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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Friday, 10 April 2020



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi wearing a mask after making it herself at her home yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

## State Counsellor: strong immune system important, plans underway to distribute food supplies

STATE COUNSELLOR Daw Aung San Suu Kyi wrote about the immune system and plans to distribute food supplies on her Facebook page yesterday.

Recently, the phrase “immune system” keeps popping into my head. Regretfully, three of our citizens have passed away because of COVID-19. All three who passed away had underlying diseases. That was why they were weak to fight the COVID-19. It means their immune systems were weak. I think people with underlying diseases and elderly people know that their immune systems are weak.

Please don't forget that your immune system can become weak if you don't take care of your lifestyle and if you don't eat properly. Please take care of yourself. Each and every citizen is valuable for the country. The collective strength of the people is the immune system of the country.

Starting from today we will begin the programme to distribute food supplies all over the country to citizens in

the basic strata of society who don't have regular income.

This type of huge programme has never been done before. We may say the strength of a steel chain lies in its weakest link. The resiliency of a country can be measured in terms of its ability to take care of its weakest people.

Please support and provide assistance to the food distribution programme. Make sure good intentions don't turn into naught. Please rein in greed and anger systematically. We won't leave behind any person who is in need. If you do have to wait, please have patience.

Let us overcome, all of us together, all the challenges we will have to face by building up a strong immune system for our country.

Let me end this message with something to brag about. I have finished making a mask. Please see left.

*(Translated by Kyaw Myaing)*

## One more confirmed case of COVID-19 on Thursday, total number of cases reach 23

Update of COVID-19 surveillance, 8:00 pm, 9-4-2020

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 have been 1,406 lab specimens tested for COVID-19 as of 6 pm, 8-4-2020, from among which 1,384 tested negative while 22 tested positive.
3. There are 66 new patients under observation between 8-4-2020 and 9-4-2020, 6 pm.

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# Tatmadaw holds second coord meeting on COVID-19

THE second coordination meeting to protect, treat and provide other necessary services to the public, Tatmadaw personnel and families regarding COVID-19 was held at the office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Present at the meeting were Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice Senior General Soe Win, Union Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Sein Win, Chief of General Staff (Army, Navy, Air) General Mya

Tun Oo, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Tin Aung San, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Maung Maung Kyaw, and Tatmadaw officers.

The Senior General first delivered a speech. The meeting then discussed preparations to test people suspected of COVID-19, quarantined persons and accommodation arrangements, treating emergency patients and virus-positive patients in Tatmadaw hospital and other buildings, and acquiring necessary medical supplies. The Senior General replied to the discussion and delivered the closing speech.



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing chairs the second coordination meeting to protect, treat and provide other necessary services to the public, Tatmadaw personnel and families regarding COVID-19. **PHOTO: C-IN-C DEFENCE SERVICES**

There are currently no COVID-19 positive patients in the Tatmadaw. There is one Tatmadaw man in hospital isolation, two dependents, 14 Tatmadaw men in hospital quarantine, 14 depend-

ents, 161 Tatmadaw men in home quarantines, 88 dependents, 44 Tatmadaw men facility quarantine, 55 dependents.

As of 8 April, there are 132 civilians for facility quarantine in

Yangon, 242 in Nay Pyi Taw and they are all in stable health conditions, according to news released by the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services office.—MNA  
(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

# Local staff found guilty in sharing rice ration of IDPs to AA

A combined team of security forces and local authorities confiscated 150 rice bags carried by a clerk of Nyaungchaung village-tract and 14 young people on a truck which was heading to Thayettapin village from Kyauktaw Township on 4 April.

The Office of Commander in Chief of Defence Services reported that the bags were taken for the internally displaced persons at Nyaungchaung camp from Kyauktaw Township Administration Office which is sharing the rice for the IDP camp every month.

Former local administrator U Than Aye was reportedly asked to local clerk U Ohn Naing, aged 55, to take out the rice.

However, only two-third of the rations went to the camp, and one-third of them were sent

to the AA group.

According to investigations, about five members of AA group went to the IDP camp with the former local administrator and instigated the persons there, saying that they were not the IDPs, but just the revolutionaries.

U Ohn Naing failed to report this case to the authorities although he was responsible for doing so as a civil service staff, even helping in it.

Out of 14 suspected young people, Kyaw Kyaw Naing said he raised funds for the AA from the migrant workers in Thailand based on racial motivation while he was working there in 2014 as he was organized by an AA member, namely Kyaw Gyi.

In 2018, Kyaw Kyaw Naing also collected funds for AA from

Rakhine communities through WeChat. He arrived back to Rakhine State in February this year amid the outbreak of COVID-19.

While he was taking shelter at the Nyaungchaung IDP camp, he helped U Ohn Naing in carrying the rice bags.

Further investigations showed that 7 young men, out of the 14 suspects, got basic military trainings from the AA at the forest camps in 2019 and 2020.

The remaining young men were said to be threatened by U Ohn Naing for carrying the rice bags on that day.

