

NATIONAL

COVID-19 emergency response committee holds first coord meeting

PAGE-2

BUSINESS

11 new projects to create over 3,200 jobs amidst COVID-19 outbreak

PAGE-5

# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Saturday, 4 April 2020

## State Counsellor holds video conference with COVID-19 frontline warriors from Kayin State



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds the video conference with COVID-19 frontline health care workers from Kayin State. PHOTO: MNA

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Chairperson of the National Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease

2019 (COVID-19), held a video conference from the conference room of the Presidential Palace yesterday morning with frontline health workers from Kayin State.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Chairperson of the National Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) first

gave some welcoming remarks. After that, Daw Thuzar Oo of Padonmar street, Pyay East ward, Dagon Township, Yangon Region; U Aung Myat, Vice President of the Association for

Monitoring of Migrant Workers from No.4 ward, Myawady Township; Police Sergeant Min Zaw Win from Police quarters, No. 5 ward, Myawady Township; SEE PAGE-3

### Update of COVID-19 surveillance (8:00 pm, 3-4-2020)

1. The Ministry of Health and Sports is actively surveying for COVID-19 for prevention, containment and treatment, searching for and quarantining people tested positive for the virus or who have been in close contact with positive cases and arranging hospital care if necessary, networking with local authorities for information on people returning from abroad and quarantine measures, and disseminating authentic news to the public.
2. There are 46 patients under observation between 2-4-2020 and 3-4-2020, 6 pm.
3. The National Health Laboratory (Yangon) released test results at 5:30 pm on 3-4-2020 showed that 55 people quarantined at hospitals tested negative for COVID-19.

SEE PAGE-3

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL

Myanmar discusses international monetary support for COVID-19

PAGE-2



NATIONAL

Well-wishers donate cash to COVID-19 national committee

PAGE-3



NATIONAL

ASEAN+3 finance officials discuss economic impact of COVID-19

PAGE-4



## COVID-19 emergency response committee holds first coord meeting



Vice President U Myint Swe delivers the speech at the meeting of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Containment and Emergency Response Committee in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

**T**HE first coordination meeting of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Containment and Emergency Response Committee was held at the Ministry of Home Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In his capacity as committee Chairman, Vice President U Myint Swe said the committee was formed with Notification No.53/2020 issued by the Office of the President on 30 March 2020, with him as Chairman and ten other members tasked with 11 duties.

The Vice President said the committee sets off to discover people who have been in close contact with COVID-19 positive persons before they exhibit symptoms. He said the committee will quarantine people returning from

overseas in collaboration with Nay Pyi Taw Council and state/regional governments. He said the committee will strictly administer community quarantine if necessary.

The Vice President said the committee will work together with government departments, the Red Cross, civil society organizations and NGOs to provide food, healthcare and moral support in the event of community quarantine. He said they will also collaborate for maintaining security, stability and rule of law in those areas as well.

The Vice President said that in case of community quarantines, the committee will ensure that essential stores and pharmacies remain open and important factories and workshops are operational as well. He said they will

also organize delivery services to community based facility quarantine areas and arrange funeral services for those who pass away from the virus.

He said they will uncover and take legal action against those spreading false information concerning the virus on social media and those hiking up prices of medical supplies and basic commodities for personal profit.

He said the committee will also assist in spraying disinfectants in public places, maintaining physical distances, disseminating crucial information and regulations at the ward and village level. He said they will monitor border and international entry/exit gates for illegal travel, security and corruption and administer relevant punishments to those who break the rules. The Vice President said

Myanmar had 20 positive cases as of 2 April 2020 and one of the patients passed away on 31 March. Thus, the public was urged to closely follow directives from the Ministry of Health and Sports and other official notifications more than ever; he said. He added that medical staff alone could not handle community based, hotel and home quarantine of people returning from abroad and require cooperation from other officials, volunteers and affiliated organizations.

The Vice President added that every nation right now is facing healthcare issues and economic hardships. He said most nations have arranged stimulus packages for its citizens and Myanmar has also reduced bank interest rates, are issuing low-interest loans, relaxing tax

payment periods and reducing collection of licence and permit fees and bridge/tollgate fees.

The Vice President urged meeting participants to discuss openly all issues and processes related to COVID-19 and then commenced the meeting. He responded to the meeting discussions and delivered the closing speech afterwards.

Present at the meeting were Union Ministers U Min Thu, Lt-Gen Soe Htut, Lt-Gen Sein Win, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Thura U Aung Ko, U Thant Sin Maung, U Thein Swe, Dr Myint Htwe and Dr Win Myat Aye, Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy, Air Force) General Mya Tun Oo, Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Soe Tint Naing, permanent secretaries, heads of department and other officials.—MNA  
(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## Myanmar discusses international monetary support for COVID-19

UNION MINISTER for Planning, Finance and Industry U Soe Win attended a High-Level teleconference with ASEAN+3 member states, Mongolia, Timor-Leste, World Bank, IMF, ADB and AIIB yesterday.

Ms Victoria Kwakwa, Vice Chairperson for Asia-Pacific Region of World Bank, Vice Chairpersons of International Finance Corporation and Multilateral Investment Agency, and Director Mr Changyong Rhee of IMF led the discussion.

They discussed temporary shock on the global supply chain due to COVID-19, crisis response facility of Asia-Pacific countries, and low interest loans from the World

Bank and IMF regarding the containment, prevention and treatment of the virus.

Union Minister U Soe Win then said the COVID-19 Fund has K100 billion to supply loans for businesses facing economic repercussions from the virus at 1 per cent interest rate for a one-year period.

He said the Hluttaw session in April will discuss the US\$ 50 million loan from the World Bank for funding preparations against COVID-19. He said the Ministry of Health and Sports will acquire US\$ 4 million from the Greater Mekong Sub-Region Health Security Project from ADB loans.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Ministers for Plan-



Union Minister U Soe Win attends a High-Level teleconference with ASEAN+3 member states, Mongolia, Timor-Leste, World Bank, IMF, ADB and AIIB in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

ning, Finance and Industry U Maung Maung Win, U Sett Aung and Dr Min Ye Paing Hein, and departmental officials. — MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

# “People are the key”

## State Counsellor holds video conference with COVID-19 ...

FROM PAGE-1

spoke about the huge challenge they had to face when Myanmar workers returned in large numbers from Thailand to Myanmar, general knowledge about health and understanding about COVID-19 of Myanmar migrant workers returning via Myawady, cooperation of Myanmar workers, the concerns of homecoming Myanmar migrant workers about future job opportunities and difficulties they are facing, need to issue health certificates after completion of the quarantine period, to give health educational briefings and health protection to drivers, safety from dangers for homecoming Myanmar migrant workers, the situation regarding measures being undertaken for security and rule of law, and the difficulties being faced by them. In response, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi provided an explanation of the measures being undertaken by the Union Government.

Afterwards, in her concluding remarks, the State Counsellor said that she was very happy to have the opportunity to have discussions in this manner. During this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, when the need was more for individuals to be closer at the mind level, there was



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds the video conference with COVID-19 frontline health care workers from Kayin State.

PHOTO: MNA

a need to be far from each other at the physical level. To be able to overcome the present challenge in the best possible way, all of us need to cooperate in unity with regards to the restrictions being placed out of necessity. If all of

us are able to follow the rules and regulations, we would all be able to control the situation even if it were not possible to completely halt the uncontrollable spread of COVID-19.

That is why I believe that all the

people would be able to individually work with a sense of duty for themselves, for their families, for their communities and for the country. — MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Myaing)

## Well-wishers donate cash to COVID-19 national committee



Deputy Minister Dr Mya Lay Sein receives the cash donation from the well-wishers for the National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

THE National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) welcomed donations of cash by well-wishers at the Ministry of Health and Sports in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Deputy Minister Dr Mya Lay Sein, on behalf of the Secretary (2) of the central committee, received the donations. On behalf of the donors, U Saw Valentine, the member of Union Civil Service Board, explained the donations. The Deputy Min-

ister expressed thanks for donations and returned certificates of honour.

The donations on 3 April included K4.3801 million from UCSB and K3 million from National Unity Party. — MNA

(Translated by TTN)

## Update of COVID-19 surveillance (8:00 p.m., 3-4-2020)

FROM PAGE-1

4. Among the 19 confirmed cases, health conditions have been stable for the virus-positive person in Teddim General Hospital, Chin State, the 9 people in Waibargi Specialist Hospital, Yangon, the patient in Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital, the patient in Shan State (North) General Hospital who was transferred from Kyaukme General Hospital, Lashio, and the 4 people in Bago Region General Hospital who transferred from the general hospitals in Pyay and Paukaung.

The two patients in Waibargi hospital are under strict isolation.

5. Myanmar had 20 COVID-19 positive cases between 23-3-2020 and 3-4-2020. The public is urgently advised to closely follow regulations and guidelines from the Ministry of Health and Sports to protect themselves, their families and their communities.

Ministry of Health and Sports

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

**ACTING CHIEF EDITOR**Aye Min Soe  
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**

Kyaw Myaing

**SENIOR EDITOR**

Aungthu Ya

**SENIOR TRANSLATORS**Zaw Htet Oo  
Aung Khin**INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITOR**Ye Htut Tin,  
Aung Htein,  
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**LOCAL NEWS EDITORS**Tun Tun Naing (Editor),  
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**TRANSLATORS**Hay Mar Tin Win,  
Ei Myat Mon,  
Kyaw Zin Lin,  
Kyaw Zin Tun**REPORTER**Nyein Nyein Ei,  
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**PHOTOGRAPHER**Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar  
Kyaw Zeya**COMPUTER TEAM**Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,  
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,  
Sanda Hnin, Thein Htwe,  
Nyi Lin Thu**EDITORIAL SECTION**(+95) (01)8604529,  
Fax – (+95) (01) 8604305**CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION**San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,  
Hotline - 09 974424114**ADVERTISING & MARKETING**(+95) (01) 8604530,  
Hotline - 09 974424848  
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com  
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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gnlmdaily@gmail.com  
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com  
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## Public notification on temporary power cut

1. The Myaungtaga-Hlinethaya 230KV electric transmission line encountered a fault at 1:55 pm yesterday and cut off power to the National Power Grid for 35 minutes.

