible with supply of Electric Power to these industries so that they could upgrade to using individually driven production machinery.

In this particular case of the slate making indigenous industry, without the slightest intention of adversely affecting the production, I would like to suggest to the authorities concerned if I may, to help them create a more safe and healthy workplace for the long term interest of the employers and workers of the industry.

China may soon lift quarantine on virus-hit Hubei province: official

SOME 56 million people in Hubei have been effectively quarantined since late January.

CHINA may soon lift the quarantine imposed on the province at the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak which has been under lockdown for more than a month, a senior government official hinted Friday.

Asked about the draconian measures taken in central Hubei province to contain the spread of the virus, Ding Xiangyang, deputy secretary-general of China's State Council, told journalists "the day everyone is waiting for will not be too far away".

But Ding stressed that cases in Hubei -- and its capital Wuhan where the virus emerged -- still made up a huge proportion of the national toll.

Some 56 million people in Hubei have been effectively quarantined since late January, to stop the virus from spreading across the country when people returned to work from their hometowns after the extended Lunar New Year break.

But new cases in Hubei and

Wuhan have been on a downward trend for several weeks.

For the first time since China started publishing cases of new infections, on Friday there were no new cases reported in Hubei outside Wuhan, with 126.

"I believe the day everyone is waiting for will not be too far away," Ding said.

As the situation improves, the authorities will make adjustments, he said.

His remarks are the latest in a number of signs that life in China may soon begin returning to normal. The small Hubei city of Chibi, south of Wuhan, removed road blocks on Friday after 19 days without new infections, allowing freer movement of traffic inside -- but not out of -- the city.

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS
Italy locks down wealthy northern region

Italy has locked down the northern Lombardy region and 14 nearby provinces, including the financial capital Milan and tourist

hotspot Venice, in an effort to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said Sunday.

According to a government decree that goes into effect until April 3, unprecedented restrictions will be taken as preventive measures, impacting some 16 million people in the north, which accounts for over one-six of the country's population.

The decree came after the Civil Protection Department confirmed a total of 5,883 coronavirus infections in Italy on Saturday.

Japan begins travel curbs

Japan on Monday adopted tougher border control measures to prevent a surge in new coronavirus infections, with a 14-day voluntary quarantine of all travelers from virus-hit China and South Korea and nearly 3 million visas invalidated.

Japan is scrambling to contain COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus months before the Tokyo Olympics and



Patients and medical workers pose for a group photo during an event celebrating the International Women's Day in a makeshift hospital in Wuchang District of Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province, March 8, 2020. PHOTO: AFP

Paralympics this summer, after Prime Minister Shinzo Abe faced a barrage of criticism for his belated response. Of the roughly 3 million visas invalidated, about 2.8 million are for Chinese and about 17,000

for South Koreans, according to the Foreign Ministry.

The travel curbs, effective Monday to the end of March, will likely deal a blow to the Japanese economy as visitors from China

and South Korea account for about half of all inbound tourists to Japan and have helped revitalize regional economies.

REFERENCES:
Xinhua, AFP News Updates

Myanmar Daily Weather Report
(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 8th March, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and North Bay and a few cloud elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 9th March, 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-7) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight increase of day temperatures in Naypyitaw, Mandalay, Magway and Bago Regions.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 9th March, 2020: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 9th March, 2020: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 9th March, 2020: Partly cloudy.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their work to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, in person, or by email to ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Own name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.). - Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar

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Report on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

From (4-1-2020) to (8-3-2020)
(8-3-2020), 8: 15 pm

1. Situation update worldwide

(World Health Organization's statement issued at 3:30 am (MST) on 7-3-2020)

Total affected countries	- 94
Total cases	- 101,927
Total death toll	- 3,486
Global death rate	- 3.4%
Global cases/ death toll	

Sr.	Countries	Since its beginning to so far	
		Confirmed cases	Death toll
1	Republic of Korea	6,767	44
2	Italy	4,636	197
3	Iran	4,747	124
4	Japan	408	6
5	Germany	639	0
Total		17,197	371

The WHO announced that outbreak of disease has occurred in many countries in both imported cases and local transmission.

45 countries, territories or areas outside China with reported cases are:

Sr.	Regions in the list of WHO	Countries
1	Western Pacific Region	Republic of Korea, Japan, Singapore, Australia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, the Philippines, and New Zealand.
2	European Region	Italy, Germany, France, Spain, The United Kingdom, Croatia, San Marino, Norway, Netherlands, Switzerland, Greece, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Israel, Romania, Belgium, Portugal, Belarus, Bosnia, Ireland, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Iceland, and Slovakia.
3	South-East Asia Region	Thailand, Indonesia, and India.
4	Eastern Mediterranean Region	Iran, United Arab Emirates, and Lebanon.
5	Region of the Americas	United States of America, Canada, and Ecuador.
5	African Region	Algeria, and Cameroon.
6	Territories	Palestine.