The report also said that legal actions are being taking against them.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

# Transit centres receive more persons under investigation for COVID-19 infection

TRANSIT centres in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon are keeping more persons under investigation for COVID-19 virus infection.

A man and a woman who returned from China arrived at the centre in Hlaing Township in Yangon on 8 April, while the Transit Centre in Nay Pyi Taw accommodated a man who arrived back from China, and 32 men and 9 women from border towns Laukkai, Tachileik, Muse, Kengtong, Kalay, Myawady, Mongyu and Maungtau.

Up to date, 134 common

people are now at Transit Centre in Hlaing Township and 284 common people at the Transit Centre in Nay Pyi Taw, according to the report from the Office of Commander in Chief of Defence Services.

Local medical teams in Nay Pyi Taw Command and Yangon Command are providing food and medical services to these persons who are in good health conditions, the report said.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

# Authorities seize ARSA, AA sites

THE Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services released news that they discovered an ARSA post 2,500 metres to the west of Kamaung Seik Village, Maungtau Township with two huts that contained small firearms, walkie-talkies, camouflage uniforms and shoes, cooking oil, rice and potatoes, a bag full of medicine, a hand-phone, a binocular, plastic bags and a

UNHCR-issued card for refugee camps in other countries.

Similarly, security forces seized a temporary site of AA located 7,000 metres to the southwest of Ponnagyun Township. They discovered trenches, gunpowder, accessories and rations donated by NGOs to IDP camps.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## Correction

Please read “conspiring” instead of “aspiring” in the third line of 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph of the Directive No 1/2020 “Compliance with the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide” body text appearing on the page-2 of 9 April 2020 issue of *the Global New Light of Myanmar*. The GNLM regrets it. — Ed



# “People are the key”

## Union Minister U Kyaw Tin participates in video conference of 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ASEAN Coordinating Council

UNION MINISTER for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin participated in the video conference of the 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Coordinating Council yesterday at 8:30 am from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw. The Meeting was attended by ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the Secretary-General of ASEAN.

At the Meeting, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers briefed their national efforts in the fight against the spread of the COVID-19 and exchanged views on sharing information, best practices and policy adjustments, strengthening cooperation to contain the spread of the global pandemic, establishing the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund, providing appropriate assistance to ASEAN citizens affected by COVID-19 in each other's countries or in a third country and enhancing coordinated and collective actions to address the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. The Ministers also discussed preparations for the Special ASEAN



Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin participates in the video conference of the 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Coordinating Council yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Summit and Special ASEAN Plus Three Summit on COVID-19 through video conferencing and endorsed the Recommendations from the first Meeting of the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group on Public Health Emergencies (ACCWG-PHE).

Union Minister U Kyaw Tin updated the Meeting on nation-

al measures taken by Myanmar Government in the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19, and Myanmar Government's whole-of-Government approach in addressing health and socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 as well as Government's rigorous efforts in mobilizing peoples' participation and promoting public

awareness under the guidance of a National Committee headed by the State Counsellor. He emphasized that no one is left behind in such responsive measures covering different strata of societies including Internally Displaced Persons and returnees from abroad. He also stressed the need to strengthen collaboration and collective

actions among ASEAN Member States in enhancing surveillance and control of the borders including the well-being and safe return of the migrant workers in the region, transferring workers across the borders systematically and safely in close cooperation between the countries concerned, fostering closer coordination to counter misinformation and fake news pertaining to COVID-19, promoting public awareness and sharing correct information to the peoples, facilitating smooth flow of the essential commodities and goods particularly urgent medical equipment in time of difficulty and maintaining the momentum of the ASEAN Community building efforts despite the challenges posed by the global pandemic.

Present at the video conference were senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture and Ministry of Health and Sports. —MNA

## One more confirmed case of COVID-19 on Thursday, total cases reach 23

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4. The National Health Laboratory (Yangon) release the first batch of test results from among 138 lab specimens at 6:30 pm, 9-4-2020. Out of 92 people in the first batch, one person under house quarantine tested positive for COVID-19 while the remaining 91 tested negative.
5. The lab results of the other 46 will be made public as soon as the National Health Laboratory releases new information.
6. Positive Case-23 is the 58-year-old Myanmar national in Kuptel Village, Tiddim Township, Chin State, with a US Green Card and the mother of the Case-01 patient. They flew together from Washington, USA, on 13-3-2020 and transited through Doha, Qatar, and landed in Yangon International Airport in the morning of 15-3-2020. They departed for Kalay, Sagaing Region on the

7. Case-18, 19 and 20 from Pyay General Hospital, Bago Region, were transferred to Waibargi Specialist Hospital, Yangon, on 8-4-2020.
8. Currently, there is one COVID-19 positive patient in Tiddim General Hospital, Chin State, 15 in Waibargi Specialist Hospital, Yangon, one in Lashio General Hospital, Shan State (North) and one new patient confirmed. All 18 patients' health are in stable condition.