2. Close inspection revealed that a motor vehicle hit transmission poles 5 and

6 of the Myaungtaga-Hlinethaya transmission line which hit No.7 (33KV) transmission line in Myaungtaga Industrial Zone and sparked a fire. The heat affected the 230KV line and temporarily cut off power to the entire power grid.

3. The Department of

Electric Power Transmission & System Control was able to restore 66 per cent of nationwide electricity at 2:30 pm and 100 per cent at 5:05 pm.

4. Power stations and sub-power stations across the nation were temporarily cut off to regulate the power flow

after the accident, resulting in a power cut for a certain period.

5. We apologize to the public for any inconveniences incurred during the power cut.—Ministry of Electricity and Energy

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## ASEAN+3 finance officials discuss economic impact of COVID-19



Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Win attends the ASEAN+3 Finance and Central Bank Vice Governors special teleconference yesterday. PHOTO:MNA

DEPUTY Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry attended the ASEAN+3 Finance and Central Bank Vice Governors special teleconference yesterday.

The meeting was also attended by Vice Governors of Central Banks of ASEAN nations, China, Japan and South Korea, and officials from the ASEAN Secretary-General Office and ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO).

The meeting discussed financial and economic situation in ASEAN region, developing the currency market, and provided their opinions on issues and challenges created by the spread of COVID-19.—MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## MFF pledges sufficient fish for local consumption amidst Coronavirus outbreak

AMIDST the Coronavirus outbreak, Myanmar Fisheries Federation-MFF announced yesterday that there was enough fish and fish products for local consumption for everyone.

“Don’t worry for fish and fishery products. There are sufficient food for local consumption,” said MFF’s General Secretary U Win Kyaing yesterday.

Myanmar people are worried about food shortage after the panic buying following the COVID-19 infections were confirmed in the country.

“Fish export was down about 80 per cent. Local fish consumption is also down after the festivals stopped and restaur-

ants also closed in the country. Price of fish at the wholesale fish market is also down. Fish price will not rise,” said U Win Kyaing.

Fearing food shortage, people have been sweeping store shelves, but international agencies and food experts have warned the pandemic could seriously disrupt global food supply chains and send prices soaring.

There are over 500,000 acres of fish and prawn farms across the country.

Myanmar exported 340,000 tons of fishery products worth \$530 million in the 2013-2014FY, 330,000 tons worth \$480 million in the 2014-2015FY, 360,000 tons worth \$500 million in the 2015-

2016FY, 430,000 tons worth \$600 million in the 2016-2017FY, 560,000 tons worth \$700 million in the 2017-2018FY, and over

580,000 tons in the 2018-2019FY, according to the Commerce Ministry.—Min Thit (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)



Workers collecting fishes at a fish market in Yangon. PHOTO: MIN THIT

## Myanmar export value exceeds US\$ 1,000 mln in January

MYANMAR’S export value for January in 2019-2020FY registered US\$ 979.91 million and border export was valued at US\$ 508.25 million, amounting to a total of US\$ 1,488.16 million.

Normal import value is at US\$ 1,772.07 million and border

import is at US\$ 280.13 million, with a total of US\$ 2,052.20 million. The trade value for January 2019-2020FY for Myanmar was US\$ 3,540.36 million and total trade deficit is at US\$ 564.04 million. Myanmar’s export value for October to January 2019-2020

FY was at US\$ 3,702.21 million and border export was at US\$ 2,548.09 million, a total of US\$ 6,250.30 million. The import value was at US\$ 5,945 million and border import value was at US\$ 1,097.46 million, a total of US\$ 7,042.46 million.

The total trade value from October to January 2019-2020 FY was at US\$ 13,292.76 million and total trade deficit was at US\$ 792.16 million, according to the monthly statistics by the Central Statistical Organization.—MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

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

## 11 new projects to create over 3,200 job opportunities amidst COVID-19 outbreak

THE Myanmar Investment Commission-MIC approved 11 new projects yesterday in the manufacturing, construction and other services sector with investments of over US\$555 million and over K 51 billion.

The investment includes expansion of capital by 13 existing projects.

The projects will create over 3,200 job opportunities for Myanmar citizens.

The MIC granted its approval at its meeting 5/2020 held in Yangon.

The meeting was attended by MIC Chairman U Thaung Tun and 10 commission members.

Myanmar Investment Commission has systematically approved the labor intensive projects to create job opportunities to minimize the impact of workers on the effects of Coronavirus (COVID-19).

By the end of March 2020, the countries with the largest investment in Myanmar were Singapore, the People's Republic of China and Thailand. The top sector is oil & gas sector, accounted for 26.94%, followed by the power sector, accounted for 26.26% and manufacturing sector, accounted for 14.18% of the total permitted amount of foreign investment.

—MNA



Union Minister U Thaung Tun attends the Myanmar Investment Commission meeting in Yangon yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

## MRF suggests mitigating Coronavirus-affected rice sector

By Nyein Nyein

MYANMAR Rice Federation (MRF) has made a six-point suggestion to the government to mitigate the impact over the rice sector and to heal the repercussions caused by the Covid-19 outbreak and spread, according to MRF.

MRF has held its management committee special meeting on 2 April 2020 attended by the chairperson, the vice-chairpersons, the general secretary and the committee members.

MRF has suggested the following six points to the government: to store the rice while reserving the export quota starting from 20 April 2020 onwards; to coordinate with the governmental departments in order to ensure the convenient and smooth process for the traders; to export the rice via Yangon or border routes and for the big players as well as for the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) businessmen; to help the stability of the local market, and to timely distribute the rice to the areas in need.

They also suggest making arrangements by the govern-

ment to enable them to store and purchase the rice in April and May so as to ensure the stability of the price and market condition as well as to keep the rice reserved.

They suggest for the rice traders to coordinate with the government in planning the promotion of the local market demand for the farmers to get reasonable profit in summer paddy yielding season. They also suggest calling for the peasant rights protection and promotion group and agricultural production management team to announce the basic rice price K550,000 per 100 baskets during the outbreak of Covid-19.

Additionally, MRF suggests for the government to grant the loans to the rice millers, traders, and exporters to enable them to store and purchase paddy and rice because the outbreak of Covid-19 can have a negative impact on the export, milling, and trading sectors.

At the end of the meeting, the federation patron expressed thanks to donors, MRF, and traders.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

## Travellers barred but cargo trucks allowed on China-Myanmar borders

By Nyein Nyein

DESPITE the suspension of travellers passing through China-Myanmar border crossings, China has permitted cargo trucks to travel through two land borders out of six in Muse district, said Vice-Chairman U Min Thein of Muse Rice Commodity Depot.

To control the spreading of Covid-19, China strictly controls border areas. This being so, China strictly curbs unnecessary passing through borders and has suspended border checkpoints regarding the residents starting from 1 April, he added.

"China closed the borders for the local people starting from 1 April. But they permit the cargo trucks to pass through Manwain

and Kyainsankyawt borders. But the truck conductors are not allowed to pass the borders. We normally export rice, broken rice and variety of beans to China," he stated.

Starting from 1 April, China has suspended crossing of the people to the Republic of China through Muse district border crossings such as Manwain, Hsinphyu, Nandaw, Kyainsankyawt, Pansai (Kyukoat) and Manhero.

However, China permits the passage of cargo trucks through Manwain and Kayinsankyawt borders.

Therefore, the bilateral border trade has declined by 25 per cent since 1 April, according to Muse Rice Commodity Depot.

At present, China grants

passage through only two border checkpoints for trading. Myanmar exports 400 truckloads of watermelon and muskmelon and over 200 truckloads of rice and variety of beans to China, he added.

With the strict control imposed upon the border, the Chinese traders are only contacting Myanmar traders over the phone, he added.

The four borders linking between China and Myanmar are Muse in northern Shan State, Lwejel in Kachin State, Chin Shwehaw in northeastern Shan State and Kampaiti in Kachin State. Muse border is the largest trade transaction zone between the two neighbours.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

## \$35 mln worth export/import licences issued via online system in two days

By Nyein Nyein

EXPORT/import licences were issued via the online system and valued at over US\$35 million in two days according to the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce on 3 April.

The trade department issued the export/import licences through the online system starting from 1 April after scrutinizing to ensure the traders' convenience in the event of Covid-19 spread.

The department has issued 46 export and import licences through the online system and

they have been valued at over \$15 million on 1 April while the department issued 67 licences valuing at over \$20 million on 2 April.

The entrepreneurs can apply for the export and import licences through the online system as well as at the department.

Starting from 9 April, the department will allow the entrepreneurs to apply for the licences only via the online system for 91 import items and 73 export items.

The department has already announced to the traders and entrepreneurs that the issuing

of licences for online permitted items may be extended depending upon the requirement.

The department will issue the licence through the online system not only for the cut-make-pack (CMP) garment import licence, which has already been issued but also for other 164 export and import items such as medicines and medical supplies, hospital equipment, foodstuffs, fertilizers, palm oil, edible products, dairy products, electronics items, energy, power, motorbike and bicycle, natural gas and sugar.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

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# Coronavirus information from around the world

Measures taken by German officials to slow the spread of the coronavirus are starting to show effect.

