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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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## Border towns ramp up COVID-19 prevention

**L**OCAL authorities and volunteers are working together to prevent Coronavirus infection by disinfecting surfaces in the markets, bridges and public areas.

**Dawei**

The community-based support group on prevention of COVID-19 in Dawei, Taninthayi Region, sprayed chlorine disinfectants in the local Kannar Market yesterday. The support group also collaborated with civil society organizations, ward administrators, local elders and philanthropic volunteers in spraying and washing afterwards.

This process will also be performed at the Shin Koe Shin pagodas, usually crowded with people, markets, highway terminal and airport soon.

**Kawthoung**

As COVID-19 sweeps across the globe, Taninthayi Region's Kawthoung authorities are taking it as their national duty to prevent the spread of the virus throughout the entire nation. Officials in Kawthoung Town-



A health worker sprays disinfectant in a local market in Dawei in southern Myanmar yesterday. PHOTO: DAWEIIPRD

ship are monitoring the Myanmar-Thai entry/exit borders and carrying out surveillance in efforts to prevent the disease infection.

The Kawthoung District Committee on Prevention and Treatment of COVID-19 on 26 March led a team of committee members, officials from the

health department, government departments, Red Cross and NGOs to clean the handrails, walls and floors of crowded public spaces such as Yeseik Myoma

Bridge, Dhammayone port, markets and disinfecting them for a second time.

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Rice bags sent from Chin State Government are seen in a depot in Tiddim.

## Aid from Chin State Government arrives in Tiddim

**F**OOD assistance from Chin State Government and a social organization arrived in Tiddim, Chin State, yesterday, according to the local Information and Public Relations Department of the Ministry of Information.

The aid includes rice, cooking oil, beans and salt.

Meanwhile, the food aid from a KMSS social organization were distributed to the villagers

of the Tiddim Township's Katel Village where the COVID-19 case was found on 23 March.

**Home quarantines enforced in Chin village**

Following the case, Chin State government has instructed the locals to stay at homes in Katel Village of Tiddim Township, Chin State, where the Covid-19 case was found.

The Union Government has

sent a team to Chin State on 24 March to help the local government in this case. Public events have been banned in the whole Chin State and the restrictions will also affect going churches on Sunday. Chin State Government has contributed K50 million for Covid-19 control fund to the public donation of K30 million. The fund will be used for medicines and other needs.— GNLM

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## Gov't discusses COVID-19 preparedness in IDP camps with UN agencies



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye attends the video conferencing with UN humanitarian aid agencies in concerning preparations against COVID-19 for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye held a video conference with UN humanitarian aid agencies yesterday concerning preparations against COVID-19 for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Speaking at the meeting, the Union Minister said there are

128 IDP camps in 24 townships scattering throughout Kachin, Kayin, Shan and Rakhine states that houses 184,333 IDPs. He said they have an action plan to combat COVID-19 for IDPs in their camps, which includes international humanitarian assistance and protection standards and an interim guideline issued

by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

The Union Minister called for the need to have action plans in place to monitor, recognize, treat and have emergency responses in place for COVID-19 among the IDP camps. He said state/regional governments, camp management commit-

tees and affiliated organizations should all work together in preventing COVID-19.

Next, the UN resident coordinator said they acknowledge the government's efforts for national inclusiveness in preventing COVID-19, especially for people living in conflict areas, IDPs and vulnerable populations. He said they will continue providing humanitarian aid in those areas and will inform of COVID-19 in the camps they are allowed to visit. He said international organizations are always looking for ways to assist the government.

Next, the World Food Programme Director said they are ready to provide necessary assistance including health products and hygiene products.

An official from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees office then said they can provide assistance with quarantine facilities and UNICEF will increase cooperation on child protection among IDPs, support for women and children, and shock responsive social protection. Officials from WHO, UNDP and UNOCHA also discussed assistance they

will be providing.

Next, Deputy Minister U Soe Aung said there are nutritional needs and support requirements for the elderly, chronic illness-afflicted patients, people with disabilities, pregnant mothers and children in the IDP camps.

In his closing speech, the Union Minister said the central committee against Coronavirus Disease 2019 was formed on 13 March and the ministry notified international organizations they have signed MoUs with for assistance on 18 March.

He said a task force from the Union Government Office, Ministry of Health and Sports and his ministry is monitoring for cases of COVID-19 and if lab tests return with positive results, they will seek out people who have been in close contact with them and take effective measurements.

He said the participation of each individual in IDP camps is crucial and a draft strategic plan for preventing and containing COVID-19 in IDP camps will be drawn up with everyone's cooperation. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## City Mart to limit purchasing amount of basic goods

CITY Mart Holding Co Ltd uploaded a public announcement on their Facebook page and in City Mart branches on 25 March that said they will limit the purchasing amount of household products to ensure every customer is able to buy their fair share.

An official from City Mart headquarters said this restric-

tion is meant to deal with panic buying, that has occurred twice, and ensure food security among all customers. They will soon make announcements requesting the public not to panic buy and to answer frequently asked questions.

Group Corporate Affairs Director U Win Myint Aung said there is no shortage of supplies

nor have the prices increased, and they have announced that on their social media platforms. He said they have discussed with their suppliers to ensure basic foodstuffs, medical products and household products are regularly restocked.

Although there is no time limit announced for the restrictions, they will be in place to ensure everyone has access to basic necessities. There are 40 City Mart branches in Yangon alone and City Mall Online is available for online ordering.

The City Mart Holding Marketing Director said there has been an increase in online orders beginning from last week, especially of basic foodstuffs, sanitizers, disinfectants, canned food, rice and cooking oil. The purchasing limitations are in place to ensure everybody can access basic necessities. Ronald Lee, Project Director for City Mall Online, said they have reached 100 per cent of their capabilities, acknowledge the increase in demand, and plan to double their numbers in the first week of April. — Nyunt Ko Ko

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



An employee shopping foodstuff in a City Mart Store. **PHOTO: NYUNT KO KO**

## Surveillance and investigation of COVID-19 Updates at 8 pm 27 March 2020

1. The Ministry of Health and Sports is closely monitoring and conducting surveillance on the Covid-19 at international gateways, at the public hospitals, community-based monitoring and private healthcare facilities.
2. In doing so, there are 47 persons under the investigation from 6 pm 26 March to 6 pm 27 March.
3. A total of 68 PUIs are being given medical treatments at the respective hospitals till 8 pm 27 March, and their laboratory results will be published in real time.
4. Out of five confirmed patients, one in Tiddim Township, two in Waibargi Specialist Hospital and one in Kandaw Nadi Hospital were in good condition. One patient confirmed at the Yangon General Hospital was transferred to the Waibargi Specialist Hospital yesterday morning and he was received isolated treatment in Intensive Care Unit at the the hospital.

Ministry of Health and Sports  
(Translated by TTN)

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# “People are the key”

## Kayah State government pushes forward with COVID-19 prevention



Kayah State Chief Minister L Phaung Sho inspects a health care facility in Kayah State. PHOTO: MNA

THE Kayah State government has formed various task forces to monitor entry/exit checkpoints to cities and at borders to prevent the spread of COVID-19 into the state. The task forces also monitor border crossings for nationals returning through illegal means, and ensuring returnees go into facility quarantine for 14 days upon returning to their hometown.

The Kayah State Chief Minister, L Phaung Sho, inspected the areas where anti-COVID-19 measures were being implemented to ensure practical implementations on the ground adhere to designated strategies, to provide necessary support, health protection and facilities.

The Chief Minister was accompanied by the State Minister for Development Affairs and Social Affairs, the State Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, the state government’s secretary,

district/township administrators, officials from the public health and medical services department and other relevant departments.

In Kayah State, Shadaw Township has BP(9) border checkpoint, Ywathit Township has BP(10), and Meisei Township has BP(13) and BP(14) that pass over to Thailand. Authorities are monitoring these borders for entry by land or water and performing health checks and the Chief Minister inspected the borders and the facilities quarantine preparations in Bawlake Township.

At the facilities quarantine area, the Chief Minister met with 4 women who returned from Thailand and Singapore and inquired about their accommodation. He also visited Bawlake Township General Hospital where two monks returning from Thailand are quarantined. —Poe Yel

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## Border towns ramp up COVID-19 ...

### FROM PAGE-1

They also provided prevention techniques to market stall owners and customers, hand basins, hand soap and tissues, and hung up precautionary vinyl posters.

### Kyunsu

The General Administration Department of Kyunsu Township, Myeik District, Taninthayi Region, is leading preparations against COVID-19. These include inviting monks to recite mantras to dispel the virus, collabor-

ating with village administrators to distribute pamphlets on the virus to each house, and announcing precautionary steps via megaphones in communities.