Therefore, the WHO has changed the level of its risk assessment on COVID-19 transmission to "very high" in China, regional countries, and global countries.

2. According to the WHO-China Joint Mission Report on COVID-19 that surveyed a total of 55,924 patients from 16-2-2020 to 24-2-2020, the main signs and symptoms are:

Sr	Signs and Symptoms	Percentage
1	Fever	87.9
2	Dry Cough	67.7
3	Fatigue	38.1
4	Sputum production	33.4
5	Shortness of breath	18.6
6	Sore throat	13.9
7	Headache	13.6
8	Myalgia or Arthralgia	14.8
9	Chills	11.4
10	Nausea or Vomiting	5
11	Nasal Congestion	4.8
12	Diarrhea	3.7
13	Haemoptysis	0.9
14	Conjunctiva Congestion	0.8

Situation of signs and symptoms of COVID-19:

Mild to Moderate	-80%
Severe	- 13.8%
Critically ill	- 6.1%

Eighty-three per cent of laboratory-confirmed cases outside China are from Republic of Korea, Iran and Italy.

At present, Myanmar is one of the 117 countries where no COVID-19 cases was found.

3. The differences between COVID-19 and seasonal influenza are:

- The signs and symptoms of COVID-19 is more severe than Seasonal Influenza. There is vaccine for seasonal influenza, but no vaccine and medicine was found yet for COVID-19.

4. Situation in Myanmar (Until 12:00 pm on 8-3-2020)

	Laboratory Test				Number of Patient
	Positive Result	Negative Result	Waiting for test	Under Test	
People under Investigation	-	60	6	6	72
Suspected cases	-	2	-	-	2
Total	-	62	6	6	74

5. There are a total of 72 people under investigation across Myanmar from 31-1-2020 to 8-3-2020: 27 in Yangon Region, 14 in Shan State, 13 in Mandalay Region and 18 in other Regions and States.

6. In preparation for COVID-19, the Ministry of Health and Sports is carrying out:

(a) monitoring persons (family members and health workers) who had close contacts with the patients and prevention and control measures against the disease at the hospitals and clinics

(b) identifying suspected cases, quarantining them and providing effective treatment

(c) giving instructions to the health workers to strictly follow preventive measures and make public awareness

(d) publishing situation reports about Myanmar and other countries in the state-owned newspapers and the internet website of the Ministry (www.mohs.gov.mm) and social media pages (<https://www.facebook.com/MinistryOfHealthAndSportsMyanmar>) and (<https://www.facebook.com/MyanmarCDC>), with taking response to the fake news

(e) coordination with relevant government agencies to lessen socioeconomic impacts resulted from COVID-19.

(f) awareness programmes with the use of *handheld loudspeakers at the crowded places in Regions and States such as bus gates and markets, in cooperation with Myanmar Red Cross Society*, civil society organizations and community based organizations.

Sr	Organizations	Personal Protective Equipment	N95 Mask	Surgical Mask	Surgical Gown	Hand Gel	Protective goggles	Non-Contact Thermometer	Ventilator	Glove
1	World Health Organization	600	525	30,000	1,000	499	500			20,000
2	Myanmar Red Cross Society	2,500	-	5,100		1,857				6,000
3	Sea Lion Company	2,000								
4	Ottara Thiri Company	1,000				225				
5	Zizawa Company							45		
6	Gold Lite Co., Ltd		2,000							
7	Eclion Global Group and other donors	3,300								
8	Yee Shin Company								5	

Report on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

From (4-1-2020) to (8-3-2020)
(8-3-2020), 8: 15 pm

FROM PAGE-10

9	Valves Co., Ltd			2,000						
10	USAID	1,000	3,500	60,000		500			20,000	
11	China							100		
12	INGOS			5,700		1,195	500		320	
13	INGO	2,000	1,600	10,350		1,900	20		500	
	Total	12,400	7,625	113,150	1,000	6,176	1,020	145	5	46,820

Ministry of Health and Sports expressed gratitude to the local and foreign organizations for donating necessary medicines and medical equipment. In preparation for COVID-19 outbreak, the ministry is purchasing and distributing ventilators.

8. Although Myanmar has not found any COVID-19 patient so far,

- COVID-19 is spreading not only in China but also in Singapore, Republic of Korea, Italy, and Iran at high level

- The chances of the travellers from the countries coming to Myanmar by flights, or through border crossings from other countries are high.