## Coronavirus field hospital opens in London

Prince Charles opened a new 4,000-bed temporary hospital in a conference centre in east London on Friday, the first of several being built in Britain to deal with the coronavirus outbreak.

The new state-run National Health Service (NHS) Hospital is named after the trailblazing 19th-century nurse Florence Nightingale and has been built in just nine days.

## Corona beer producer halts brewing

Two Mexican brewers, including the producers of Corona beer, have said they are reducing production because of the health emergency in the country over the COVID-19 pandemic.

Grupo Modelo — whose brands include Pacifico and Modelo as well as Corona — said the measure was in line with the Mexican government's order to suspend all non-essential activities until April 30 to slow the spread of coronavirus.

## Brazil health minister has big job

As if leading his country's fight against coronavirus wasn't hard enough, Brazil's health minister has to deal with a boss, President Jair Bolsonaro, who criticizes, undermines and ignores him.

But Luiz Henrique Mandetta takes the far-right leader's snubs in his stride: "I'm working here," he says.

Tension has been brewing for weeks between the president known as the "Trump of the Tropics," who downplays COVID-19 as a "little flu," and the pediatric



The six patients are in serious condition. Private ambulances brought them from the Moselle region to Findel airport, Luxembourg. **PHOTO: CGDIS**

orthopedist tasked with making sure Brazil's health system doesn't collapse because of it.

## Military aircraft brings Grand Est patients to Toulouse

A French military aircraft touched down at Findel airport in Luxembourg earlier this Friday. The aircraft will bring six French Covid-19 patients to Toulouse.

Lux-Aiport took to Twitter to applaud the Greater Region's cooperation. The six patients are in serious condition. Private ambulances brought them from the Moselle region to Findel airport. Police and the head of CGDIS joined the escort at the Luxembourg border. The A330 aircraft took off for Toulouse at 1.30pm.

According to the Republicanain Lorraine, the transfer had initially been planned to take place via Lorraine airport. The patients were eventually brought to Findel airport instead due to technical problems.

## Drive-thru coronavirus testing in UAE

A drive-through coronavirus screening centre in the UAE capital Abu Dhabi has become a go-to destination for many wanting reassurance during the pandemic.

The facility, believed to be the first of its kind in the Gulf, greets around 600 people a day in the 12 hours it is in service.

The test is free for the elderly, pregnant women and anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19. Others can get tested for 370 dirhams (\$100). A nurse approaches the car to take the passengers' temperatures and then takes a nasal swab — a five-minute procedure.

## Iran coronavirus death toll rises 134 to 3,294

Iran on Friday announced 134 more deaths from the novel coronavirus, bringing the officially confirmed total to 3,294.

Health ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour told a news conference that 2,715 new infections had been confirmed in the past 24 hours, taking the total to 53,183. Iran is one of the countries worst-hit by the coronavirus pandemic and has been struggling to contain the outbreak since it reported its first deaths on February 19. Jahanpour said 17,935 of those hospitalised with the virus had recovered, while 4,035 were in a critical condition.

## Germany's virus curbs are working

Measures taken by German officials to slow the spread of the

coronavirus are starting to show effect, the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) for disease control said on Friday. "We are seeing that the spread of the virus is getting slower... it's working," said RKI president Lothar Wieler, stressing that restrictions on public life "need to be maintained" and it was too early to hail victory.

## Nigerian man shot dead for flouting virus lockdown

A Nigerian man has been shot dead for allegedly flouting a stay-at-home order aimed at curbing the spread of coronavirus, police and a lawmaker said on Friday.

Nigeria has introduced a raft of measures, including lockdowns of major cities, to try to contain the virus, which has infected 184 people, two of them fatally.

Joseph Pessu, a resident of the oil city of Warri in the southern state of Delta, was killed on Thursday by a soldier deployed to enforce the lockdown, the sources said.

"The incident occurred yesterday with the youths protesting," state police spokesman Onome Onowakpoyeya told AFP.

Angry young people lit fires in the streets but police later restored calm, he said.

## Applause in Europe, lights in India

Prime Minister Narendra Modi called on Indians to hold candles and mobile phones aloft for nine minutes on Sunday to dispel the "darkness and uncertainty" of the coronavirus crisis.

On Thursday, the confirmed number of coronavirus cases in India passed 2,000 with 53 deaths, although some experts say that the country of 1.3 billion people is testing too few people.

India has been under lockdown since 25 March, leaving millions of migrant workers suddenly jobless, and prompting hundreds of thousands to try and get home to their home villages, often on foot. "Friends, amidst the darkness spread by the Corona pandemic, we must continuously progress towards light and hope," Modi said in an address to the nation on Friday.

"We must defeat the deep darkness of the crisis, by spreading the glory of light in all four directions."

## Controls in place for those thinking of holidaying

This Friday, French police will be setting up reinforced controls to continue implementing containment measures as the Easter holidays approach.

French Minister of the Interior, Christophe Castaner, told Parisien the objective was to dissuade potential holidaymakers, using reinforced checks in major cities, stations, roads and tourist destinations. On TF1, Prime Minister Edouard Philippe supported the motion on Thursday evening, reminding the public there must be no holidays.

## New coronavirus detection test developed

Siemens Healthineers, a specialist technology supplier in the medical sector, has developed a coronavirus detection test in its Esch-sur-Alzette laboratory.

The test has been designed to be used in medium-sized laboratories, such as those in hospitals.

Sebastian Kronmueller, head of molecular diagnostics, said the molecular diagnostic test would help to combat the global pandemic.

It is designed to help researchers positively identify the virus in less than three hours, which would in turn allow healthcare professionals to treat their patients as quickly and accurately as possible.

REFERENCES  
AFP; RTL News Updates



Customers stand on circles marked on the ground to maintain social distancing as they wait to enter the Reliance Mart mall during a government-imposed nationwide lockdown as a preventive measure against the COVID-19 coronavirus in Ahmedabad, India on 26 March, 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

# Witch-hunts shouldn't be allowed to take place



False information about the novel coronavirus poses a major, life-endangering problem for social media users. PHOTO: FILE/AFP

By Khin Maung Myint

AS the threats of the COVID-19 is growing it is getting on the nerves of the people around the world and our country is no exception. Peoples' tempers are becoming edgy. If we cannot control and contain that situation properly it can lead to undesirable consequences.

Today, the social media, i.e: the Facebook, which is the popular choice of our people is crowded with ugly confrontations, live-streamed by one or the other of the bystanders or even by those who were involved. Heated arguments that sometimes turned into blows are becoming frequent. It is only natural that in such times when people are overcome with anxieties and frights, their tempers are on the edges. In such a volatile situation they can flare up into unnecessary confrontations.

Those who use the Facebook regularly may be accustomed to such scenes before, but recently these are becoming more frequent. As more and

more people are staying home, hopefully such incidents will decrease. However, we should be mindful that such conditions are prime situations for saboteurs to exploit. Whenever, there was such a situation, we had witnessed that the undesirable elements exploited it to their advantages.

To cite a few instances, first there was the riots of 1967, which started out as a rally against the rice shortage problem. It was diverted to take the form of a racial conflict. Here, I will not be going into detail on that matter as it was a thing of the past. The second major chaos was during the 1988 student up-rising that led to the nationwide demonstrations. During those two incidents, while the peoples' bloods were boiling with anxiety, enthusiasm and anger, extra-judicial killings and reckless burnings took place, due to instigations.

Though the present situations may differ in nature from those two incidents, people today are tense with anxiety and fright.

These are catalysts for a volatile situation, meaning: the slightest instigations can make the situations get out of control. Authorities should not let the vigilantes take charge of the situations in the residential areas, but law and order must be enforced by those who are responsible. Some residential areas are starting to restrict traffics and comings and goings of strangers in their areas to prevent infected people entering or staying there. It is understandable that they should be wary of the prevailing situations and praise them for their awareness of the extent of the present dangers, but they shouldn't take the situations into their hands.

They should report the matter to the authorities if there are anything suspicious in their neighborhood and the authorities should take prompt actions to check on their reports. If there should be a delay, undesirable instigations will explode the situations out of proportions. If absolutely necessary it should be the authorities who must condon off or as it is becoming popular, lockdown, if you like, communities, streets, wards, villages and even towns.

It is undeniable that the public participations is of great importance at such a time. As members of the public, we must obey and adhere to the emergency rules and instructions set by the government. As good citizens, we must report any foreigners or returnees from abroad staying in our residential areas without subjecting themselves to be checked or quarantined. We must report some returning migrant workers from the neighbouring countries who sneaked back into the country

and are evading quarantine and medical checks and those with symptoms who failed to report to the medical authorities and are staying at home. However, we should not take the matters into our own hands and demand those people not to stay in the area. It is the duty of the authorities to confront them.

If the ward administrative authorities are given that task, they should not let unauthorized persons crowding around the house and voicing their opinions freely, while live-streaming the situations with cell phone cameras. Such activities could lead to the misunderstanding of the real situations and could do more harm than good. Here, I would like to cite two incidents that occurred recently.

The first one was in downtown Mandalay. I am not sure what started it, as it was a live-streamed video clip uploaded by one of the parties involved. There was a very heated argument going on between two women. The one who wasn't in the video was accusing the other of hiding an infected visitor who arrived recently, in their home and demanding them to get that person out of their house. The other was denying that vehemently. The argument became more heated and unnecessary words were exchanged. The one who was accusing unnecessarily brought in religion and race, which was totally uncalled for. Bystanders, not visible in the scenes, were giving their opinions randomly, which in my opinion further stoked the heat of the confrontation.

The second incident was in the suburb of Yangon. Some people besieged a house and demanded not to keep sick peo-

ple at home. The resident of the house was trying to explain but some women were aggressively demanding. One lady uploaded a message on the Facebook that those people belong to a certain faith, but they are not, which I learned later from the Facebook statuses exchanged between the aggressor and another bystander. This could lead to racial or religious conflicts unnecessarily.