They also checked the body temperature of passengers at port bridges in Kyunsu Township and other villages and notifying people to wash their hands to get rid of the virus. — U Sithu Aung (Kyunsu)

### Bokpyin

The administrator of Karathuri, Bokpyin Town-

ship, U Aye Myo Aung, is leading the processes to screen people returning from abroad, managing ward and village processes, and facility quarantines for people returning from abroad. They are also collaborating with the department of medical services, other relevant departments and the general public to prevent the spread of COVID-19. — U Kyaw Kyaw Latt (Dawei), Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung)

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



A nurse checking the body temperature of passengers at port bridges in Kyunsu Township. PHOTO: SITHU AUNG

## China donates medical protective equipment to Myanmar



Ambassador Mr Chen Hai, Director General Prof Dr Zaw Than Tun and officials are seen with the medical protective equipment donated by the People's Republic of China. PHOTO: MNA

CHINESE government donated medical protective equipment to Myanmar on 26 March to fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr Chen Hai, Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to Myanmar, handed over the medical supplies to Prof

Dr Zaw Than Tun, Director General of Medical Research under the Ministry of Health and Sports.

This is the second batch of donation from China, and included 5,000 personal protective equipment (PPE), 5,000 N95 masks, and 200,000 disposable face masks.

The first batch of China’s donation included laboratory equipment, and face masks.

Chinese government is also arranging to transport more medical supplies including thermometers to Myanmar. —MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)



# National Health Lab confirms three positive COVID-19 patients

## Press release on COVID-19 issued at 00:15 am on 28 March, 2020

1. The National Health Laboratory (Yangon) has tested the samples of 62 patients who are quarantined at the hospital, and the laboratory confirmed at 11 pm on 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 that three patients mentioned in the table-1 are having with Coronavirus infection. The remaining 59 patients have no infection.
2. A man aged 29 from Insein Township, Yangon Region, has been quarantined at the Waibargi Special Hospital in Yangon since 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2020, following his arrival in Myanmar on 21 March 2020 after travelling to Barbados, England and Thailand. The sample from him was tested by the National Health Laboratory (Yangon), and the laboratory confirmed on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020 that he is having with the Coronavirus.
3. A woman tour guide aged 60 has been quarantined after COVID-19 symptoms such as coughing and vomiting were found one day after she was taken to Yangon General Hospital on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Though she has no record of travel to foreign countries in the past 14 days, she travelled across Myanmar together with French tourists as a tour guide. The National Laboratory (Yangon) tested samples from her on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020, and confirmed that she is positive for the Coronavirus infection.
4. A 58-year-old woman from Switzerland arrived in Nay Pyi Taw International Airport on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 from Geneva via Bangkok. While receiving a hotel-quarantine in Nay Pyi Taw, she was suffering fever together with symptoms of COVID-19 such as coughing and diarrhoea. She was taken to the Nay Pyi Taw's 1,000 bedded hospital on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020. The National Laboratory tested the samples from her on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020, and confirmed yesterday that she is having with the Coronavirus. The patient had a history that she closely contacted her father, who had been infected with the Coronavirus, for two hours on 13 March 2020.
5. Those three patients confirmed with the Coronavirus infection are quarantined separately, and the all patients in good condition.
6. The samples from the patients confirmed by the National Health Laboratory (Yangon) over the COVID-19 infection on previous days were sent to the World Health Organization's reference laboratory, and the WHO's laboratory also confirmed that they all are positive for the infection.
7. Now, the authorities are tracking the contacts of the above COVID-19 patients and imposing restrictions on them in a bid to tackle the outbreak. People are urged to follow strictly guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Sports.

*Ministry of Health and Sports*

### Situation of Laboratory Test for Covid-19 (Issued at 00:15am on 26 March 2020)

Sr	Aged	Gender	Travel history in the last 14-day	Name of the Hospital	Date of arrival at the hospital	Covid-19 result
06	29 years old	Male	The United Kingdom	Waibargi Specialist Hospital	26-3-2020	positive
07	58 years old	Female	Switzerland	1000-bed Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital	26-3-2020	positive
08	60 years old	Female	No	Yangon General Hospital	26-3-2020	positive

# Authorities alert public on COVID-19 via megaphones



Officials alert public on COVID-19 in Haka, Chin State. PHOTO: IPRD



Officials alert public on COVID-19 in Dimawhso Kayah State. PHOTO: IPRD

OFFICIALS from the Union Government Office, General Administration Department, Ministry of Health and Sports, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and regional civil society organizations have collaborated to disseminate information and news of COVID-19 in Nay Pyi

Taw and the states and regions. One of these processes involves notifying communities via megaphones about simple guidelines for preventing the spread of COVID-19, symptoms of COVID-19, urging people to contact health departments if symptoms manifest, how the elderly and

people with chronic illnesses are more vulnerable, maintaining a 3-foot distance with other people, using tissues or elbows when sneezing and coughing, how the virus spreads from the hands to the eyes, nose and mouth upon touching the face, the need to wash hands with soap and water

or sanitizers with 60 per cent alcohol content, avoiding crowded areas and eating nutritious foods to strengthen the immune system, requesting people returning from abroad to cooperate in quarantining and people with the virus for isolation, notifying the local administrator in case of peo-

ple returning from abroad, legal repercussions for spreading false information with or without the intention to cause panic, keeping an eye out for news from the Ministry of Health and Sports, and requesting full cooperation from the public.—MNA

*(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)*



# Trimonthly inspection of Muse-China border complete

REGULAR inspection on the border stone markers near the border of Manhero, Muse District, Northern Shan State, began on 24 March near checkpoint 70/2 close to the border control in Ward 1.

Manhero has a 13-mile border with China and has 23 border stone markers for demarcation. Authorities usually visit the stone markers once every three months for cleaning and

maintenance.

March 2020 is the month for the trimonthly inspection and a team consisting of Town Administrator U Sai Myat Aung Oo, Township Police Chief Tin Aung Soe and other government officials began inspecting all 23 stone markers on 24 March and completed the inspection on 25 March at checkpoint 66/1.—Sandar (IPRD) (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Officials inspecting a stone marker for cleaning and maintenance near the border of Manhero, Muse District, Northern Shan State, on 25 March. PHOTO: SANDAR (IPRD)



Myanmar migrant workers returning from Thailand queue at Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge 1 in Tachilek, Shan State on 27 March. PHOTO: YAR SAY

# Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge 1 accepts over a thousand returning citizens

THE Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge 1 in Tachilek, Shan State, was closed on 23 March but continued to accept and screen Myanmar migrant workers returning from Thailand, with over 90 having returned on 27 March.

Myanmar nationals were allowed to return from Thailand after an agreement was reached between both nations and over a thousand citizens have returned so far.

Over 90 Myanmar nationals returned illegally on 23 March and although some of them were

suspected for COVID-19, lab tests by the Ministry of Health and Sports showed they were not infected.

Meanwhile, 43 Thai nationals returned to Thailand from Myanmar on 26 March and 10 more returned yesterday.

The health department of the Thai border town of Mae Sai, which border with Tachilek, reported at 2p.m. yesterday that a man and a woman from two of its wards have COVID-19.—Yar Say (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

# Regional govt orders temporary shutdown of Ayeyawady beaches

“WE have just received an instruction from the regional government to shutter the hotels and guesthouses. We are preparing to follow the instruction. We don’t have any guests at Chaungtha beach. But other beaches may have some guests and they are also following the instruction,” said Administrator U Kyaw Thu of Chaungtha beach.

The regional government has directed on 26 March the closure of the hotels and guesthouses in beach areas including Chaungtha, Shwethaungyan, and Ngwehsaung in Ayeyawady Region until the end of April in the fight against the Covid-19.

Although the regional government has announced on 24 March that there would be no public gatherings with no trav-

ellers being allowed to visit the beaches some hotels remained open because hotels were not included in the announcement. However, the residents are highly concerned over the opening of the hotels in beach areas, and so, the hotels and guesthouses are now directed to shutter temporarily.

Ayeyawady Region government announced on 24 March the closure of the beaches including Chaungtha, Ngwehsaung, Shwethaungyan, Gawrangyi Island and other beaches. The regional government also announced on 26 March the temporary shutdown of the hotels, motels, and guesthouses until 30 April. —Aye Cho

(Translated by Hay Mar)

# Merchants sell basic food stuff directly to people

MYANMAR Rice Federation, Myanmar Rice and Paddy Traders Association and Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers’ Association sold basic foodstuff at reasonable price to the local people in Hlinethaya Township yesterday.

The move is aimed to avoid the unnecessary price hike as

there is an abundant stockpile of the basic foodstuffs in their hands, according to the officials.

About 1,400 people bought the food yesterday.

The scheme will proceed to other industrial zones in Yangon Region.