- The ministry is increasing surveillance in upward momentum at the international airports.

- The ministry is also closely monitoring the hotels, guest houses and houses where the foreign travellers will reside.

- Local transmission was found in some countries where new cases occurred despite no close contacts with COVID-19 patients or no previous visit to the countries with the outbreak of disease

- In the crowd, people can be infected the virus from COVID-19 patients and asymptomatic carriers.

9. It is also possible that some cases could be found immediately, the people and social organized are suggested:

(a) to avoid crowded area and festivals as much as possible

(b) to organize only unavoidable public event

(c) arrange soaps and water, or hand sanitizer at the public gatherings and festivals.

(d) announce the information about COVID-19 for about five minutes before the events begin.

(e) strictly manage only a few people come to events and sickly persons not to come to the events; strictly follow the health announcements issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports.—MOHS (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

10 die in collapse of China hotel used as quarantine facility



Supplied photo shows the collapsed Xinja Express Hotel in Quanzhou in southeastern China's Fujian Province. PHOTO: KYODO

HONG KONG — Ten people have been confirmed killed in the collapse of a hotel used as a coronavirus quarantine facility in southeastern China's Fujian Province, local media reported Sunday. A total of 48 people have been rescued and 23 others remain trapped in the rubble of the Xinja Express Hotel in the coastal city of Quanzhou, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

The 80-room hotel, which

was being used for medical observation of people who had contact with coronavirus patients, suddenly collapsed around 7 p.m. Saturday.

Of the 71 people who were in the hotel at the time it collapsed, 58 were people under quarantine, according to media reports.

More than 700 firefighters were dispatched to the site, working through the night to pull people from the rubble, according to

the local authorities.

Although it is not clear what caused the collapse, Xinhua reported that two supermarkets on the first floor were undergoing remodeling when the accident happened, adding that the owner of the building has been put under police control.

Quanzhou is about 1,000 kilometers away from Wuhan, the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak.—Kyodo

Bangladesh reports first coronavirus case

DHAKA — Bangladesh confirmed its first three cases of coronavirus infection, as informed by the director of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control, and Research on Sunday.

Meerjady Sabrina Flora told reporters at a briefing that two relatives had tested positive after returning from Italy, while the third patient had been in contact with them. They are in their 20s and 30s. The South

Asian nation restricted entry to people coming from Italy, South Korea, Japan and Kuwait this week, requiring them to undergo medical checks before traveling.

The number of people who contracted the COVID-19 viral disease globally has topped 100,000, the World Health Organization said Saturday. The virus has spread to more than 90 countries since emerging in China in December. — ANI

Glamour and equality in Thailand at world's top transgender pageant

BANGKOK — After her friends were killed in transphobic attacks at home in Brazil, Ariella Moura's aim was to make a statement against gender discrimination on Saturday at the world's top transgender pageant in Thailand.

The annual Miss Tiffany's Universe pageant brings together 21 international contestants showcasing their beauty but also spreading a defiant message for equality from across the globe.

The pageant's winner, Mexico's Valentina Fluchaire, was presented her sash and tiara by Jazelle Barbie Royale of the United States, who took the prize in 2019.

But for 22-year-old Moura, who was one of the night's fi-

nalists, the evening was about far more than performing well.

"People are open-minded in Brazil for a lot of things, but it is a big country... and for sexuality people are discriminated (against) a lot. I know a lot of friends who were murdered," said Moura, who was crowned Miss Trans Brazil in 2019.

"I hope this (will) change," she added, decrying the strident transphobic and homophobic views of her country's far-right populist president Jair Bolsonaro.

Moura lauded her parents for helping her through the stigma and practical difficulties of coming out as a teen and is now ready to strut her stuff under the glittering lights of Tiffany's.—AFP



Finalists (L-R) Brazil's Ariella Moura, Thailand's Ruethaipreeya Nuanglee and Mexico's Valentina Fluchaire compete in the Miss International Queen 2020 contest. PHOTO: AFP

Trump refuses to halt rallies as coronavirus surges

WASHINGTON — US President Donald Trump signaled Saturday that he has no intention of halting campaign rallies despite surging coronavirus infections, as a case was confirmed for the first time within miles of the White House.

The president struck a defiant tone as he spoke to reporters about the outbreak at his Mar a Lago resort in southern Florida, where he was hosting his Brazilian counterpart Jair Bolsonaro.

“We will have tremendous rallies and we’re doing very well, and we’ve done a fantastic job with respect to that subject,” Trump responded when asked if his “Keep America Great” campaign events would continue.

Trump’s remarks came as the number of cases confirmed across the United States leapt past 400, with 19 deaths confirmed so far, mainly in the west coast state of Washington.