Today, as more people can afford to possess a cell phone and have easy access to the Facebook, such undesirable scenes are being live-streamed and random opinions and comments uploaded. Such activities could lead to undesirable consequences. What some people are doing resembles the witch-hunts of the medieval Europe, where some innocent people were stoned to death after being accused of practising witchcraft. Hopefully the two incidents ended without any bloodshed. However, if such behaviours or activities are allowed to continue, some saboteurs will exploit it for their own gains as in the two incidents of extra-judicial killings mentioned at the beginning of this article.

Also, as many are becoming jobless and have no income as their businesses or jobs were stopped functioning, people could become desperate. This will lead to stealing, looting and robbing. Even now we are hearing of such crimes being committed. They could become rampant. The authorities may have plans to maintain law and order, but would like to suggest that those plans should be viable and sufficient.

In conclusion I would like to say - "Please don't let the witch-hunt like activities to take place". It will lead to chaos.

## DIGITAL MAPPING

# Google to publish user location data to help govts tackle virus

GOOGLE will publish location data from its users around the world from Friday to allow governments to gauge the effectiveness of social distancing measures put in place to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, the tech giant said.

The reports on users' movements in 131 countries will be made available on a special website and will "chart movement

trends over time by geography," according to a post on one of the company's blogs.

Trends will be display "a percentage point increase or decrease in visits" to locations like parks, shops, homes and places of work, not "the absolute number of visits," said the post, signed by Jen Fitzpatrick, who leads Google Maps, and the company's chief health officer

Karen DeSalvo.

"We hope these reports will help support decisions about how to manage the COVID-19 pandemic," they said.

"This information could help officials understand changes in essential trips that can shape recommendations on business hours or inform delivery service offerings."

SOURCE : AFP



We know where you are. PHOTO: AFP

# Do our best now in anticipation of worsening situation in the future

**W**ITH the return of thousands of Myanmar migrant workers from Thailand crossing the border gates, Myanmar has experienced the biggest challenge in quarantining them in facilities to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The workers' knowledge about the virus, and cooperation with the authorities, are of paramount importance for the success of the facility quarantine in fighting the COVID-19 disease.

Also, it is a national duty to explain to them about the guidelines and directives issued by the ministries to control the COVID-19 infection to ensure that they cooperate with the authorities without

fail and they understand that violations of the rules could result in punishment under the law.

Preparations should focus not only on control and treatment of the infectious disease, including stockpiling of medicines and medical equipment, but also on preventing shortages of basic supplies and food for the people.

At the centre of our response to the global pandemic, a more comprehensive approach is needed with communities. Most importantly, each citizen is responsible to cooperate with the authorities and take appropriate measures, as their contribution is playing an important role in minimizing the health, as well as socio-economic impact of the pandemic during this time of crisis.

Amidst the rapid spread of COVID19 and continuing challenges, the World Health Organization yesterday emphasized the role of society and of all governments in the South-East Asia Region to prevent a long-haul with the pandemic and avert further loss of precious human lives and other resources.

"Every case, cluster and evidence of community transmission would need to be aggressively responded to.

Basic public health measures, such as detection of active cases, isolation, testing, treatment and contact tracing, are among our most powerful tools. Strong surveillance is needed to assess and guide evidence-based measures," Dr Khetrpal Singh said in the statement.

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Control and Emergency Response Committee, led by Vice President U Myint Swe, held a coordination meeting yesterday, calling on regional and state authorities to ensure preparations are in place for effectively responding to the possible situation, which will be worse than the current situation.

Preparations should focus not only on control and treatment of the infectious disease, including stockpiling of medicines and medical equipment, but also on preventing shortages of basic supplies and food for the people. To effectively and quickly respond during an emergency situation, the onus must be on regional authorities.

We must do our best now, in anticipation of a worsening situation in the future.

## 4<sup>th</sup> year performance of the Supreme Court of the Union

### The Supreme Court of the Union is the superior court of record and has supervisory powers over all courts in the Union and its decisions are binding upon all courts.

By Naing Linn Kyi  
PHOTO: HEIN SITHU



Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo.

**T**HE Supreme Court of the Union is doing its best in the fourth year of incumbent government for the development of state judiciary in two prongs for the greater good and finer development on physical aspect as well as moral aspect.

Emphasis is given to have the faith and trust of the people over the judicial system, and the endeavour is accelerated year on year.

With the motto "Advancing Justice Together for the greater good of all people", the Supreme Court of Myanmar is implementing for the right state judiciary.

"Elevating physical aspect includes upgrading the judicial buildings, setting up proper court appearances, creating judicial training schools to international standards. Enhancing moral aspect includes the linking of Myanmar judicial officers with the foreign partners to interact at seminars with a view to gain wider perspectives. Moreover, communications are also hooked up with the ministries and the government departments to understand the directive," said U Ko Ko Naing, Permanent Secretary of the Supreme Court.

For the implementation, the strategic plans are being drawn in advance such as that of 2015-2017 plans and 2018 - 2022 plans, and complied according to the plan.

**Upgrading physical aspects**  
Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo on 19 October 2019 opened a new Mandalay District Court building. The new district court building reflects such as that of uplifting the honour of the court, that of creating fair judicial aspect on the image, that of in conformity with the Supreme Court of Myanmar policy, aims and objectives, that of perfect court room appearances with (21) chambers, that of retiring restroom for judges, that of restrooms for law officers, that of guestroom, that of meeting rooms in perfect standardized enclosures.

**Raising awareness over judicial rulings**

The groundbreaking ceremony of Judicial College of the Union

Supreme Court was held at the projected site of the building on Naygya Street, Zawana Theikdi Ward, Ottarathira District, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area on 7 November 2019.

"Union Supreme Court laid down the Judicial College project to build an advanced judicial institution under the strategic goal which is under the five-year strategic judicial plan (2018-2022)," said U Ko Ko Naing, Permanent Secretary of the Supreme Court.

During 2019, tasks have been carried out such as that of the launching and updating of website of the Supreme Court of Myanmar; that of the preparation for uploading websites of judicial courts of (14) states and regions; that of the construction of "ruling content management system" (RCMS); that of easy collection on information on "Data Collecting System" (DCS); that of the Practice Note sets out the principles and framework of the Active Case Management System (ACMS).

Law-related handouts and pamphlets issued at different level judicial courts in Kachin State, Kayah State, Kayin State, Mon State and Shan State have been translated into different ethnic dialects and languages such as that of Kachin, Kayah, Poe Kayin, Sakaw Kayin, Mon, Shan and Pa-o

and distributed by the Supreme Court and My Justice. (My Justice is working towards increasing capacity within communities to understand and apply rights.)

Awareness enhancing of the public towards the judiciary proceedings and rulings has been conducted through media proficiency courses for the judicial officers. They are conducted with the motto such as "Developing relation and interaction with the news media and the public". A total of six workshops had been held on media relationships through the collaboration of the Supreme Court of Myanmar and the USAID - PRLM.

USAID is promoting the Rule of Law in Myanmar (PRLM) Project. It is with the purpose of building a transparent and inclusive justice sector as a critical step to improving legal rights for Myanmar's people in the wake of recent political transition.

During 2019, many judicial information officers representing the Supreme Court of Myanmar; Region and State judicial courts, District courts, Township courts have met and discussed with news media personnel for (211) times.

Law-related handouts and pamphlets issued at different level judicial courts in Kachin State, Kayah State, Kayin State, Mon State and Shan State have been translated into different ethnic dialects and languages such as that of Kachin, Kayah, Poe Kayin, Sakaw Kayin, Mon, Shan and Pa-o

Moreover, Judges from Regions and States also visited to PRC, India, Japan, Fiji in connection with judicial matters.

Among the judicial officers, the foreign trainees have been selected and sent to Australia, UK, Japan, South Korea, and PRC in pursue of Master's Degree and PhD Degree. In accordance with the MOU signed on 9 October 2014 between Singapore Legal Affairs Ministry and the Supreme Court of Myanmar, judicial officers from Myanmar have been sent for the ninth times to conduct joint study at Singaporean Courts.

**Capacity Building**  
In accordance with the MOU signed between the Supreme Court of Myanmar and the Indian National Judiciary Academy, the judges and law officers from Myanmar numbering (40) have been sent to India for capacity building propose at Bhopal National Judiciary Academy from 23 to 29 August 2019.

Law Officers are mostly sent

to Singapore, Thailand, Japan, PRC, and the Philippines for short term trainings and seminars.

The Supreme Court of Myanmar has laid down judicial strategic plan for five years (2018-2022) and making systematic reforms. The relevant performances have been reported beginning 2016.

Law courts at different levels have undergone reforms in structure as well in essence, and that the government has been providing with finance, budget, human resources and technical assistance.

**Judiciary Strategic Plan**  
Judiciary strategic plan for 2018 - 2022 has been laid down for further implementation with the reform motto such as "Advancing Justice Together for the greater good of all people" by the Supreme Court of Myanmar.

Law courts at different level have disposed and made final judgments on cases over (99 point 57) per cent from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019, the percentage is higher than the last year figure of (98) per cent. With a view to accomplish (100) per cent in 2020, priority is being given in this context.

**Handling Criminal Cases**  
Law courts at different level have disposed and made final judgments on cases over (99 point 57) per cent from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019, the percentage is higher than the last year figure of (98) per cent. With a view to accomplish (100) per cent in 2020, priority is being given in this context.