This effort is to ensure the

adequate supply of basic foodstuffs in the local market and control the price increase amid Covid-19 negative impacts, said a statement released by the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.—Ko Htet (Translated by TTN)



People purchasing cooking oil at a stall set up by an oil supplier company yesterday. PHOTO: KO HTEH



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**YRTA exempts daily management funds from YBS companies**

BY Nyein Nyein

YBS companies are exempted to contribute the management fund to YRTA for more than one month starting from 27 March to 30 April, said YRTA Managing Director U Aung Nyi Nyi Maw.

YBS buses that are operating for the convenience of the commuters to travel in the Yangon region are allowed not to pay K4,000 per bus per day for the YRTA management fund for more than one month. A total of 4,500 YBS buses are operating daily in the Yangon region.

"By doing so, YRTA can support YBS buses in one way or another," he added.

YBS companies must report to the Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA) on their daily process such as applying for waivers and recording the routes as usual. Moreover, YRTA is making efforts to solve the problems facing by YBS buses under the supervision of the Yangon Region Government if it's hard for them to overcome them, he noted.

Currently, YRTA is cooperating with YBS companies to prevent the Covid-19 pandemic according to the guidelines and instructions issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports. YBS companies are operating their buses daily as usual mainly for

YBS buses seen in downtown Yangon . **PHOE KHWAR**

the convenience of the passengers.

In response to the Covid-19, YBS companies and the public are cooperating in such activities as promotion of health awareness campaign by putting stickers, distributing pamphlets, and keeping hand sanitizers on the buses, installing basins and placing soaps, and ensuring systematic disposal of garbage near the bus stations and railway stations.

Although some government departments and business places, which are usually busy with

the people, have already been temporarily suspended to avert the Covid-19 threat, public transportation like YBS buses are operating regularly, said Managing Director Ko Tayoutlay of Power Eleven Company.

"We hear some people complaining of the suspension of crowded places because of Covid-19. How about people who can easily be infected with this virus from the congested YBS buses or crowded places? Our commuters have nothing but to rely upon public transportation like YBS buses. So, our YBS companies

are getting their buses cleansed daily, rubbing the armrests and straps and the iron bars with the bacteria killers. For our Power Eleven company, we are cleaning inside the car by using the bactakleen liquid to ensure the travellers' safety. We are trying our best to prevent the Covid-19 spread, said Ko Tayoutlay.

At present, more than 100 bus lines are running 4,500 buses on 135 routes, along with the airport shuttle and city transit. The number of daily commuters is estimated at 1.8 million. *(Translated by Hay Mar)*

**Korean Co to produce gold, silver jewellery through CMP system**

By Nyein Nyein

"THERE are many foreign companies in Myanmar doing businesses under the CMP system. With the permission of the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC), Apple Design Jewellery company has imported solid gold from Korea. It's 14-karat gold. They will produce the finished gold designs in Myanmar. Then, they will export them to other countries. The ways are similar to those garment factories in Myanmar. They import

the raw materials from abroad and cut-make-pack here only to send them back abroad as the finished products. Myanmar will get the labour charges for making the jewellery," said Chairman U Myo Myint of Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association.

The gold and silver jewellery will be made with the cut-make-pack (CMP) system in Myanmar, according to the Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association.

Korean Apple Design Jewellery company has been granted

to produce gold and silver jewellery in Myanmar. Its 14-karat rose pink gold through the CMP system was under the laboratory process at the one-stop service center (OSSC). This business can create job opportunities for the local people. Additionally, Myanmar people will learn technical knowhow from them, he noted.

"Related to goldsmith and silversmith businesses, craftsmanship and technology can be more developed in Myanmar," U Myo Myint said. The company

has imported the gold after they have received an import licence from the MIC to manufacture gold jewellery under the CMP system. However, they found it difficult for assessment and Customs clearance. Therefore, after the laboratory process at the OSSC the Customs Department, in coordination with Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association, will facilitate them in assessing and appraising both the solid gold and the finished jewellery. *(Translated by Hay Mar)*

Suspects Maung Khar, Min Thu and Yan Naing Aung seen together with seized heroin. **PHOTO: MPF****Narcotic drug seized in Homalin, Tachilek**

A combined team including Myanmar Police Force from Waingmaw Township searched Minekine Police Station searched the house of Maung Khar who lives in Nantaw Village, Homalin Township on 26 March and arrested him and Min Thu and Yan Naing Aung together with 0.731 kilo of heroin.

On that day evening, a combined team including anti-nar-

cotic drug force inspected the motorcycle driven by Kya Ka accompanied by Ma Nan Lu on Kyuntaw Street, Parsat Ward, Tachilek Township and seized 10,000 stimulant tablets and a hand phone from them.

Police have opened lawsuits against them under the Narcotic Drug and Psychotropic Substance Law, according to the MPF. — GNLM



CONFRONTING THE CORONAVIRUS

# Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) advice for the public

## Basic protective measures against the new coronavirus

Stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the WHO website and through your national and local public health authority. Most people who become infected experience mild illness and recover, but it can be more severe for others. Take care of your health and protect others by doing the following:

### Wash your hands frequently

Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.

Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.

### Maintain social distancing

Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

Why? When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.

### Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth

Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.

### Practice respiratory hygiene

Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose

of the used tissue immediately.

Why? Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

### If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early

Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority.

Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on the situation in your area. Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also protect you and help prevent spread of viruses and other infections.

### Stay informed and follow advice given by your healthcare provider

Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your healthcare provider, your national and local public health authority or your employer on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on whether COVID-19 is spreading in your area. They are best placed to advise on what people in your area should be doing to protect themselves.

Protection measures for persons who are in or have recently visited (past 14 days) areas where COVID-19 is spreading

- Follow the guidance outlined above.
- Stay at home if you begin to feel unwell, even with mild symptoms such as headache and slight runny nose, until you recover. Why? Avoiding contact with others and visits to medical facilities will allow these facilities to operate more effectively and help protect you and others from possible

**Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**  
**How to protect yourself and others from infection**

**Follow these good practices**

- Always wash your hands with soap and running water when hands are visibly dirty. If your hands are not visibly dirty you can use an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- Contact your nearest health care provider if you have fever and either cough or difficulty breathing, along with a history of travelling to one of the epidemic countries.
- Cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing and dispose of tissue immediately after use.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or bended arm if a tissue is not available.

**Things to avoid**

- Avoid close contact with people who have travelled from the areas experiencing an outbreak or those who show cold or flu-like symptoms.
- Avoid direct unprotected contact with live farm or wild animals, as well as surfaces in contact with animals.
- Avoid eating or drinking uncooked animal products, including raw meat, eggs and milk.
- Avoid eating animals that have died of disease.

emro.who.int/cov @WHOEMRO /WHOEMRO /WHOEMR

COVID-19 and other viruses.

- If you develop fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical advice promptly as this may be due to a respiratory infection or other serious condition. Call in advance and tell your provider of any recent travel or contact with travelers. Why? Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also help to prevent possible spread of COVID-19 and other viruses.

**REFERENCE**  
**WHO'S HEALTH TOPICS**

## Robotics, automation to play increasingly important role in combating COVID-19, says editorial



Technicians improve a first-generation disinfection robot in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province, on Feb 11, 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA

**R**OBOTICS and automation could play an increasingly important role in combating infectious diseases such as COVID-19, according to an editorial published 25 March on Science Robotics.

Robots have the potential to be deployed for disinfection, delivering medications and food, measuring vital signs, and assisting border controls, said the editorial written by multiple authors, most of who are professors specialized in robotics-related studies at different universities.

COVID-19 has affected manufacturing and the economy

throughout the world. This highlights the need for more research into remote operation for a broad array of applications requiring dexterous manipulation – from manufacturing to remotely operating power or waste treatment plants, said the editorial.

The authors think robotic technologies could make valuable contributions to disease prevention, screening, diagnosis, patient care and disease management.

**KEY POINTS**

- Earlier this month, a field hospital staffed by robots opened in the Hongshan Sports Center in Wuhan,

China, where the pandemic began.

- Dubbed the Smart Field Hospital, the facility can serve 20,000 patients and is a project involving Wuhan Wuchang Hospital, China Mobile and CloudMinds, a maker of cloud robotics systems based in China and the U.S.
- It is a trial aimed at relieving exhausted health-care workers even as the outbreak in China slowed in recent weeks.

**REFERENCES**  
**Xinhua; CNBC**



# Those breaking public health order can face jail time

THE regional authorities have urged people returning to Myanmar to go into self-isolation for 14 days and, once they are home, to report to local authorities when they return and if they become sick.

Unfortunately, there are some people who have not been following the public health guidelines, though the authorities are enforcing these rules to keep the entire public safe.