US President Donald Trump insisted during a visit to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention the risk of having many people in close proximity “doesn’t bother me at all”. **PHOTO: AFP**

Meanwhile health authorities announced the first confirmed case in the nation’s

capital -- a Washington DC resident in his 50s with no history of international travel and no close

contacts with anyone known to be infected.

Asked if he was concerned

that the virus had spread to within a few miles of the White House, Trump replied: “No, I’m not concerned at all.”

The president had already insisted as he visited the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Friday that the risk of having so many people in close proximity “doesn’t bother me at all.”

The CDC warns on its coronavirus web page against people congregating in crowds and encourages the elderly, in particular, to stay home as much as possible.

Trump has been holding rallies -- which attract many senior citizens -- at a rate of more than one a week recently, often as counter-programming to Democratic primary contests or debates.

However, his website currently indicates “no events scheduled” for the coming days, without giving a reason.—AFP

Hospitality gives way to hostility for migrants to Greece

ATHENS — Five years ago, Greece offered hospitality to a huge wave of migrants at the height of the Syrian civil war -- but today, hostility greets those seeking a new life.

Experts put the about-turn largely down to a declining trajectory of global growth as well as crisis fatigue, with the Greek people already having shouldered years of austerity after the financial crisis of a decade ago.

Nearly a million refugees

made it to Greek islands in the Aegean Sea, just kilometres (miles) off the Turkish coastline, in the 2015 exodus, and the majority trekked on to mainland Europe.

Poignant images of local mothers on the island of Lesbos feeding migrant babies went round the world.

The following year, a group of local people from the same island found themselves proposed for the Nobel Peace Prize for their humanitarian efforts.

But after Turkey last week gave migrants the green light to head for Europe, feelings have changed on an island that already hosts thousands of migrants from the last wave.

Last time round, “people hoped that the leftist government of Alexis Tsipras, with his humane view on refugees, was going to halt austerity,” Filippa Chatzistavrou, professor of political science at Athens University, told AFP.

Instead, Greece’s economic woes continued.

Today, Chatzistavrou says, many Greeks are still trying to find their feet in an increasingly extreme political environment.

Kostas Filis, director of Greece’s Institute for International Relations, said the first migration wave was “spontaneous” as people fled Syria and the Islamic State.

“Today, Turkey is behind a very much smaller migrant flux looking to come to Greece,” he says.

Athens sees Ankara’s decision to open the exit gates as “a political weapon,” whose result was to see some 13,000 people congregate inside 48 hours on the border post at Kastanies.—AFP



Struggling to deal with a new wave of arrivals, Greece, says it proved its humanitarian credentials during the 2015 migrant crisis, and now blames Turkey for encouraging migrants to leave for the European Union. **PHOTO: AFP**

Macron put to test in French municipal elections



Polls show Macron’s party struggling amid a furore over the government’s decision to force through unpopular pension reforms by decree. **PHOTO: AFP**

PARIS — Three years after President Emmanuel Macron swept to power promising a “revolution”, have French voters definitively soured on him?

The first round of municipal elections next weekend is expected to test backing for Macron’s ambitious reform agenda following a second winter of discontent marked by mass protests.

Polls showing Macron’s four-year-old Republic on the Move (LREM) party struggling in the March 15 vote, to be followed by a second round on March 22, which come amid a furore over the government’s decision to force through unpopular pension reforms by decree.

The elections also follow the “yellow vest” rebellion of 2018-2019, which lifted the lid on the widespread anger in rural France against a leader seen by critics as the president of the rich.

The coronavirus epidemic -- which has killed a dozen and

infected hundreds in France -- looms large over the vote.

The government has ruled out postponing the election but analysts have warned that fear of contamination could be a big turn-off for polling station volunteers and voters alike.

Macron, who is set to seek a second mandate in 2022 polls, has attempted to downplay the significance of the vote for more than 500,000 councillors and nearly 35,000 mayors. “I don’t believe that people will vote for this or that candidate because they do or do not support the president,” he told reporters in January.

But a fresh electoral setback after the LREM in last year’s European elections finished behind the far-right National Rally would nevertheless show that “Emmanuel Macron’s magic powers are no longer that magic,” Bruno Cautres, a researcher and lecturer at Sciences Po university in Paris, told AFP.—AFP

UK seeks to 'deliver on promises' in first post-Brexit budget



Britain unveils its first post-Brexit budget, promising increased public service spending and an end to a decade of austerity. PHOTO: AFP

LONDON — Britain unveils its first post-Brexit budget on Wednesday, with Prime Minister Boris Johnson expected to press ahead with major spending on infrastructure while also addressing the fallout from the coronavirus outbreak.