SEE PAGE-10



Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo poses for a group photo with Chief Justices from other countries at the 7<sup>th</sup> Council of ASEAN Chief Justices Meeting in Thailand on 23 November 2019. PHOTO: MNA

## Letter of gratitude sent to UMFCCI

THE National Central Committee on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Prevention, Containment and Treatment has sent letter expressing gratitude to the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) on 2 April.

The letter said the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on 11 March and Myanmar has put action plans to prevent, contain and treat the virus, as well as implementing solutions for long-term consequences and repercussions concerning it.

UMFCCI announced on 26 March that it and its affiliated associations are ensuring there is no deficit of basic commodities in the market and setting lower prices so as to alleviate economic hardships caused by COVID-19 on the general public.

The letter thanked UMFCCI for their contribution to the Union Government's efforts to prevent and contain COVID-19 and highlighted that collective strength can overcome any difficulties. —MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



### Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 3rd April, 2020)

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

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2020:** Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Upper Sagaing Region, Kachin and Chin States. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw, Magway, Bago and Yangon Regions, Kayah State and 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 (3-6) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Northern Shan and Chin States.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2020:** Generally fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2020:** Generally fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2020:** Partly cloudy.

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

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## 4<sup>th</sup> year performance of the Supreme Court of the Union

### FROM PAGE-9

#### Case Management Programme

Beginning 1 August 2018, the Case Management Programmes for criminal cases had started at different law courts in the states and regions, and that a total of (99) law courts have taken up and handled to January 2020. In July 2020, the programmes would be carried out at (109) township courts. During 2019, township law courts in Yangon East District and Yangon West District have started to handle the Case Management Programmes, which led the popularity of such system.

Therefore, percentage of cases disposed come up to (97 point 5) percent. "Case Management Programmes" shows efficacy and that the year 2019 saw case disposal on (109) percent in criminal cases and (139) percent in civil cases, totaling (124) percent.

#### Court-Led Mediation Pilot Programme

The "Launching Ceremony on Court-Led Mediation Pilot Programme" is held by the Supreme Court of the Union at Myanmar International Convention Center-II (MICC-II) in Nay Pyi Taw on 27 February 2019.

At the ceremony, the Chief Justice of the Union, in his opening speech, stated that alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms were being used in many countries since years ago and ADR system plays a vital role not only for the public's access to justice but also for the business opportunity of the country. As Myanmar people are being familiar with the amicable dispute resolution mechanism, the Supreme Court of the Union has tried to set up the Court-Led Mediation System since its first judicial strategic plan (2015-2017).

"Review made on 28 February 2020, the cases handed over to dispose off through Court-Led Mediation System had been successful on (24 point 02) per cent. Among the civil cases (16 point 29) percent had been settled. Many more cases were also disposed off successfully," according to Director-General Daw Tin Nwe Soe.

The system would be applied in the whole country beginning 2022.



Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo strikes the stake at the groundbreaking ceremony to build Judicial College of the Union Supreme Court in Nay Pyi Taw on 17 November 2019.

#### Changing of ruling authority at Judicial Courts

On 26 July 2019, the Supreme Court of Myanmar has issued Notification No (688/2019); (689/2019); (690/2019) with regard to the juvenile cases. In accord with the Child Law, the Township courts are conferred with powers to handle juvenile case. A separate Juvenile Court (Yangon Region) has been constituted to try juvenile cases that occur in 20 townships in the Yangon City Development Area. A separate Juvenile Court (Mandalay Region) has been constituted to try juvenile cases that occur at 5 townships in Mandalay City Development Area. Other townships have been constituted to try juvenile cases.

The Supreme Court of Myanmar on 16 December 2019 issued Notification No (1083/2019), and formed "Wa" Self-Administered Division Law Court to handle criminal cases and civil cases occurred in relevant townships.

#### Law Procedures

In 2018, various laws numbering (52) types under the purview of the Supreme Court of Myanmar have been amended, issued by-laws, drafted new laws.

On 20 August 2019, Union Parliament vide union law number (25/2019) recorded the 4th Amendment Bill on Union Judiciary Law. On 14 February 2020, Myanmar passed its new Insolvency Law, which aims to introduce a modern insolvency regime for investors and en-

trepreneurs. The law aims to protect micro, small, and medium enterprises by focusing on corporate rescue and debt rehabilitation.

#### Inspection of prisons

Union Chief Justice, Judges from Supreme Court of Myanmar, judges from States and Regions and Districts have visited and inspected various prisons in the country for (76) times. They inspected detention cells police stations for (637) times. They also inspected labor camps for (49) times. During the inspections, they called for the rights of the prisoners and related issues. Necessary directives were given, and that more cooperation is being exerted.

#### Improving Judicial tasks

Tasks being carried out for rule of law are as follows.

1. Case disposal and final judgment have been made to achieve (99 point 57) per cent.
2. Timely completion of cases and judgment in line with justice handled at five district courts and (43) township courts in expediting the matters.

3. Legal aid groups are formed in addition to reorganization of such groups in the states and regions as well as townships.

4. With a view to uplifting the skills of the judges, a legal subject book entitled "Review on International Commercial issues through legal aspects", has been published. The book has been taken up for discussions with relevant ministries as well as

private sector.

5. Drafting of curriculum and office rules and procedures in connection with Intellectual Property for the use of judges.

6. Issuance of directives in connection with children, vulnerable adults and special witnesses.

7. Issuance of directives for the notary publics and the lawyers in connection with money laundering issues.

8. Uploading information on the website of Supreme Court of Myanmar on the progress and work implementation of law courts in Yangon Region.

9. Translation and distribution of handouts and pamphlets on legal affairs in seven different ethnic languages such as Kachin, Kayah, Poe Kayin, Sakaw Kayin, Mon, Shan and Pa-O.

10. Release of timely information on crime and offence at law courts by meeting with news media over the cases that people have taken interest.

11. Court-Led Mediation Pilot Programme is in progress at two district level courts and two township level courts

#### Disposal of cases without delays

Delay in the judicial sphere is tantamount to loss of justice. In the proceeding of a case, the procedures must be correct in line with the prescribed laws, and that presentation of both sides must be considered seriously with fairness. Case Management Programme is not being a pro-

cess to dispose of the cases in a hurried manner, but to expedite the matter within the allocated timeframe with prescribed rules and regulations.

#### International Cooperation

Strategic Plan on judicial sphere and its reform tasks have been referred to UN agencies and that international cooperation are being accorded from partner countries. As the Union Chief Justice is the member of Council of ASEAN Chief Justices, Myanmar is participating in the ASEAN judiciary matters.

The Union Supreme Court and the Supreme Court of Singapore signed the Memorandum of Guidance as to Enforcement of Money Judgments on 11 February 2020. The signing ceremony was held at the meeting hall of the Union Supreme Court in Nay Pyi Taw.

#### Moving ahead with the tasks

Since the advent of incumbent government, People's Centred Policy has been the core strategy of the Supreme Court, and implementing the tasks with might and main. Tasks included disposing of the cases in a short time at different law courts; to expand the Case Management Programme in (25) district courts and (109) township courts; to expedite the judgments on the cases in the allocated timeframe; to expand the agenda on Court-Led Mediation Pilot Programme to six more township courts; to equip the court room with special witness interrogation enclosure; to issue relevant information with regards to civil cases and insolvency cases; to draft task plan on the establishment of commercial related law court; to draw work projects; to lay out program with regards to Court-Led Mediation Pilot Programme; to create Information Technology system; to elevate the skills of judges and the judicial officers; to come together for cooperation in the tasks such as that of the reform program of the Supreme Court of Myanmar; that of the cross-border civil cases and commercial cases; that of the cooperation among the judicial organizations in the region. With these tasks, the Supreme Court of Myanmar and the relevant judges and law officer at different levels would move ahead in the scheduled jobs.

(Translated by UMT (Ahlon))



## Light at tunnel's end: Wuhan's cautious reawakening

WUHAN — Cars are back on city streets and shoppers are strolling in malls again as life slowly returns to Wuhan. But the cradle of the global coronavirus pandemic remains under the shadow of the contagion.

The city of 11 million people — along with tens of millions more throughout the rest of Hubei province — was locked down in late January in an unprecedented and ultimately failed bid to contain the pathogen.

Hubei and its provincial capital Wuhan have accounted for the majority of China's officially reported 3,322 coronavirus deaths and 81,620 overall cases.

But with new infections now virtually nil — according to the much-questioned Chinese government figures — authorities have begun loosening restric-

tions on movement within the city and easing its isolation from the rest of the country.

**As a result, Wuhan is stirring again.**

AFP pictures and video, shot at the lockdown's height in late January and again this week after curbs began to ease, tell the story.

Then: eerily silent and empty streetscapes, closed shops, residents frantically stocking up on food and medicines, pervasive fear. Now: light yet growing road traffic, commerce sputtering back to life, and citizens ready to plan for the future again.

"If we don't keep striving, what else in this world is worth striving for?" said Waiwai, owner of a small cafe which reopened Sunday but for take-out only



Men stand on a bridge over the Yangtze River in Wuhan on 30 March after travel restrictions into the city were eased following more than two months of lockdown. PHOTO: AFP

owing to social-distancing rules.

But with China now on guard against a return wave of overseas coronavirus infections, Wuhan authorities on Friday made clear that business-as-usual would not

be returning anytime soon.

A government notice said re-opening the city brings the risk of infections from beyond its perimeter and that the health crisis remained "severe". — AFP

## Singapore to impose partial lockdown for a month

SINGAPORE — Singapore on Friday tightened its measures to curb the coronavirus spread that effectively amounts to a month-long partial lockdown, with people told to stay at home and most workplaces ordered to close, after an alarming increase in unlinked

local cases.

"We will close most workplaces except for essential services and key economic sectors," Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said on national television, adding that all schools and universities will switch to home-based learn-

ing.