In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic is also a natural disaster, and those who do not comply with the law can face fines and even prison time under Section-2 (b) of the National Disaster Management Law.

To prevent the need to issue punishments, governmental employees are obliged to explain to returnees about the benefits of the quarantine, as well as about the duty of good citizens to follow the directives of the health authorities.

Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye, who is also the chairman of the National Disaster Management Committee, has urged officials from the ministry's departments in regions and states to work closely with regional administrative officials to conduct preventive measures against the spread of the Coronavirus and to deal with offenders who violate quarantine requirements.

To prevent the need to issue punishments, governmental employees are obliged to explain to returnees about the benefits of the quarantine, as well as about the duty of good citizens to follow the directives of the health authorities.

Next, they should explain the National Disaster Law to those who returned from neighbouring countries to ensure that they do not break the law.

Also, the health authorities have labeled the coronavirus an "epidemic or notifiable disease" under the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law. This means those who fail to disclose being sick with Coronavirus could face punishment.

The return of thousands of our migrant workers from Thailand has put our country at high risk for the spread of COVID-19 infection.

It is not a normal situation when thousands of people return from a country which is experiencing the Coronavirus infection. The returnees might carry the Coronavirus with them and could infect their own families first, then spread the infection to others.

The current situation, with thousands of returnees from Thailand, makes it challenging for enforcement on the ground.

To effectively stop the source of infection, we need to put in place aggressive, adequate and immediate measures.



# Asia virus latest: China bans foreigners, markets up on stimulus

Foreigners are banned from entering China, while non-nationals with valid visas and resident permits will be blocked from coming to the country, in a bid to halt a second wave of infections.

HERE are the latest developments in Asia related to the novel coronavirus pandemic:

### China bars foreigners to halt second wave

Foreigners are banned from entering China, while non-nationals with valid visas and resident permits will be blocked from coming to the country, in a bid to halt a second wave of infections.

Other measures include reducing the number of international flights and limiting the capacity on board to 75 per cent.

In recent weeks, China's tally of cases has dwindled dramatically, with only a handful of domestic patients each day -- but there has been a surge of infected people arriving from new hotspots overseas.

President Xi Jinping meanwhile said China and the United States should "unite to fight" the pandemic in a call with US counterpart Donald Trump, according to state media. Beijing and Washington have clashed in recent weeks over the virus.

### Markets bounce on US stimulus

Asian equities mostly rose again and the dollar extended losses, with traders buoyed by government and central bank pledges to prop up the virus-ravaged global economy.

Markets have had a brutal month as the pandemic spreads around the globe, but have recovered some ground in recent days as policymakers unleash unprecedented stimulus measures.

### Singaporeans may face jail for standing too close

Singaporeans could be jailed for up to six months if they intentionally stand close to someone else, under tough new rules to halt the spread of the virus.

The city-state has introduced a series of new measures to tackle the virus, including closing bars and cinemas as well as banning large events.

### Tokyo businesses to close as cases rise

Businesses in the greater Tokyo region prepared to shut their doors, at least for the weekend, after governor Yuriko Koike made



Beijing Capital International Airport workers wear face shields on March 27, 2020, amid the coronavirus pandemic. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

### Investment fund Temasek, while local bank DBS will provide a Sg\$4 billion loan.

People in the Japanese capital have been urged to stay at home this weekend after Koike warned of a possible "explosion" of the virus following a rise in cases.

### Emergency flights for people stranded in South Asia

Foreign governments stepped up operations to evacuate tens of thousands of tourists stranded by the coronavirus pandemic in remote locations across South Asia, from the Everest base camp to beach hotels in Sri Lanka.

More than 10,000 people are stranded in Nepal, almost 17,000 tourists are stuck in Sri Lanka, while tens of thousands of travelers and expatriates are in India, according to authorities.

### Singapore Airlines to get cash injection

Singapore's flag carrier said it was getting extra funding of up to Sg\$19 billion (US\$13 billion) to help weather the pandemic, which is hammering the aviation sector.

The airline will raise up to Sg\$15 billion with the backing of its majority shareholder, state

investment fund Temasek, while local bank DBS will provide a Sg\$4 billion loan.

### India cuts interest rates

India's central bank cut its benchmark interest rate by 75 basis points to 4.40 per cent, following similar moves by policymakers worldwide who are battling to stave off a major economic crisis.

### Malaysia stimulus package

Malaysia announced a 250 billion ringgit (US\$57 billion) stimulus package to combat the fallout from the pandemic, including direct payments to people, rent waivers, and electricity bill discounts.

### Indonesia response 'in tatters'

Indonesia's coronavirus crisis is far worse than being officially reported and the government's response is "in tatters", the country's doctors association warned as the death toll climbed to 87.

The world's fourth-most populous country only reported its first confirmed infection this month but by Friday, that had ballooned to over 1,000.

### Driving out migrant labourers

The fear of starvation due to lockdown is driving out migrant labourers from the national capital.

"We are going back to Badaun in Uttar Pradesh. We have been hungry for two days. The biscuit which used to cost Rs 10 now costs Rs 30," said Shahadat, who along with others were on way to their native places. "We have no money. We will die either of hunger or coronavirus," added Shahadat, who used to live in Okhla here.

Since the lockdown was imposed on Tuesday midnight for 21 days to check the spread of COVID-19, migrant labourers from the nearby districts of UP, Haryana, and Rajasthan have started returning to their native places.

Many of them claimed that they had been hungry for days. They are walking down to their respective destinations without having any mode of transportation to save themselves from hunger and coronavirus.

### Joint action between China and the US

President Xi Jinping on

Friday urged for a coordinated joint action between China and the United States to fight against the novel coronavirus, saying that he hopes that Washington will take concrete steps to improve bilateral relations.

In a phone conversation with US President Donald Trump, Xi said bilateral relations are now at a critical juncture, and both nations stand to gain from cooperation and lose from confrontation and that cooperation is the only correct choice for both sides, Peoples' Daily China reported. Xi called for a joint effort from both sides to bolster cooperation in areas such as epidemic containment and develop a China-US relationship featuring non-confrontation, non-conflict, mutual respect, and win-win cooperation.

China has already shared information on the novel virus, including the genetic sequencing of the virus, with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and countries including the United States.

The country has also shared its experience on epidemic containment and medical treatment and done its best to support and help countries in need of assis-

tance, he said.

### Democracies should lead the effort

Democracies like the United States and India should lead the effort around the world to combat the coronavirus pandemic, Morgan Ortagus, the spokesperson for the US State Department said on Thursday. "Other democracies that are joining us in this fight, and this time for all of us, are fully transparent into doing our best practices, this is a pandemic and this won't be the last one. We have had SARS, Ebola, and now COVID-19. I think it's upon democracies like America and India to lead an effort around the world," Ortagus said.

"America and India have close ties, we have many Indian-Americans, many people who live and go back and forth between our two countries and it is certainly helpful when we have countries like India and South Korea fighting this together," she added.

Talking on India's decision to impose nation-wide lockdown, Ortagus said: "The United States is super supportive of the fact that he (Prime Minister Narendra Modi) is taking it so seriously and putting the lives of the Indian people first."

### Fiscal deficit to expand

China has decided to allow its fiscal deficit to expand to take measures aimed at shoring up an economy hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, state-run media reported Friday.

"Our country is facing a new challenge for economic development," the ruling Communist Party's decision-making political bureau was quoted by the media as saying as it laid out the policy. "We will take a more aggressive fiscal policy," the Politburo said in a meeting chaired by President Xi Jinping, according to the media.

To prevent the bursting of asset-inflated economic bubbles, Xi had put more emphasis on budgetary tightening than on economic growth, prior to a recent economic slowdown largely as a result of the virus outbreak and a prolonged trade dispute with the United States.

REFERENCES  
AFP; ANI; Kyodo; Xinhua  
News Updates



## Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 2:00 pm Friday 27th March, 2020)

### SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs M.S.T:

During the past (24) hours, weather has been partly cloudy in Sagaing, Mandalay, Yangon and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Northern Shan, Chin, Rakhine and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States. Day temperatures were (3°C) above March average temperature in Kachin State, (2°C) above March average temperatures in NayPyiTaw, Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Shan(South and East), Chin, Kayin and Mon States and about March average temperatures in the remaining Regions and States. The significant day temperatures were (41°C) each in Chauk, Toungoo and Bawlak and (40°C) each in Tada U (Avia-Met), Magway, Aungmyan and Hlaingbwe.

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

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 28th March, 2020:** Light rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi Regions, Shan(North and East) and Rakhine States and generally fair 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 off and along Myanmar Coasts.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Slight increase of day temperatures in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions, Shan and Chin States.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 28th March, 2020:** Generally fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 28th March, 2020:** Generally fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 28th March, 2020:** Generally fair weather.

**WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND:** Weather will be partly cloudy in Yangon Region and generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay Region.

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CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

## WHO Director-General calls on G20 to Fight, Unite, and Ignite against COVID-19

DR Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization, addressed Heads of State at 26 March extraordinary G20 Leaders' Summit focused on COVID-19.

He told them, "You have come together to confront the defining health crisis of our time: We are at war with a virus that threatens to tear us apart - if we let it."

He welcomed the G20's initiative to find joint solutions and work together: "This is a global crisis that requires a global response."

### "Fight, unite, ignite"

Dr Tedros' call was clear. First, he urged leaders to fight without excuses, without regrets — thanking countries who have already taken steps and urgently

asking that they do more. Second, he encouraged them to unite, stressing that no country can fight this alone, and calling on all countries to build on the solidarity already sparked by the crisis. Third, he exhorted them to ignite a global movement to ensure this never happens again. He welcomed G20 leaders' commitment "to do whatever it takes to overcome the pandemic" to protect lives and livelihoods, as well as restore confidence and shore up stability currently threatened in trade and other sectors, and to commit to take all necessary health measures and seek to ensure adequate financing to contain the pandemic and protect people, especially the most vulnerable."

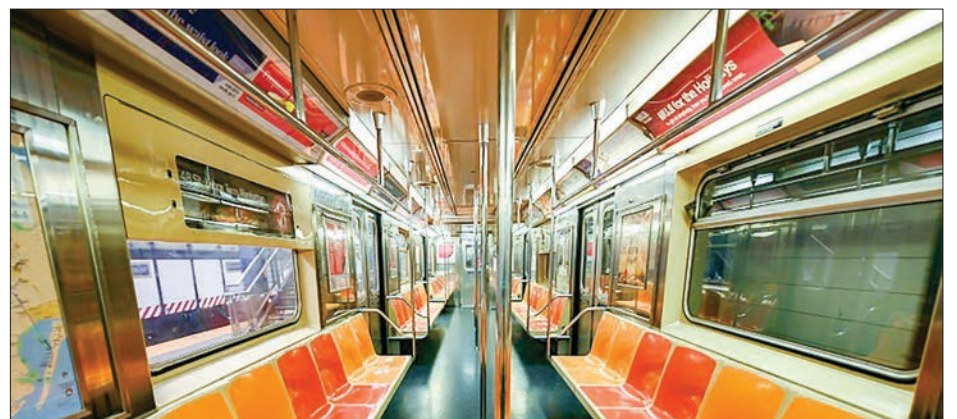
REFERENCE  
WHO News Updates



People cross a quiet road in central Sydney on March 25, 2020, as people stay away due to restrictions to stop the spread of the worldwide COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak. PHOTO: AFP

CONFRONTING THE CORONAVIRUS

## US tops world in virus cases



An empty New York Subway car is seen on 23 March, 2020 in New York City. PHOTO: AFP

THE United States now has more COVID-19 infections than any other country, and a record number of newly unemployed people, as the coronavirus crisis deepens around the world.

Hours after his nation reached the grim milestone, President Donald Trump spoke by phone to China's Xi Jinping, after weeks of bickering and finger pointing over a disease researchers say could kill at least 1.8 million people by the end of the year.

"Just finished a very good conversation with President Xi of China," Trump tweeted. "China has been through much & has developed a strong understanding of the Virus. We are working closely together. Much respect!"

The warm words — which were not quite echoed in the Chinese state media readout of the call — came after a few weeks in which the White House had repeatedly referred to "the Chinese coronavirus", angering Beijing.

China, which appears to have got on top of its own outbreak, readied to bar entry to foreigners as it frets over a surge in imported cases, illustrating the difficulty of containing a virus in an interconnected world. Wuhan, the city where the illness first emerged late last year, was — from midnight — to ease severe movement restrictions in place for two months.

REFERENCE  
AFP News Updates

CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE

# Life under lockdown - practical tips from the UN

BY Department of Global Communications (The United Nations)

THE United Nations Department of Global Communications (DGC) promotes global awareness and understanding of the work of the United Nations.

With many people being asked to socially distance themselves from others, while other cities have placed their residents under mandatory lockdown to prevent the further spread of the coronavirus, the United Nations has tips for those seeking to strike the balance between vigilance and the need to maintain some normalcy in their lives.

With school closures, parenting has become increasingly challenging. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has issued six parenting tips for parenting during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

"School shutdown is also a chance to make better relationships with our children and teenagers," says UNICEF in the guidance document. "One-on-One time is free and fun. It makes children feel loved and secure, and shows them that they are important."

School shutdown is also a chance to make better relationships with our children and teenagers. One-on-One time...

makes children feel loved and secure, and shows them that they are important.

UNICEF recommends parents and their children to create a flexible but consistent daily routine. "COVID-19 has taken away our daily work, home and school routines. This is hard for children, teenagers and for you. Making new routines can help," it says.

In a document on how to talk to children about the coronavirus disease, UNICEF says "children have a right to truthful information about what's going on in the world, but adults also have a responsibility to keep them safe from distress", recommending that adults use age-appropriate language, watch children's reactions, and be sensitive to their level of anxiety. UNICEF also offers some advice for employers on how they can support working parents during the coronavirus outbreak.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is rallying international organizations, civil society and private sector partners in a broad coalition to ensure that learning never stops.

The agency has also release a document listing distance learning solutions and recommendations.

The closure of gyms, sport facilities



A child takes an online karate class at home during COVID-19 outbreak in Shanghai, China. PHOTO: ZHU XIAOYI

and stadiums, public pools, dance studios, and playgrounds means that many are not able to actively participate in individual or group sporting or physical activities.

But that does not mean, people should stop being physically active, nor should they disconnect from the coaches, teammates and instructors.

In the lead up of the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (6 April) the United Nations is working with influencers in sport to create social media messaging encouraging audiences

to be active and to foster solidarity against the challenges posed by COVID-19.

The World Health Organization recommends 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week, or a combination of both. WHO also have some tips on how to achieve this with no equipment and with limited space. There is an abundance of free and accessible online and digital tools targeted at encouraging people of all ages and abilities to stay active and mobile while remaining indoors. ■



## ‘Printing money’: booming mask producers in China meet global demand

BEIJING — As the coronavirus pandemic that originated in a central Chinese city has gone global, thousands of factories in China have nimbly turned to a new and very profitable market — face masks for export.

At the height of China’s outbreak in early February, Guan Xunze’s company created a new mask factory in just eleven days.

The factory, with five production lines in northeastern China, made the much-needed N95 face masks which were in huge demand as infection num-

bers surged.

As cases in the country have dwindled, the 34-year-old — who was previously in pharmaceuticals — is now profiting from new markets and exporting masks to Italy, where the death toll has overtaken that of China.

In the first two months of the year, a staggering 8,950 new manufacturers started producing masks in China, according to business data platform Tianyancha — racing to fill the huge gap in demand.

But after the virus epicentre

of Hubei province was placed on lockdown and the initial frenzy began to die down in China, virus outbreaks emerged in new hotspots elsewhere in the world.

Globally more than 400,000 have been infected with the deadly coronavirus, and demand for protective equipment is still soaring as nations across the globe battle the outbreak.

“A mask machine is a real cash printer,” said Shi Xinghui, sales manager of an N95 mask machine company in Dongguan city, southeastern Guangdong



Workers produce face masks at a factory in Handan in China’s northern Hebei province. **PHOTO: AFP**

province. “The profit of a mask now is at least several cents compared to less than one in the past.

“Printing 60,000 or 70,000 masks a day is equivalent to printing money.” — AFP ■

## Korean Air chief defeats ‘nut rage’ sister’s challenge

SEOUL — The “nut rage” heiress who forced a plane to turn back over her macadamias failed Friday to wrest control of the family airline from her brother, in what analysts said illustrated the power of incumbents at South Korea’s chaebols.

Cho Hyun-ah, 45, whose family control the Hanjin group that includes flag-carrier Korean Air, made headlines worldwide with her furious reaction over an improperly served bag of nuts in first class.

The airline is now in the throes of a corporate crisis because of the coronavirus pandemic, with hundreds of flights cancelled, staff going on unpaid leave, and executives taking pay cuts.

A months-long battle for control came to a head Friday at the annual meeting of Hanjin Kal, the holding company for the conglomerate, when Cho and an activist investment fund, Korea Corporate Gov-

ernance Improvement (KCGI), sought to oust her younger brother Cho Won-tae from the chairmanship.

Cho Won-tae, backed by other family members and Korean Air’s US alliance partner Delta Air Lines, fended off the challenge, winning 56.67 per cent support in a shareholder vote.