Finance minister Rishi Sunak will present the budget in parliament after his predecessor Sajid Javid resigned unexpectedly last month.

In a series of interviews on Sunday, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said he would "deliver on the promises" made by Johnson in the run-up to the December election.

The Conservatives vowed to boost productivity in areas outside London through investment in public services, broadband and transport projects such as the new high-speed railway HS2.

Sunak on Sunday unveiled plans to double funding for flood defences, to £5.2 billion (\$6.8 billion), after several major storms that destroyed homes and businesses particularly in northern England and Wales. However, the government has delayed publication of its National Infrastructure Strategy — a more long-term outlook on improving British transport connections

while achieving net-zero emissions nationwide by 2050. And the budget risks being overshadowed by concerns about the coronavirus outbreak which has infected more than 200 people in Britain. Sunak said he was ready to give the state-run National Health Service, which experts warn is already struggling with normal winter outbreaks such as flu, "whatever it needs".—AFP ■

China's steel PMI edges down in February

BEIJING — China's steel sector slowed down in February as market demand weakened amid the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, a report from the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing (CFLP) showed.

The purchasing managers' index (PMI) for China's iron and steel industry came in at 36.6 in February, down from 47.1 in January, according to the CFLP Steel Logistics Professional Committee.

A reading above 50 indicates expansion, while a reading below reflects contraction.

The report attributed the slowdown to the weak demand during the epidemic, noting that production and business activities of steel companies slowed down last month while steel inventory was on the rise.

The committee expected the steel industry to gradually return to a normal track as the epidemic situation improves and infrastructure investment warms up. China's steel market witnessed hot demand in 2019 thanks to the steady operation of infrastructure building, real estate and other downstream industries.—Xinhua ■

UN-backed candidate from Singapore beats China's nominee to head WIPO agency

GENEVA — Daren Tang, a civil servant from Singapore, serving the United Nations since a long-time, has defeated China's nominee to lead the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), a vote that followed weeks of vicious diplomatic sniping between Washington and Beijing.

Institut Moutaigne, a Paris-based think tank, in one of its report, stated that Daren Tang received 55 of the votes cast by 83 member countries to 28 for China's candidate, Wang Binying. The voting took place in Geneva on March 4. One of the major reasons behind China's loss on a global stage may be that the mainland has most often

been accused of stealing IP rights.

"China is also a growing force in the area of patenting and intellectual property: both as a contributor and as a problem to innovation since it is the country most often accused of stealing IP rights," the report said.

The Office of the United States Trade Representative, which led a seven-month investigation into China's intellectual property theft and made recommendations to the Trump administration, estimates that "Chinese theft of American IP currently costs between \$225 billion and \$600 billion annually," it added.—ANI ■

NOTICE OF INVITATION TO TENDER N° MYA/002-19 2611 (Works)
Title: Construction of 2 Rural Access Roads in Keng Tung Township, Eastern Shan State
in the framework of Project MYA/002 receiving financial resources from the Governments of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

This notice of invitation is launched by and according to the procedures of the Luxembourg Agency for Development Cooperation (Lux-Development), on behalf of Project MYA/002 receiving financial support from the governments of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

- Identification and financing of the Project**
 - Title: Project MYA/002 - Eastern Shan State Rural Development and Inclusion Project
 - Source of financing: The Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, as set out in the Project's Memorandum of Understanding dated 12 December 2017
 - Status of financing: Approved
- Identification of the Contract**
 - Type of Contract: Works
 - Object: Construction of 2 Rural Access Roads in Keng Tung Township, Eastern Shan State
 - Reference number: MYA/002-19 2611
 - Number of lots: 2
 - Grouping of lots: N/A - However, a tenderer can submit an offer for 1 or 2 lot(s) and be awarded more than 1 lot if they comply with the award criteria
- Eligibility and evaluation criteria**
 - Origin: no restriction
 - Eligibility: companies satisfying the criteria included in the Statement of Good Standing and in the Ethics Clauses of the General Regulations
 - Evaluation: the lowest administratively and technically compliant tender will be granted the contract (lot by lot)
 - Variants: no variants will be considered
- Location and timeframe**
 - Location of the Project: Eastern Shan State
 - Place of performance and Performance period of the Contract:

Lot	Title of Lots	Length of Road	Place of performance	Performance Period - up to Provisional Acceptance
Lot 1	Construction of Nar Kaw – Nar Shai Rural Access Road	17.96 Km	From Nar Kaw village to Nar Shai village, Keng Tung Township, Eastern Shan State	300 calendar days
Lot 2	Construction of Nar Kaw – Happy Kwel Rural Access Road	11.22 Km	From Nar Kaw village to Happy Kwel village, Keng Tung Township, Eastern Shan State	300 calendar days

c) Validity period of tenders: 90 days from the time limit for receipt of tenders.