"We have kept the outbreak under control, but looking at the trend, I am worried that unless we take further steps, things will get worse," he said.

Last week, Singapore began to see more local cases, nearly

half of which were not traceable to any source.

"This suggests that there are more people out there who are infected, but who have not been identified, and they may be passing the virus unknowingly to others," Lee said.

The stay-home rule will begin next Tuesday, with most business premises to be shuttered while educational institutions will all have to close from next Wednesday. While the government has this week introduced penalties that it plans to impose on noncompliant companies, the call for the public to stay home appears to be more of an advisory as no penalty has been announced for individuals who do not comply.

People are still allowed to go out to buy food at markets, or to get take-out from restaurants and other food outlets, Lee said, adding that they can also exercise in parks as long as they keep a safe distance from others. —Kyodo News ■



Social distancing markers are seen at a food outlet as authorities implement a social distancing measures to combat the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic on 2 April, 2020 in Singapore. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

## China-led AIIB to set up \$5 billion fund to tackle virus epidemic

BEIJING — The China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank said Friday that it will set up a fund worth \$5 billion to help its member countries tackle the economic turmoil triggered by the coronavirus pandemic.

The bank said it plans to take steps such as investing in infrastructure related to public health and lending money to manufacturers in its 102-member nations for the next one and a half years, adding it may expand the fund if the situation

further worsens.

Proposed by China in 2013, the AIIB was launched in December 2015. Japan and the United States are the only Group of Seven industrial powers that have not joined the bank. —Kyodo News ■



AIIB logo. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Delhi govt sets up 328 relief centres for 57,000 people: Kejriwal

NEW DELHI — Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday said that the Delhi government has set up 328 relief centres in the national capital to accommodate 57,000 people amid the countrywide lockdown due to coronavirus.

Addressing a digital press conference, Kejriwal said, "We have prepared 328 relief centres to accommodate 57,000 people. Anyone can come to these relief centres and stay here. We will take care of them." A total of 384 cases have been found in Delhi, following a rise of 91 cases in the last 24 hours in the city, the Chief Minister added. He stated that five people have died in the national capital due to coronavirus and one of them was a person who attended the Tablighi Jamaat event in Nizamuddin. — ANI ■

### Another Afghan city goes under quarantine as COVID-19 cases rise

KABUL — Pul-e-Khumri, the capital of northern Baghlan province is another city in Afghanistan that has been put in quarantine to contain the spread of COVID-19 in the country.

The decision has been taken in the wake of detection of two patients who have been infected with the novel coronavirus over the past couple of days and the daytime curfew would come into effect from Saturday. Talking to reporters, acting governor for Baghlan province Abdul Qadim Niazi said on Friday that a 21-day daytime curfew will be put in place from April 4 during which all government departments and private entities except health facilities will remain closed. The number of COVID-19 cases in Afghanistan, according to Wahidullah Mayar, spokesman for Public Health Ministry, has reached to 273 with the majority of them in western Herat province bordering Iran. According to Mayar, six patients have died since the outbreak of the virus in mid February in Afghanistan and 10 others have recovered. —Xinhua ■

## Biden says will talk soon with Trump on coronavirus response

WASHINGTON — Democratic White House hopeful Joe Biden said Thursday he was finalizing plans to speak by telephone with President Donald Trump about the coronavirus crisis and how to stem the deadly pandemic.

The administration suggested Wednesday that Biden, the former vice president and likely challenger to Trump in November's election, call the president to offer his assistance.

"I'm happy to hear he'll take my call," Biden told an online press conference. "My team is working with his team to set such a call up."

Coronavirus has stretched America's health care system to the breaking point.

More than 5,600 people have already died in the country. Of the one million confirmed and reported cases worldwide as of Thursday, 236,000 are in the United

States. Several Democrats have accused Trump of downplaying the seriousness of the outbreak early on, and Biden has joined in the criticism, saying Trump has fudged the response.

But Biden, who like most Americans remains hunkered down in his home, did stress how he has been offering his advice and proposing policies for weeks "for what I thought should be done." — AFP ■



Volunteers from the International Christian relief organization Samaritan's Purse set up an Emergency Field Hospital for patients suffering from the coronavirus in Central Park on 30 March, 2020 in New York. PHOTO: AFP

## No port in a storm: Australia tells virus-stricken cruise ships to go home

CANBERRA — Australia insisted Friday it would not let the crew of multiple virus-stricken cruise ships into the country, slapping aside suggestions it was falling short on legal and moral obligations.

More than a dozen ships are believed to be off Australia's coast, carrying around 15,000 crew and some experiencing outbreaks of coronavirus.

"We have issued notices to all of these ships to leave Australian waters," Australian Border Force Commissioner Michael Outram told local media Friday.

"If ever there was a time, I think, for ships to go back to where they're registered, it's probably during a time of a global pandemic like this."

Many vessels fly under flags of convenience — registered to countries such as Panama, the Bahamas and Liberia, which have scant capacity to screen or treat an influx of possible virus carriers.

The issue has become a

global problem, with ships looking for safe ports from Florida to Yokohama to Perth and angry authorities accusing the multi-billion dollar cruise industry of being reckless.

Australian authorities say they will not risk unleashing a wave of COVID-19-positive people into the country, burdening local health services that are already scrambling to increase

capacity.

Cruise ships have already accounted for almost 10 per cent of Australia's more than 5,000 infections and several deaths.

And the issue has become politically fraught, with local pundits dubbing the vessels "Death Ships" and one nervous state leader calling for the navy to intercept a cruise ship full of German tourists. — AFP ■



More than a dozen cruise ships are believed to be off Australia's coast, carrying around 15,000 crew and some experiencing outbreaks of coronavirus. PHOTO: AFP



Spanish soldiers are setting up temporary shelters for homeless people in a country where more than 10,000 people have now died. PHOTO: AFP

## US and Spanish deaths surge as world virus toll breaks 50,000

MADRID — The number of confirmed coronavirus deaths accelerated past 50,000 on Friday as the United States, Spain and Britain grappled with their highest tolls yet and the world economy took a massive hit.

The human scale of the pandemic has never been more stark — experts warning that more than one million cases of COVID-19 disease confirmed globally is probably only a small proportion of total infections as testing is still not widely available.

The United States accounts for around a quarter of confirmed cases but Europe is far from being out of danger — Spain reported more than 900 deaths in 24 hours on Friday, for the second day running. The virus has now killed more 10,000 people across Spain, but not 29-year-old Javier Lara, who has just returned home after being treated in an overburdened intensive care unit.

"I was panicking that my daughter would get infected. When I started showing symptoms, I said I wouldn't hold her or go near her, or change her nappies," he told AFP, describing his fear for his eight-week-old after facing death at the "worst moment in his life".

While Italy still leads the world in fatalities, France, Belgium and Britain have also been hard hit. The UK government is rushing to build field hospitals after a one-day toll of 569.

The battle waged by public health experts across the world ebbed and flowed on Friday, with German experts saying the rate of new infections is slowing thanks to lockdown measures, but Asian city-state Singapore confirming it would close schools and workplaces to fend off a possible upsurge in cases.

### China's 14 'martyrs'

The world economy has been pummeled by the virus and associated lockdowns, with more than half the population of the planet under some kind of stay-at-home order. Some 10 million people in the United States lost their jobs in the last two weeks of March, and economists warn it will get worse.

"No words for this," said Ian Shepherdson of Pantheon Macroeconomics. "Total layoffs between the March and April payroll surveys look destined to reach perhaps 16 to 20 million, consistent with the unemployment rate leaping to 13 to 16 per cent. In one month." — AFP ■

## Germany reports about 80,000 COVID-19 cases, death toll over 1,000

BERLIN — The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Germany has jumped by 6,174 to 79,696, and the death toll has risen by 145 to 1,017 in the last 24 hours, the Robert Koch Institute, country's federal agency said on Friday.

On Thursday, the country recorded 6,156 new cases and 140 deaths. Most of the cases have been recorded in Bavaria (20,237), North Rhine-Westphalia (16,606) and Baden-Wuerttemberg (16,059)

while Berlin has 3,202 cases.

Germany remains the third most affected country in Europe after Italy (1,15,242) and Spain (1,12,065) in terms of the number of COVID-19 patients, as per the data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. According to the WHO daily situation report, Europe has confirmed 503,006 cases, which accounts for more than half of global cases. And continent has recorded over 33,000 deaths. —ANI ■

# ADB warns global cost of virus could top \$4 trillion

MANILA — The coronavirus pandemic could cost the global economy \$4.1 trillion as it ravages United States, Europe and other major economies, the Asian Development Bank warned on Friday

The estimated impact is equivalent to nearly five per cent of worldwide output based on a range of scenarios, but the lender said losses from “the worst pandemic in a century” could be higher.

“The estimated impact could be an underestimate, as additional channels such as...possible social and financial crises, and long-term effects on health care and education are excluded from the analysis,” the ADB said.

The Manila-based bank said a shorter containment period could pare the losses to \$2 trillion.

The crisis has sent equity markets spinning as traders



Indonesia's President Joko Widodo (2<sup>nd</sup> r) examines a room while visiting the 2018 Asian Games athlete's village which has been converted into a hospital for COVID-19 coronavirus patients in Jakarta on 23 March, 2020. PHOTO: AFP

fret over the long-term impact on the world economy, though governments and central banks have stepped in to ease the pain, pledging more than \$5 trillion in stimulus and easing monetary policy.

Officially reported COVID-19 cases worldwide topped the one million mark on Thursday, with tens of thousands dead, while

there are warnings the numbers will continue to balloon as the disease rapidly spreads.

With billions of people in lockdown and economies at a standstill, the ADB said Asia is forecast to grow 2.2 per cent this year, its slowest pace since a 1.7 per cent expansion during the Asian financial crisis in 1998.