Hanjin is one of the multifaceted, family-controlled conglomerates known as chaebol that dominate business in South Korea and played a key part in its rise to become the world’s 12th-largest economy.

But several now stand accused of murky political connections and stifling innovation and smaller firms.

Many chaebol families retain only a small ownership stake in their companies, but maintain control through complex webs of cross-shareholdings between subsidiaries, and rapid promotions for family members. — AFP ■

## Sony expects to fall short of projected earnings due to virus spread



File photo taken 1 March, 2019, shows the logo of Japanese electronics and entertainment company Sony Corp. on its signboard in Tokyo’s Chuo Ward. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

TOKYO — Sony Corp. said Friday it expects to fall short of its projected earnings in the current business year ending March as the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic is large enough to wipe out the previously expected increase in sales and profit.

The electronics and enter-

tainment giant, which revised its earnings guidance upward in February, said then potential effects of the spreading virus on its business were not factored into the estimate.

In February, Sony raised its net profit forecast for the year to 590 billion yen (\$5.42 billion) from the previously estimated 540

billion yen, citing robust demand for image sensors for smartphone cameras.

It also raised its operating profit outlook to 880 billion yen from 840 billion yen and sales to 8.50 trillion yen from 8.40 trillion yen.

There is now a possibility that the company will postpone the release of its earnings results currently scheduled on 30 April, as “the spread of COVID-19 could lead to delays in account closing procedures and other operations,” it said.

Sony said it has shut down its British factory to produce video cameras for broadcasters through 20 April due to a local government order. —Kyodo News ■

## Renewable energy projects get huge relief amidst COVID-19

NEW DELHI — The Indian solar industry is heavily dependent on imports for meeting its requirement of the solar modules and solar cells of which around 80 per cent is sourced from a single country i.e. China and the remaining 15 per cent is sourced from South-East Asian countries like Malaysia, Vietnam, Taiwan, Thailand, and South Korea.

The spread of COVID-19 in China and other countries has posed an imminent challenge to the expansive clean energy target set by the country. It has also caused the factories to shut down and disruption of the supply chain, which is likely to impact the

on-time completion of the solar IPP projects in India. Typically, all solar IPPs contracts (including the PPAs) have penalty clauses for the delay in completion of the project, which will have to be paid by the IPPs as most of the existing insurances do not cover COVID-19. To put things into perspective, it is estimated that around 12 GW of solar projects are expected to be completed by the year-end in India, of which around 10 GW supply is dependent on China.

In a major relief to the Indian renewable energy industry and to address the above concerns, the Ministry of New and Renewable

Energy (MNRE), Government of India vide its office memorandum dated 20 March, 2020, has inter-alia directed SECI, NTPC or other concerned renewable energy implementing agencies of MNRE (Implementing Agencies) to treat delay on account of disruption of the supply chains due to spread of coronavirus in China or any other country as Force Majeure and to grant appropriate time-extension in Scheduled Commissioning Date (SCOD) of the IPP projects as per Force Majeure Clause in the respective IPPs contracts, based on supporting evidence/documents produced by IPPs.—ANI ■



Hanjin-owned Korean Air is in the throes of a corporate crisis as the coronavirus pandemic shatters the airline sector. **PHOTO: AFP**



## British PM Boris Johnson tests positive for COVID-19: official

LONDON — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced on Friday that he is self-isolating after testing positive for COVID-19.

“Over the last 24 hours I have developed mild symptoms and tested positive for coronavirus,” he said on Twitter, posting a video message.

“I am now self-isolating, but I will continue to lead the government’s response via video-conference as we fight this virus,” he wrote.

“Be in no doubt that I can continue thanks to the wizardry of modern technology to communicate with all my top team to lead the national fightback against coronavirus,” he added in the video message.

A Downing Street spokesperson said in a statement that Johnson, whose partner Carrie Symonds is pregnant, experienced mild symptoms on Thursday and was tested for COVID-19 on the personal advice of England’s chief medical

officer.

The test was carried out in No 10 by NHS staff, the spokesperson added.

In his video message, Johnson thanked workers in Britain’s state-run National Health Service (NHS) for their efforts in battling the spread of the virus.

A total of 11,658 coronavirus cases have so far been confirmed in Britain, and 578 deaths.

Earlier this week Prince Charles, the eldest son and heir



A Downing Street spokesperson said in a statement that Johnson, whose partner Carrie Symonds is pregnant, experienced mild symptoms on Thursday and was tested for COVID-19 on the personal advice of England’s chief medical officer. **PHOTO: AFP**

to Queen Elizabeth II, also tested positive for the virus.

The government confirmed this week that if Johnson was in-

capacitated, Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab would temporarily assume the role of prime minister. — AFP ■

## Prince Harry and Meghan now based in California: report

LONDON — Prince Harry and his wife Meghan have permanently relocated to California amid the coronavirus pandemic, media reports said Friday.

The royal couple flew by private jet from Canada to Los Angeles last week before the border between the two countries closed because of the deadly virus outbreak, The Sun reported.

“Harry and Meghan have left Canada now for good,” a “royal insider” told the tabloid.

“The borders were closing and flights were stopping. They had to get out.”

The border between the US and Canada — the longest in the world — closed last week in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as both countries see escalating numbers of cases.

Harry and Meghan rocked the royal family with their January announcement that they will no longer represent the monarchy as they pursue a new, financially independent life.

The Duke and Duchess of



Britain’s Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, (l) and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex arrive to attend the annual Commonwealth Service at Westminster Abbey in London on 09 March, 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

Sussex will formally step back from royal duties on 31 March.

It had been thought they would base themselves in Canada, where they have spent time in recent months. But The Sun said the move to California “had been planned for some time” and that the couple had “realised Canada would not work out for various reasons”. “They want to be based in the Los Angeles area,” the

source told the tabloid. Meghan grew up in the Californian city and her mother, Doria Ragland, still lives there. The one-time actress also has a network of friends and work contacts in Los Angeles, where she could now restart her career. Disney announced on Thursday that she will narrate a new film about a family of African elephants, set for release next Friday.— AFP ■

## Denmark increases COVID-19 test capacity as infections exceed 2,000

COPENHAGEN — The test capacity for COVID-19 in Denmark has increased to 5,000 a day, said a press release from the Danish Regions authority on Friday.

“I am proud of the fact that through hard work we have increased the test capacity to a level where we will be able to test five times as many Danes,” said Stephanie Lose, chairper-

son of the Danish Regions.

Currently, Denmark tests 1,000 per day on average.

Nevertheless, Soren Brostrom, director general of the Danish Health Authority, reacted to the news by calling for an even greater increase.

“5,000 is a clear requirement for the regions that we expect here and now. But we want upwards of 10,000, and

even higher,” said Brostrom.

According to Friday’s figures from the Statens Serum Institut (SSI), a governmental public health and research institution under the Danish Ministry of Health, 17,275 Danes have so far been tested for COVID-19, with infections in the country now standing at 2,010, and 52 deaths from COVID-19.—Xinhua ■

## Virus cases spike on US aircraft carrier: media

WASHINGTON — The number of coronavirus cases on the USS Theodore Roosevelt aircraft carrier in the Pacific Ocean has spiked to at least 23, with authorities moving to isolate the entire crew in port, US media reported.

Earlier this week three sailors were evacuated after testing positive for the virus, the first cases reported on a US Navy ship on deployment.

“Additional positive cases of COVID-19 have been discovered”, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mike Gilday said in a statement Thursday, without specifying how many.

Gilday added he expected further positive tests among the more than 5,000 personnel on board the warship, which is in Guam on a “pre-scheduled port visit.”

None was seriously ill and

none had been hospitalized, the admiral said.

The Wall Street Journal said there were now “at least 23” cases and quoted Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly as saying authorities were “in the process now of testing 100 percent of the crew.” “During the port visit, base access will be limited to the pier for Roosevelt’s sailors. No base or regional personnel will access the pier,” Modly said.

The USS Theodore Roosevelt was last in port in Vietnam, although Gilday said it was difficult to connect the cases to a particular port visit.

The Hawaii-based Indo-Pacific Command also said Thursday a joint US-Philippines-Australia exercise involving thousands of troops in the Philippines had been canceled over coronavirus fears.— AFP ■



The USS Theodore Roosevelt aircraft carrier has more than 5,000 personnel on board / © Navy Office of Information. **PHOTO: AFP**



# India's central bank slashes interest rates as virus spreads

NEW DELHI — India's central bank cut interest rates sharply Friday as the coronavirus outbreak deepens fears for Asia's third largest economy, which was already battling a prolonged slowdown.

The move, which came ahead of the bank's scheduled meeting next month, followed similar measures around the world as finance chiefs struggle to stave off what could be the worst economic crisis in decades.