- Definitions**
- Awarding authority: Lux-Development
- Contracting Authority: Department of Rural Development on behalf of Project MYA/002
- Beneficiary: around 15'000 people living in 5 Tracts, Keng Tung Township, Eastern Shan State
- Supervisor: Terra Myanmar Geoscience Company Limited
- Donor: Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
- Donor's Representative: Lux-Development
- Tender Dossier (TD)**
- How to obtain the TD: the TD may be obtained on request by email to mya002@luxdev.lu
- Consultation of the dossier: the TD may be consulted by email mentioned above
- Written notifications and communications must be sent to email mentioned above
- Deadline for requests for additional information: 10 days before the deadline for submission of tenders
- Deadline for providing explanations to tenderers by email: 5 days before the deadline for submission of tenders
- Language, currency, receipt and opening of tenders**
- Language: English
- Currency: **Kyat**
- Address for receipt and opening: 1 original and 2 copies to:

Project MYA/002
Eastern Shan State Rural Development and Inclusion Project
Address: 1st Floor of the Building of Department of Rural Development
Myo Thit Quarter 3, Keng Tung Township, East Shan State
- Deadline for receipt of tenders: **06 April 2020 at 14h00** (local time)
- Date and time of the public opening session: immediately after the deadline for submission
- Guarantees**
- Tender Guarantee: N/A
- Performance Guarantee: N/A
- Other Guarantees: see TD (advance repayment bank guarantee and retention bank guarantee)
- Payments**
All eligible payments which are part of this Contract will be processed by Lux-Development on behalf of Project MYA/002.
- Information meeting and/or site visit**
- Mandatory** information meeting: starting at **8h30 on 25 March 2020** at the address at 7.c above
- Mandatory** site visit: immediately after the mandatory information meeting
Note: The participants must carry an ID card, a letter of authorisation or introduction from their company. No participant may represent more than one company.
Costs for site visits and preparing tender: No costs incurred by the tenderer in site visits, preparing and submitting the tender shall be reimbursable. All such costs shall be borne by the tenderer.
- Complementary or additional services**
This Contract does not include any complementary or additional works. In the event where complementary or additional works would be required (initially not included), its value will be limited to a maximum of 100% of the initial value of the Contract.
- Additional information: see TD**

NUMBER of ancient heritages in Pinya was less than those of Inwa because some of these heritages were renovated but some had disappeared in public buildings and crop lands. Most of the young people of Mandalay cannot immediately give directions for routes to locations of significant sites in ancient Pinya city or places around TadaU. I set a target of my article for travellers who are willing to pay visits to Pinya in addition to Mandalay and Inwa.

Past events of Pinya era

Pinya and Sagaing city states flourished contemporary with late Bagan before establishment of Inwa city state. Pinya was contemporary with Bagan before the state of latter's ruin. In Bagan era, Pyaw Shan national Theinkhabo who came from Myinsaing region to Bagan entrusted his three sons to King Narathihapatae. King Kyawswa, son of King Narathihapatae, of Bagan honoured eldest Athinkhaya to govern Myinsaing city, younger Yazathingyan to Makkhaya city and youngest Thihathu to Pinle city. At a time when younger Yazathingyan passed away, youngest Thihathu assassinated the eldest with poison so as to occupy property of two elder brothers. He moved his residence to Inwa and then built Pinya city for four times but missions failed. So, he established Pinya city again near Panlaung River, five miles south of Inwa on 9 February 1313 AD. Now, Pinya city state is more than 700 years old. At that time, Pinya and Sagaing were ruled by contemporary kings.

How to visit Pinya city

Ancient Pinya city state is located on western bank

of Panlaung River between Mandalay-Myingyan railroad and Sakar-in Village, one mile south of TadaU. So you should say to the guides you wish to visit around Sakar-in Village of TadaU.

Travelling sites in ancient Pinya city

Everything is not significant in Pinya. Some red posts as ancient heritages can be seen here and there. Specifically, I on my trip to ancient Pinya city felt experiences of visiting an Anyar village with a far distance from Mandalay on arrival at Sakar-in Village. It was because the village was filled with simplicities as well as traditional activities at the Buddha Pujaniya festival.

Shwezigon Pagoda in Pinya

King Thihathu built Pinya Shwezigon Pagoda. I saw some red posts mentioning that there

was an ancient region. I knew the pagoda was enshrined with five of seven sacred relics of the Lord Buddha in the reign of King Anawrahta. The original pagoda built by King Thihathu was enveloped by his son King Uzzana. Such a move showed a tradition of Pinya era when locals hoisted umbrellas atop the pagoda. It was because the original pagoda was seen with umbrella in a good condition when the enveloped pagoda collapsed in bad weather.