—AFP ■

## Italy's Conte demands more 'courage' from EU to fight virus

ROME — Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte on Friday extended his feud about coronavirus money with EU Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen in the pages of a newspaper.

“Dear Ursula,” he wrote in a letter to La Repubblica, “I hear ideas (from you) not worthy of Europe. The decisions we make today will be remembered for years.”

He called for “more ambition, more unity and more courage” from the EU, in response to a letter from von der Leyen in the same paper on Thursday where she had promised more support for Italy.

Conte wants the whole bloc to share the risk by issuing billions of euros in so-called coronabonds, helping Italy to borrow more cheaply to fight a pandemic that has killed nearly 14,000 people and shattered the country's economy.

Von der Leyen has sided with Germany and some other

northern European countries, who argue that pooled risk could raise their borrowing costs. She prefers an EU-wide guarantee that could raise 100 billion euros (\$108 billion) for the specific purpose of helping national unemployment schemes.

Conte said he “welcomed” the EU's initiative but made it clear that he still wanted the coronabonds.

### 'Many more weeks'

“When fighting a war, you must do everything possible to win and equip yourself with all the tools needed for the reconstruction,” Conte wrote.

This required “innovative tools such as the European Recovery Bonds”. He said the bonds were “useful to finance the extraordinary efforts that Europe will have to put in place” and “are in no way aimed at sharing the debt that each of our countries has inherited from the past”.—AFP ■

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

#### M.V GENIUS STAR VII

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V GENIUS STAR VII VOY. NO. (MK2028E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-3 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 MULTIMAX SHIPPING PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301928

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

#### M.V TRAMONTANA

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V TRAMONTANA VOY. NO. (02/20) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-4 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 WILHELMSSEN SHIPS SERVICES PTE LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

#### M.V DA ZHI

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V DA ZHI VOY. NO. (32) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of TMIT-1 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 COSCO SHIPPING SPECILIZED CARIZER CO LTD

Phone No: 2301928

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

#### M.V LADY C

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V LADY C VOY. NO. (03/05) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of TMIT-2 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 HIGHEST SHIPPING PTE, LTD

Phone No: 2301928

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

#### M.V UNI ARISE VOY. NO. (0199-605 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V UNI ARISE VOY. NO. (0199-605 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN MARINE (S'PORE) PTE., LTD.

Phone No: 2301185

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

#### M.V MCC SHENZHEN VOY. NO. (013S/014N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC SHENZHEN VOY. NO. (013S/014N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 4-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/TMT 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 MAERSK ASIA PTE., LTD.

Phone No: 2301185

# National archives, reliable for researcher

By Maung Thar (Archaeology)

**T**HOSE studying various arts and science including researchers and experts search literary evidences at libraries and other materials at museums so as to refer them in research works. They also rely on archives to have historical evidences.

### Archives and records

The Myanmar dictionary defines the archives which mean the literary works compiled memorable for long term existence as well as the documents under preservation. The Law on National Records and Archives states, "The records mean documents, inscriptions, folded papers, palm leaves, manuscripts or printed literature compiled or accepted by any government department or other organization or a person. The word shall comprise alphabets, sounds and TV documents recorded through machinery or electricity or other way."

The law defines the meaning of archive, saying that the archive means the records which shall be designated as archives scrutinized by the archive supervisory committee with its remarks to preserve such kinds of records for many years because of containing evidences and facts related to history, culture heritage and governance of Myanmar.

The records gathered at the Myanmar Archives were scruti-

nized by the archive supervisory committee formed with experts and scholars in 1991 in accordance with 11 points of archive values. The committee sets the records meeting the set standards as archives. As such, all archives are records but every record cannot be approved as archives.

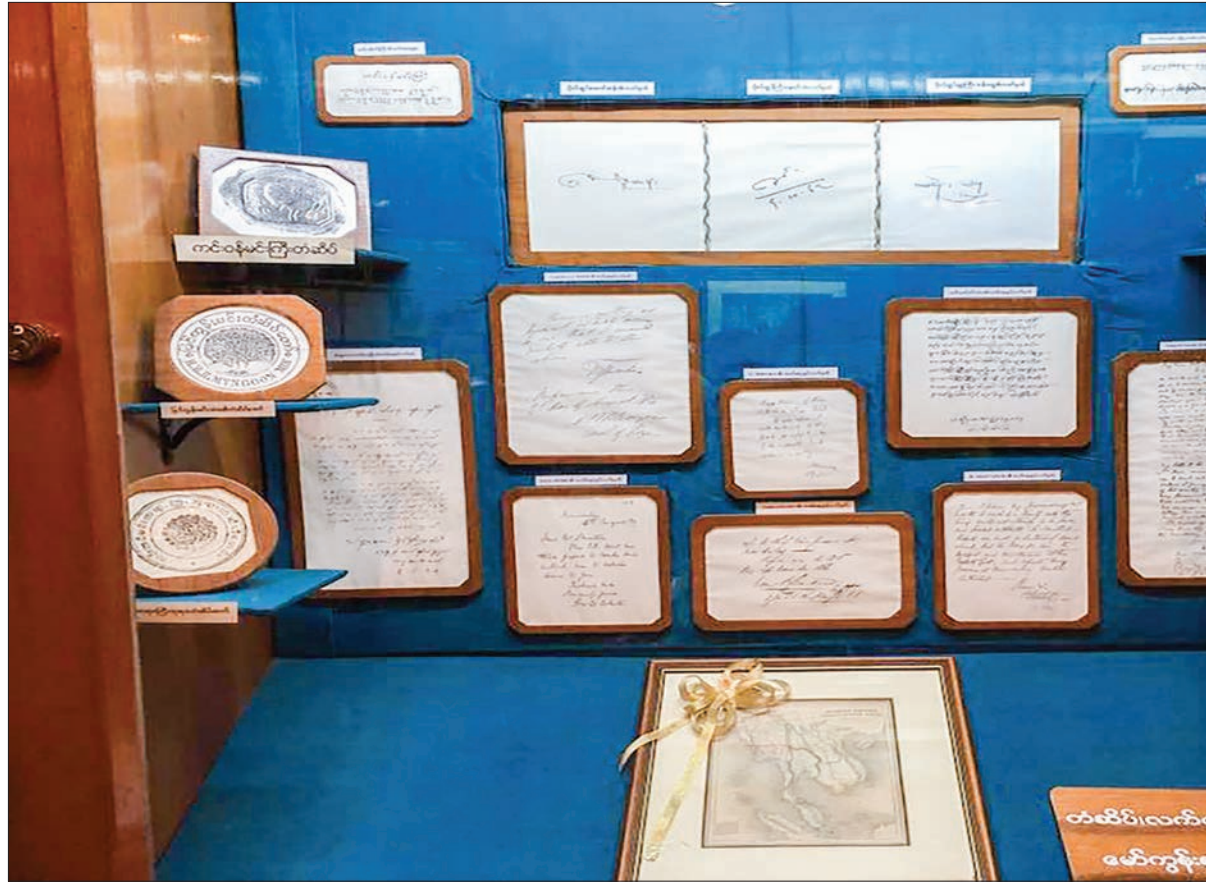
### National Archives

The venue where historical archives are systematically kept is the archive building.

As global countries established archives, the National Archive of France opened in 1790 is famous as the largest one across the world. Such archive initiated its functions of storing records as of 625 AD.

The International Council on Archives was constituted as a professional organization in Paris of France on 9 June 1948. Formation of the council aimed to effectively manage maintenance, care and usage of record and archive experts from various countries for ensuring long term existence of world archive heritages. As such, its founding day which falls on 9 June was designated as the International Archives Day.

In Myanmar, Archives in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw hosted the exhibitions to mark the 70th Anniversary of International Archives Day on 9 June 2018 by holding the paper-reading session on art of archives. The celebration of



Historical records and archives from the Archives.

the International Archives Day aimed to enable the people to understand the role of the archives and art of archives. Moreover, it meant prevention of loss of country's historical and cultural record heritages and perpetual existence of these objects.

Among eminent archives in Myanmar, each of the national archive is opened in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw whereas the Defence Services Historical Research Institute is operated in Nay Pyi Taw. These archives store the records

of national cause and high historical value of the State.

The National Archives Department was formed with 34 staff members under the Ministry of Planning and Finance on 15 March 1972 in order to manage functions of the national archives of Myanmar. The institute took over rare books and printed archives related to administration of colonial era from the library of the secretariat. Likewise, the National Archives Department took over files of archives from 1853 to 1948

and remaining notes in 1835 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The department was put into service at No 114 on Pyidaungsu Avenue in Dagon Township in July 1973. It launched duties and functions with 114 officers and staff members of organizational setup. The Law on National Records and Archives was enacted in 1990.

According to the UN Development Programme in 1982, the strengthening of National Archives Project was implemented. Experts from UNESCO gave theoretical and practical training as well as machinery assistance to those of the department. Staff members from the department were sent abroad to further study archive science and technologies.