As manufacturing activity and consumption grinds to a halt under a lockdown, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said the benchmark repo rate — the level at which it lends to commercial banks — would be cut by 75 basis



The central bank's steep rate cut is in line with similar measures adopted around the world as the virus hammers economies. PHOTO: AFP

points to 4.40 per cent.

The reverse repo rate, the rate at which it borrows from commercial banks, was lowered 90 basis points.

The bank also cut the amount of cash lenders must set aside as reserves

by one percentage point to three percent to encourage lending to small businesses hit by the crisis.

"This kind of uncertain outlook has never been seen before... finance is the lifeline of the economy and keeping it active is of para-

mount importance for the RBI," central bank governor Shaktikanta Das said in a surprise announcement in Mumbai.

He added that India needed conventional and non-conventional measures to tackle the unprecedented situation depending on the spread, intensity, and duration of the COVID-19 outbreak.

India has so far registered 694 cases for its 1.3-billion-strong population but experts believe the numbers could rise exponentially in the weeks ahead. Earlier this week, the government imposed strict restrictions asking citizens to stay indoors, only allowing essential services to function.—AFP ■

# European stocks retreat at end of strong week for global equities

NEW YORK — European stock markets retreated Friday as investors banked profits from the week's strong rally in global equities as governments and central banks step up action to bolster an economy battered by the coronavirus pandemic.

There were more gains however for most Asian indices, while the dollar extended losses.

Approaching the halfway stage, Europe's main stock markets were down on average by more than three percent — but like indices around the world were set to finish the week strongly higher overall.

"European markets

have pulled back... with caution being the order of the day after such a good rally," said Neil Wilson, chief market analyst at trading group Markets.com.

"Stimulus efforts have calmed markets" this week, Wilson said, noting however that investors were looking to bank profits ahead of the weekend pause.

While the number of people contracting COVID-19 continues to escalate, the support measures which the G20 said amounted to \$5 trillion, have given traders hope that the expected global recession will be sharp but short.—AFP ■

# Oil storage buckles as virus saps demand



More of these needed. PHOTO: AFP

LONDON — Global oil storage capacity is under intense pressure because of booming output from Saudi Arabia and the United States while the coronavirus outbreak slams the world economy and crude demand.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and Russia had cooperated closely since 2016 to curb production, support prices and protect their precious revenues.

That all changed earlier this month when Saudi Arabia launched a vicious price war with Moscow, after OPEC and non-member Russia failed to clinch an

output-cutting deal to curb the market impact of the deadly COVID-19 outbreak.

The perfect storm sent oil prices collapsing to their lowest levels in almost two decades, with London Brent North Sea hitting \$24.52 per barrel and New York's WTI crude striking a nadir of just \$19.46.

However, despite evaporating demand, production has continued apace — and the resulting oil is often destined for overstretched storage facilities around the world, according to industry experts. "We knew that surging output from OPEC members would place upwards pressure on crude oil stockpiles,"

Petromatrix analyst Olivier Jakob told AFP.

"Yet this phenomenon clearly accelerated... with the collapse of oil demand."

As a consequence, the market remains awash with crude in storage on land and in container ships.

And the estimated level of total oil stockpiles has now overtaken the previous peak set in early 2017, according to data from energy sector intelligence firm Kpler, which warns stocks continue to swell.—AFP ■

## PUBLIC NOTICE

MTG DC Company Ltd (MTGDC) has entered into a Tower Transfer Agreement with Irrawaddy Green Towers Ltd ("IGT"), whereby MTGDC has agreed to sell and agreed to buy (26) tele-communication towers owned by MTGDC.

The effect of this is that rent for the premises which are taken on lease by MTGDC in which the towers are erected will in future to be paid by IGT.

IGT confirms and undertakes that they will honor all the leases ( and associated lease payments) agreed with between MGTDC and landlords. The commercial terms of the ground lease agreements (including rental amount,tenure and time of payment) shall remain exactly the same.

If anyone has any objections to the transaction between MTGDC and IGT, please contact U Tun Myint with related facts within 14 days' starting from the date of this advertisement at 01 202093, 01 4705093 or alternatively at tun.myint@igt.com.mm or by post at Irrawaddy Green Towers Ltd, International Commercial Center, No.422/426, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor (A), Strand Road, Botahtaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar.

Irrawaddy Green Towers Ltd

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY. NO. (023W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY. NO. (023W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28-3-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIP/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.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY

AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SAN GIORGIO VOY. NO. (012S/013N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SAN GIORGIO VOY. NO. (012S/013N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 28-3-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/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.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S SEALAND MAERSKASIA PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301185



**T**HE Law on the Preservation and Protection of Ancient Buildings mentioned that the buildings of more than 100 years old are involved on the list of ancient structures. Among more than 100 years old ancient buildings in various regions of the country, most of the buildings established in colonial era can be seen in Yangon City.

British constructed residential houses, offices and religious buildings in Yangon City after occupying Myanmar. These buildings are included on the list of ancient buildings at present. Among them, the Armenian Orthodox Church, 157 years old, is the longest life Christian church in Yangon.

#### Yangon in the history

Mon ethnic people established a fishery village named Dagon in the place of present Yangon between 1028 AD and 1043 AD. King U Aung Zeya who was the first king in Konbaung era came onto the throne in 1752 AD and established new Yangon city on 75 acres of land in the area of Dagon Village on 2 May 1755 with appointment of a city governor.

British occupied lower Myanmar on 20 December 1852 when Konbaung era had been established for 100 years. In 1853, Dr W Montgomery and Lt A Fraser drew an urban plan for implementation of modern Rangoon plan centring Sule Pagoda so as to establish the lower

Myanmar.

According to the Reconstruction of Modern Rangoon 1853, Yangon City was established in the shape of chess board pattern. The area of Yangon City was limited on East Road called current Theinbyu Street in the east, Lanmadaw Road in the west, Strand Road in the south and Commissioner Road called Bogoyoke Aung San Street at present in the north. Yangon City consisted of five main roads with 180 feet each in width (now Strand Road, Merchant Street, Maha Bandoola Street, Anawrahta Street and Bogoyoke Aung San Street) which stretched from the east to the west and the streets under numbers from the south to the north. The west street of Yangon City was 17th street and the east one, 44th street. Many buildings including Christian churches were established in that area.

#### Armenian Orthodox Church

After establishment of modern Yangon City, the Armenian Orthodox Church facing Merchant Street was built on the land

plot at the corner of Merchant Street and Bo Aung Kyaw Street in current Kyauktada Township in 1862. The Orthodox Church built as the earliest Christian missionary church in Yangon has been hosting the religious services till today.

Currently, some 20 members of Armenian families residing in Yangon City attend the holy services at the church on Sundays twice a month. Sometimes, when the father from the church is busy, the church postpones hosting the service on Saturday instead of Sunday. At present, there may be about 100 persons of Armenian across Myanmar, said Mr. Steven who guards the church.

Armenians and their relatives who arrive in Yangon for many reasons come to the Armenian Orthodox Church for joining the services.

The Armenian cemetery where bodies of Armenians in Yangon were cremated was located near Jew Cemetery, Islam Cemetery and Christian Cemetery nearby Yangon Railway Station from 1874 to 1980. Now, the cemeteries did not exist there.



A view of the altar and Interior of Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church in Yangon. PHOTO: MAUNGTHA (ARCHAEOLOGY)

# Armenian Orthodox Church

By Maung Tha (Archaeology)



Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church in Yangon. PHOTO: MAUNGTHA (ARCHAEOLOGY)



Mr. Martitossian, one of the Armenians in Yangon, passed away in 2013.

After Portuguese citizens had entered Myanmar, Armenians settled in Thanlyin in 17th century AD to do trading. An ancient Portuguese Church was built at the entrance to Thanlyin in 1749 with the contribution of an Armenian. Some people misunderstood that the tomb in the compound of the church was that of Portuguese Na Zin Kar. Actually, it was the tomb of Armenian citizen Nicolas de Aguilar who was buried in 1750. The inscriptions on the tomb were described in Portuguese, Latin and Armenian languages.





through land route and waterway. They arrived in Myanmar in early 1550. In the reign of Myanmar kings, they served at Inwa Royal Palace while other Armenians who did not serve the Myanmar king were wealthy by doing businesses in some towns and villages in Myanmar including Amarapura, Mandalay and Yangon.

Henry Yule accompanying the diplomatic delegation led by Major Arthur Phayre who paid a trip to Inwa Royal Palace in upper Myanmar from Yangon of lower Myanmar on 1 August 1855 compiled and published a record of British diplomatic delegation to Inwa.