Three great caves in Pinya

The main aim on my trip to Pinya was to visit three great caves located in west of TadaU-Kyaukse road but these caves meant caves for Buddha images. Anyone does not exactly know who built these caves but locals said the southern cave was built by King Thihathu. Works of images were in mostly similar to those of Ba-



Pinya Aungsikhon Pagoda. **PHOTOS: THIHA LULIN**

Wizayapura Pinya

By Thiha, the Traveller @ Thiha Lulin



Nan U Pagoda.



One of the ancient caves.



Landscape of Pinya Sakar-in village.

gan. These were double caves. The stone plaques found in the cave mentioned that King Uzzana donated land plots for three great caves.

These great caves were massive and similar to each other. Caves were located 120 feet in distance to each other and they stretched from the south to the north, and the middle one was the largest. Two caves on the wings were facilitated with ladders to the

caves but the warnings were posted not to climb the caves. The caves were built with four arches, each of which had a Buddha image. With regard to mural paintings, I did not have any evidences. There remain some glazed terracotta plaques at the caves. But I could not guess the images of terracotta plaques. In fact, such scene was good to take photos.

Royal palace site in Pinya



One of the three great caves in Pinya.

I faced difficulties to search the royal palace site. I asked the village administer at his residence for location of the royal palace site. Thanks to him, I found the royal palace site after walking along a fur-long route beside a dragon fruit farm, north of three great caves. Firstly, I found a mound of a collapsed pagoda. Then, I saw a post bearing a directive to the royal palace site. The archaeologist team recorded an inscription on the post, mentioning that the two-month excavation was conducted at the royal palace site in 1994. It was reported that the royal palace area was on more than 120,000 square feet of land. Many buildings of the royal palace were connected with Samok building and Sanu building in accord with the tradition of ancient Myanmar kings. That was why the royal palace might be formed with more than 10 buildings but all the buildings were burnt down.

NanU Pagoda

Later, I knew a collapsed pagoda beside the post of royal palace site was NanU Pagoda. Today, the original architectural works of NanU Pagoda was not guessable.

Yadana Myasigon Pagoda
There were two same titles of Yadana Myasigon Pagoda in Pinya. One of two was Pyn-

samaleinda Yadana Myasigon Pagoda but I could not find it. I asked locals for the route to another Yadana Myasigon Pagoda. I thought the pagoda was built of pieces of shale stones because I noticed sand at damaged parts. The ladder leading to the monastery at the entrance to the pagoda caught my attention to take photos.

Yanaungmyin Pagoda

It is located in Themaungkan Village of TadaU. I thought the pagoda was included in area of Pinya because it might be built in Pinya era. I went to the pagoda from the road leading to the international airport to the expressway. Inwa King Minkhaung built Sikhongyi in Yanaungmyin area and ordered all to call the pagoda as Yanaungmyin Sikhongyi. Some evidences mentioned the pagoda was built by King Anawrahta and renovated by King Minkhaung.

Aungsikhon Pagoda in Pinya

Aungsikhon Pagoda was constructed by King Swa Saw Ke. As the pagoda is located near Sakar-in Village, travellers can pay visit to the pagoda after wondering around Sakar-in Village. Scenes I saw from a terrace of the pagoda were very beautiful. There remain some glazed terracotta plaques at

the pagoda.

Sakar-in Village

Whoever pays visit to Pinya, they must pass through Sakar-in Village. So they should pay visit to the village without fail. I myself observed traditional culture of the village while eating fried snacks near the lake in centre of the village. Local people use bullock-carts for transportation till today. I liked simple nature of the village even though it is close to Mandalay.

Maha Mingala Pagoda

It was reported that Maha Mingala Pagoda which positioned in TadaU is central between Pinya and Inwa royal palaces. The pagoda was built by King Minkhaung II in 842 Myanmar era when he came to the throne. The interior of pagoda is filled with ancient paintings and sculptural works. The paintings illustrated by Abbot U Acinna of Kyauksataing Monastery and the Jataka stories depicted with reliefs are very interesting.

Although there are travelling sites in Pinya less than those of Inwa, the former is an attractive destination for travellers. Based on that region, authorities should strive for more improvement of tourism services. Collapsed and damaged stupas and temples in the region show a style of Myan-



Yadana Myasikhon Pagoda.



Yanaungmyin Pagoda.



Traditional lifestyle of Sakar-in village.