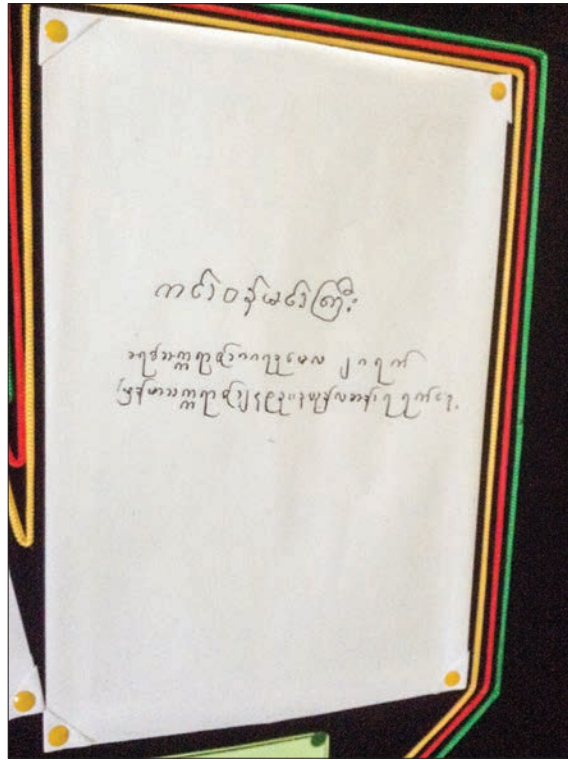
The Department of National Archives (the National Archives) of Myanmar joined as member of the International Council on Archives (ICA) in 1991 and the Southeast Asian Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (SARBICA) in 1993. Myanmar hosted the 11th general conference of SARBICA in 1997.

Thanks to cooperation with international archives, the National Archives could perform collection of archives and records, preservation, and dissemination of information and evidences to the people through modern technologies meeting international standards.

The National Archives is



File cabinets in National Archives.



Historical record of Minister U Kaung.



Royal seal.

undertaking its functions not to damage administrative evidences, to safely store them and give services to relevant departments as well as local and foreign researchers for taking records and archives as references. The department takes over records on administration, policy affairs and economic matters related to administrative machinery of the State from Union ministries, and region and state governments in accordance with the Law on National Records and Archives.

With regard to gathering records and archives, the department systematically stores records on papers collected from Union ministries and region and state governments under control of temperature and moisture. The records easy to broke are sterilized and bleached with the use of acid as well as maintained with the use of tissue through archive technologies.

The archives are carrying out collection of records, maintenance of such records through technologies, and supporting the people in searching records and archives as references.

#### Historical records and archives from the Archives

The National Archives has been maintaining original treaties, agreements and writs (1947-2015) and the Independence Charter (1948) including various kinds of records and archives such as

the palm leaves of General Maha Bandoola (1824 AD), the Treaty of Yandabo (1826 AD), the administrative reports of Burma (1856-1935), Burma Gazettees (1862-2009), announcements of the government (1880-2009), the Independence Charter in Japanese era (1943), the Panglong Agreement (1947), Aung San-Atlee Agreement (1 January 1947), and Nu-Atlee Agreement (17 October 1947). Moreover, the department stores documentary photos, manuscripts and royal seals.

In addition, the department systematically keeps archives in British era, the documents related to situations of Myanmar before the Second World War from 1939 to 1942, the documents on war of the Second World War in early 1942, records on British military administration in 1945, the records on civil administration re-governed by the British governor in Myanmar as of 1 October 1945, records on administration

arranged by the executive government of the governor to Myanmar in February 1946, the records on changing administrative system from 1948 to 1950, the records on Pyidawtha system from 1952 to 1956, the records of the care-taker government in 1958, the records of handing over the power to Pa-Hta-Sa government in February 1960 after holding the elections due to concluding the term of the parliament in 1956, the records on formation of the Revolutionary Council on 2 March 1962, and the records on formation of the government of the State Law and Order Restoration Council in 1988.

Similarly, more than 37,000 files of records such as management and administration records of the State in the reigns of King Mondon and King Thibaw, dispatch records on relations with the lower Myanmar in the reign of King Mindon, and administrative records of British are systemat-

ically stored at the department.

#### National Archives (Nay Pyi Taw)

The second archive of the Department of National Archives was put into service on Razathingaha Road in Ottarathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw on 22 May 2015. After opening the second archive, I grasped the opportunities to visit it under the arrangements of the Ministry of Culture (present Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture).

The Nay Pyi Taw National Archives is formed with booths of archives in successive eras, rooms of storing archives and records, and reading room for references and readers can easily search things they wish to know at the reading room for references through the national archives information system. Arrangements have been made for readers to have microfilms via database. Archives and records not on paper

are being stored through digital technology.

The National Archives preserves historic archives and records, national characteristics and cultural heritages. As part of evidences for citizen rights, archives can be submitted as evidences at the court. Likewise, government departments can take references to the records and archives. That is why the archive plays a key role in operating the administrative machinery of the State.

Duty and functions of the national archives of Myanmar aim to preserve historic archive evidences of the State for a long run, give services for research process and reference, and disseminate the important role of the art of archive among the people. As such, the national archives are invaluable for those wishing to search records and archives as references.

(Translated by Than Tun Aung)



National Archives (Nay Pyi Taw).

## JFA president contacts MFF president on his recovery from COVID-19

THE Japan Football Association (JFA) president Kozo Tashima recently contacted the Myanmar Football Federation president U Zaw Zaw about his recovery from the corona virus COVID-19 disease, according to the yesterday's statement with the Myanmar Football Federation.

The 62-year-old Tashima visited Europe and the US on football business from 28 February to 8 March. He had a presentation at the UEFA meeting in Amsterdam on 2 March, went to the US for women's soccer events, and arrived back in Tokyo on 8 March.

Kozo Tashima have tested COVID-19 positive last month and he got fever starting on 17 March but now he is free from the disease, according to his message sent to the MFF.

Upon his recovery Tashima said to the media that he is now free from COVID-19 disease and has expressed his heartfelt thanks to health care providers for giving him special health care.

And Tashima also sent his thanking message to the MFF president that he was thanking to all members of Myanmar Football Federation led by MFF president U Zaw Zaw for wishing him to get recovery from the pandemic.

In his message he has encouraged to the similar COVID-19 infected person that all the patients can be recovered and no need to fear.



File photo shows MFF president U Zaw Zaw (left) receiving a gift from JFA president Kozo Tashima in Japan in February 2020. PHOTO:MFF

He has also pointed out the key points to combat the disease: having sufficient nutrients, supplements and getting enough sleep and do not need to be worried. In this way, the COVID-19 pandemic will disappear all over the world, he continued.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

## Well-wishers donate essential things to MFF quarantine site

WELL-wishers donated essential things include medical products, foodstuffs and energy drinks to a quarantine centre of the Myanmar Football Federation in Yangon yesterday afternoon, according to the statement issued by the football federation.

First, officials from 100 Plus, official hydration partner of the Myanmar Football Federation donated 25,000 isotonic can drinks at the quarantine side of the MFF yesterday.

Next, officials from Myanmar Medical Association donated 200 boxes of fruits for the quarantined person and Ma Thazin Aung, CEO of Max Global Ltd also donated 200 boxes of fruits for the quarantine site.

Also, officials from United Pharmaceutical Company Limited donated medical products for the quarantine centre to control and prevent against COVID-19 pandemic.

All the donations were received by General Secretary of the Myanmar Football Federation, U Ko Ko Thein and certificates of honour were given to the donors after the donations.

Currently, Myanmar Football Federation is collaborating with Ministry of Health and Sports to combat against the global threatening COVID-19 disease.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

## From grand final to building site as NRL players go back to work

SYDNEY (Australia) \_ Six months ago they were playing one of the biggest games of their careers, but now stars of Australia's National Rugby League are working as builders and plumbers after the coronavirus shutdown forced them to find new jobs. Several members of the Sydney Roosters, who won the grand final against the Canberra Raiders in October, are among the players back "on the tools" as they try to pay bills and mortgages after the season was suspended. Players from the NRL, one of Australia's most popular sports, are facing hefty pay cuts this year after the pandemic shuttered sport worldwide and left the league battling for survival. "Some of them are looking for jobs... some of them are on the tools already," Roosters coach Trent Robinson told radio station Triple M. "Plumber, builder. There's lots of jobs that have been thrown out there for the guys, and they're still continuing to look. "They know they're going to have some time. They know they've got to train,

but after that they're looking to get back into some of their old trades." It's a similar story for players across the 16-team NRL, which came to a screeching halt after two rounds -- one played behind closed doors -- last month. The NRL, cash-strapped despite its immense popularity and ubiquitous media presence, strongly resisted closure before anti-virus measures made it impossible to play on. On Thursday, the NRL and the players' association agreed on an emergency deal under which players will lose five months' pay this year if the 2020 season is abandoned.

### Banana farmer

The league's suspension has meant a dizzying turnaround for the players, especially the Roosters who were celebrating their grand final win. Now, Roosters lock Victor Radley is plying his trade as a carpenter, while Elliott Whitehead is driving a tractor and his Raiders teammate Jack Wighton posted on Instagram looking for work. —AFP ■

## Volunteers and virtual beer: German fans take fight to virus

BERLIN (Germany)—When their side played promotion rivals Arminia Bielefeld in the German second division on March 9, Stuttgart fans did not realise that it would be the last game before the coronavirus lockdown.

A week later, football was suspended in Germany and Stuttgart's "ultras" were focusing instead on helping the elderly and vulnerable during the health crisis.

"A lot of people are ready to put their own egos to one side and come together to help the community," Clemens Knoedler of Stuttgart ultra group Schwabensturm told AFP.

"In the week after the Bielefeld game it became clear that something would change. We met up and asked ourselves what we were going to do."

Along with other supporter groups across the country, Knoedler and his fellow ultras decided to mobilise in support of their local community.

Where he once led thousands of Stuttgart fans in cheering on their football team, Knoedler now organises around 80 volunteers to pick up groceries and prescription medicines for those who can't leave their homes.

The project sprang up in a few days, and now encompasses six different districts in Stuttgart and the surrounding area.

"We are doing this for our city and our region. That is part of our self-understanding as ultras, that we are ready to help out where we can," said Knoedler.—AFP ■



Stuttgart ultras are showing a flair for social work during the coronavirus lockdown. PHOTO: AFP