The record mentioned Armenians had visited Myanmar's royal palace for many years. Twelve families of Armenians resided in Amarapura. Armenian citizen Makertich J Mines, Malun governor of Myanmar king, welcomed the British diplomatic delegation in Malun to the royal palace. Number of Armenians in Myanmar increased to 1,250 in 1871-1872, up from 40 in 1804.

on Bank Street. At that time, the Silver Grill restaurant was the best European style restaurant in Yangon.

The family of Armenian entrepreneur Balthazar contributed to erecting the Queen Vitoria Statue in the Fytche Square in 1896. The building of the present US embassy on Merchant Street was owned by Balthazar family.

Armenian engineers A C Martin and V J Nahapiet took responsibilities for construction of many buildings in colonial era including Bulloch Broths Building (now Yangon General Post Office) and Bank of Bangal (now Myanma Economic Bank Branch-3) in Yangon City. As such, the buildings installed with the plaque bearing the name of A C Martin can be seen till today, explained Ko Arkar Kyaw, a tour guide, who is studying Yangon City in colonial era.

**Two Armenian Churches**

Armenians started their settlements in Yangon in 18th century AD. As the first ever Armenian Church was built by Gregory Avas

church consecrated on 17 January 1863 was famous as Baptist

Church of the St. John the Baptist, 1862 in both Myanmar and



A commemorative Blue Plaque was installed outside Yangon's oldest surviving church, the Armenian Apostolic Church of St John the Baptist on 1 October, 2014. PHOTO: MAUNGTHA (ARCHAEOLOGY)



Interior of Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church in Yangon. PHOTO: MAUNGTHA (ARCHAEOLOGY)

**Myanmar and Armenians**

Armenia is a landlocked country in Caucasus and Eurasia region, teeming with jungles and hills. It was Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic of past Soviet Union but it seceded from the Soviet Union on 23 August 1990 to establish the First Republic of Armenia. Armenians enacted Christianity as State religion in 301 AD.

Khojas, the Armenian merchants, wondered around the world by trading with partners

**Armenian entrepreneurs in Yangon City**

Armenian merchants Khojas arriving at Yangon were wealthy because of successfully doing businesses.

The Strand Hotel in Yangon City was bought by two Armenian brothers Sarkies in 1901, and they operated the hotel till 1925. Likewise, Armenian Myanmar Pete Arratoon owned the Silver Grill restaurant on Bar Street (now Maha Bandoola Park Street) and Balthazar building

near Yangon River in 1766, the wooden tip roof of the church can be seen from far distance.

King Mindon allotted a land plot for the present church. After occupying Yangon, British allowed Armenians to continuously use the present church area free of charge while building the new city. Unfortunately, the First Armenian Church was destroyed by fire in 1850.

Hence, the Second Armenian Church was built and it was named St. John the Baptist. The

Saint John Church. The church was built with the architectural works in the Middle Age of Europe. After completion of the construction, Father Aviet Chaytor arrived first at the church so as to manage holy services.

As the Yangon Heritage Trust-YHT put a blue plaque at the Armenian Church on 4 October 2014, His Holiness Catholicos Karekin II who came from the First Republic of Armenia unveiled the blue plaque which bears The Armenian Apostolic

English languages.

As YHT has been putting blue plaques at urban heritage buildings in Yangon City, the Armenian Orthodox Church was the third one of bearing the blue plaque as well as the first one among religious edifices in Yangon City.

On the same day, His Holiness Catholicos Karekin II and party served holy mass such as reading the Bible and praying at the Armenian Orthodox Church.

As efforts are being made to revitalize the Armenian faith because number of Armenians and its faith are lesser in Yangon, some persons join the faith, Mr Steven disclosed.

According to the Law on the Preservation and Protection of Ancient Buildings, the religious edifices including pagodas, stupas, temples, monasteries, brick monasteries, public rest house and ordination halls, the buildings related to the faiths and brick mounds are inclusive of ancient buildings.

As such, the Armenian Orthodox Church becomes one of the ancient buildings to be maintained and protected by the people.

The 157 years old Armenian Orthodox Church established in 1863 of colonial era is one of the historic urban heritages in Yangon City.

Translated by Than Tun Aung





## ASEAN Para Games postponed to October over pandemic

THE ASEAN Para Sports Federation (APSF) has postponed its 10th ASEAN Para Games for the third time to 3-9 October in the Philippines.

The 2020 ASEAN Para Games were originally scheduled to take place from 18 to 24 January and first pushed back to 21-27 March due to technical problems.

The APSF and the Philippines Local Organizing Committee announced the biennial Games' second postponement from 26 May to 6 June last month due to the coronavirus. The motto for the 2020 Games is "We Win As One".

The ASEAN Para Games is a biannual multi-sport event held after every Southeast Asian Games involving disabled athletes from the current 11 South-east Asian countries.

Participating athletes have a variety of disabilities ranging from spastic, cerebral palsy, mobility disabilities, visual disabilities, amputated to intellectual disabilities. The ASEAN Para Games is under the regulation



A Vietnam Para-athlete with his teammate competes during the 4x100 metre final during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Para Games in Manila 19 December 2005. PHOTO: AFP

of the ASEAN Para Sports Federation (APSF) with supervision by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the Asian Paralympic Committee and is

traditionally hosted by the country where the Southeast Asian Games took place.

Its headquarters is in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where

the first ASEAN Para Games took place. On 14 to 20 January 2014, Myanmar hosted its seventh games in Nay Pyi Taw. — Kyaw Khin ■

## ASEAN Football Federation to reschedule competitions

THE ASEAN Football Federation (AFF) will reschedule several competitions slated for the next four months, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, according to the federation's website.

A total of four events will be moved to later dates this year. The first postponed event will be the AFF Women's Championship and will take place in May in the Philippines. Three other postponements are the AFF U18 Women's Championship, the AFF U16 Boys' Championship, and the AFF U19 Boys' Championship, which were originally scheduled in Indonesia in June, July and August respectively. However, the 2020 AFF Suzuki Cup, scheduled for November this year, will go ahead as planned. AFF U15 Girls' Championship, AFF Futsal Championship, AFF Futsal Club Championship, and AFF Beach Football Championship will be held later in the year. — Kyaw Khin ■

## IOC to set new Olympic date in 3 weeks: source

GENEVA — The International Olympic Committee will set dates for the rescheduled Tokyo Olympics in about three weeks, a source familiar with the matter said Thursday.

According to the source, the IOC may decide to hold the games in spring as requested by international sports federations to avoid the hottest weeks of the Tokyo summer.

After weeks of uncertainty amid the widening coronavirus pandemic, the IOC, local organizers and the Japanese government announced on Tuesday that the Olympics and Paralympics were being delayed until 2021.

They said the games will be held no later than the summer of 2021.

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Friday it was not realistic to postpone the games by just a few months in the face of the fast-spreading virus, while a delay of two years would "make it seem like a different games altogether."

On Thursday, IOC President



A man walks past an advert for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics on 25 March, 2020 in Tokyo, Japan. PHOTO: KYODO

Thomas Bach held a conference call with the 33 international sports federations to discuss options, before further consultations with other bodies such as athletes' representative groups, sponsors and broadcasters.

In Wednesday's media teleconference, Bach was asked about the possibility of the Games happening before next summer.—Kyodo News ■

## How the coronavirus has hit global sport

PARIS — The Tokyo Olympics and Euro 2020 have both fallen victim to the spread of the coronavirus pandemic with global sports coming to a complete standstill.

Here, AFP Sport looks at the events impacted by the virus which had killed more than 23,000 people around the world at 1900 GMT Thursday.

### TOKYO OLYMPICS

The International Olympic Committee issued a joint statement with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Tuesday postponing the Tokyo Games until next year. Only two days earlier, IOC president Thomas Bach insisted time was on his side as he gave himself up to four weeks to reach a decision.

### FOOTBALL

Internationals  
Euro 2020, scheduled to take place in 12 European cities from 12 June to 12 July has been put off until 2021. In a knock-on effect, the women's Euro scheduled for 7 July to 1 August, 2021, will be postponed along with the Nations League final stages.

The Copa America has been

moved from 12 June-12-July 2020 in Argentina and Colombia to summer 2021.

### Clubs

UEFA has postponed the Champions League, Europa League and Women's Champions League finals, originally scheduled for May but has given no new dates. In Italy, where more than 8,000 people have died, all matches — as well as all major sports events — have been suspended officially until at least April 3 although administrators say they are not expecting a resumption before 2 May.

The English Premier League has been suspended until 30 April.

In Germany, the Bundesliga is on hold until 2 April.

In Spain, all professional football has been suspended indefinitely.

In France, Ligue 1 and Ligue 2 and women's football have been suspended indefinitely.

Outside Europe, most top leagues have been affected, with the start of the J-League delayed, Major League Soccer in the United States and China's top-flight Super League put on hold. —AFP ■



International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach. PHOTO: AFP