Lake in Sakar-in village.

mar's dry regions. It is sure that if tourist destinations and domestic industries can be exposed in nearby villages, Pinya will have attractiveness to local travellers and globetrotters.

I wish may all have a nice, safe and sound trip in health and happiness.

Translated by
Than Tun Aung



Myanmar lethwei star Shwe Yarman seen with his trophy after beating Brazilian fighter Fabio in yesterday's Lamine lethwei fight. **PHOTO: MLC**

Shwe Yarman beats Brazil's Fabio in Lamine lethwei fight

MYANMAR lethwei fighter Shwe Yarman defeated Brazil's Fabio in the first round of a lethwei competition held yesterday in Lamine, Mon State.

A young and strong fighter, Shwe Yarman, who was representing Myanmar, launched an attack from the start of the match, while the Brazilian fighter relied on an attack plus defense style.

Shwe Yarman knocked out the Brazilian fighter in the first round of the fight.

Next, Myanmar fighter Saw Min Aung fought with Phwa Soula of Thailand, and their match ended in a draw through a unanimous decision.

The match between Saw

Min of Myanmar and Banleusak Tor Silachai of Thailand was also thrilling for Myanmar fans. Saw Min beat Silachai in the third round of the fight.

A local lethwei fight of five rounds featured two Myanmar fighters — Saw Ant Gyi and Lamayou. Lamayou won the fight after knocking out Saw Ant Gyi in the third round.

In a four-round lethwei fight, Than Phyzo Zaw (Myanmar) fought to a draw against Paing Thet Kyaw (Myanmar).

Meanwhile, Myanmar youth fighter Aung Paing fought to a draw against another youth Than Min Zaw in a three-round lethwei fight.

—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

MNL: Yangon United bags best coach, player awards for Feb

YANGON United head coach U Tin Maung Tun has been adjudged the best coach, while midfielder Maung Maung Lwin has been declared the best player in the Myanmar National League for the month of February.

They were presented the awards by officials from Myanmar Post and Telecommunications on 7 March.

Under coach U Tin Maung Tun, Yangon Region-based Yangon United has secured good results in the previous month's matches.

The team beat Sagaing United by 2-0, ISPE F.C. by 2-0, Southern Myanmar F.C. by 1-0, and played to a 2-2 draw against defending champions Shan United.

Yangon United is still placed

third in the scoring table of the Myanmar National League with 20 points from six wins, two draws, and one loss.

Yangon United midfielder Maung Maung Lwin has also helped improve the team's playing style by displaying good understanding with his teammates. He scored a goal for his team in the match against ISPE F.C. last month. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



Yangon United midfielder Maung Maung Lwin seen with 'Player of the Month' award. **PHOTO: MNL**

Italy sports minister calls for 'immediate' halt to Serie A over coronavirus

ROME: Italy's Sports Minister Vincenzo Spadafora called on Sunday (Mar 8) for an immediate suspension of the Serie A season due to the coronavirus outbreak that has killed 233 people in the

Mediterranean country.

"The FIGC (Italian Football Federation) should consider immediately STOPPING Serie A," Spadafora wrote in a statement on his Facebook page. "It makes

no sense right now, as we ask citizens to make enormous sacrifices to prevent the spread of the virus, to endanger the lives of players, referees, coaching staff and fans who will surely gather to watch the matches, by not temporarily suspending football."

Italy has borne the brunt in Europe of an epidemic that first emerged in China at the end of last year and has spread to almost 100 countries.

On Wednesday, the league was ordered to play matches behind closed doors until April 3 as part of broader measures imposed nationwide to limit crowds and fight the spread of the COVID-19 disease.—AFP ■



Serie A was set to play its matches behind closed doors until Apr 3 before Spadafora's demand. **PHOTO: AFP/PIERO CRUCIATTI**

Chelsea crush Everton to cement top four place

LONDON: Chelsea powered to their biggest Premier League win of the season and cemented their place in the top four as Mason Mount and Pedro inspired a 4-0 demolition of Everton on Sunday (Mar 8).

Frank Lampard's side won for just the second time in seven league games thanks to goals from Mount, Pedro, Willian and Olivier Giroud in a masterful display at Stamford Bridge.

Chelsea, in fourth place, are now five points clear of fifth-placed Wolves and with nine matches to play they are in pole position to qualify for

the Champions League.

It was a vibrant end to a much-needed week of good news for Lampard, whose side knocked out Liverpool out in the FA Cup fifth round on Tuesday.

Rocked by a Champions League last 16 hammering by Bayern Munich and a series of spluttering domestic results, Chelsea were in danger of losing the feelgood factor created by Lampard's bleeding of so many promising youngsters in his first season.

An injury crisis robbed Lampard of eight senior players this weekend.—AFP ■