9. Case-04 is a Myanmar American citizen quarantined at Kandaw Nadi Hospital, Mandalay, on 25-3-2020 whose two lab results on 2-4-2020 and 4-4-2020 both show negative to COVID-19. Since their health condition was also stable, they were moved from isolation to hospital quarantine on 8-4-2020.
10. There have been 23 COVID-19 positive cases in Myanmar between 23-3-2020 to 9-4-2020 and two of them no longer have the virus and are in good health. Case-04 has been transferred from hospital isolation to quarantine and Case-07 to hotel quarantine on 8-4-2020.
11. 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)

### Laboratory results on COVID-19, 8:00 pm, 6 April 2020

Sr	Aged	Gender	Travel History in previous 14 days	Place for medical treatment	Quarantine Date	Lab result on COVID-19
23	58 years	Female	Nil	Tiddim, Public Health Department	23 March 2020	Positive

Although she did not travel foreign countries 14 days ago, she returned from USA on 13 March 2020 and arrived back Myanmar on 15 March 2020.



## Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe inspects constructing quarantine facility for COVID-19 patients in Phaunggyi village

UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe looked into building a healthcare facility for treatment and quarantine of COVID-19 patients at the Central Institute of Civil Service (Lower Myanmar) in Phaunggyi village of Hlegu Township, Yangon, yesterday.

Under the management of Yangon Region Government, the facility is under the construction of the Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Federation and the Myanmar Private Hospital's Association.

Accompanied by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, the Union Minister looked around centre and explained awareness campaigns and medical teams comprised with senior doctors in fighting against the pandemic.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein also said the facility is scheduled to complete by 21 April with



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein and officials observe the healthcare facility for treatment and quarantine of COVID-19 patients at the Central Institute of Civil Service (Lower Myanmar) in Phaunggyi yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

installation of modern technologies and his government will provide accommodations to the health workers and vol-

unteers at the facility which will include an internet network for video calls between the patients and their families

at homes.

The Yangon Region Transport Authority will erect mirror partitions between the patients

and the drivers on the buses which will be used for this healthcare centre.

The Chief Minister added he has no lockdown plan at the business city at the moment.

The quarantine facility in Phaunggyi village will have 20 beds at intensive care unit, 240 beds for high dependency unit and 240 beds for patients, totaling 500 beds for the first phase.

Meanwhile, the second phase will have 40 beds at intensive care unit, 480 beds for high dependency unit and 480 beds for patients, totaling 1,000 beds for the first phase.

It will have the three zones of green, yellow and red, with the installations of oxygen plants, pipelines and other medical equipment necessary for COVID-19 patients.

Hospital wastes will also be destroyed by a furnace set up by the Yangon City Development Committee. —MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

## MoHT discusses tourism project with Luxembourg development agency



Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung holds the meeting with the team of LuxDev through video conference yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung held a meeting with the team of LuxDev, the aid and development agency of the Luxembourg government, through video conference yesterday.

The LuxDev Code MYA/001 is aimed for the development of human resources in the hotel and tourism sector and capacity

development of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism of Myanmar.

Mr Geert De Bruycker, the Chief Technical Coordinator, represented the Project Support Office in Yangon, and both sides discussed renovation of Centre for Tourism Development in Yangon, drafting process of Myanmar Tourism Master Plan

2020-2030 by the local experts if travel restrictions continue till the end of April and online training courses to prevent infection of COVID-19.

The Union Minister and the Deputy Minister coordinated the discussions of the Chief Technical Coordinator on the project.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

## First batch of loans issued from COVID-19 Fund

THE Working Committee on Alleviating Economic Repercussions of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) held meeting (3/2020) and decided and announced that 88 businesses applying for COVID-19 Fund will be issued loans as the first batch.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## Stranded Myanmar nationals return from Thai, under quarantine

THE Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that 7 Myanmar nationals stranded in Suvarnabhumi Airport, Thailand, were transported back to Myanmar on 8 April.

The ministry's announcement said as the 7 Myanmar nationals were stranded in Suvarnabhumi Airport after commercial flights to Myanmar were suspended due to COVID-19, they were brought back on a cargo flight by Myanmar National Airlines on 8 April.

The Myanmar embassy in Thailand first attempted to cooperate with Thai officials to have 7 Myanmar nationals re-enter Thailand but their attempt was unsuccessful due to the Thai government's new regulations.

Seven Myanmar nationals include 2 women and 5 men who have received Fit Certificates from the respective country. This is why the Myanmar embassy organized to have them return to Myanmar on the MNA cargo flight.

They are currently under quarantine, as per Ministry of Health and Sports regulations. —Htet Hlian

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



## National basic household food distribution to begin 10 April

THE National Central Committee on Prevention, Containment and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) announced on 7 April that families with no regular income will be provided with 8 pyis of rice, 50 kyathas of cooking oil, 50 kyathas of salt, a peitha of lentils and a peitha of onions per household starting from 10 April during the long Thingyan holidays.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi urged the public to assist the distribution of rations, to prevent sympathy from becoming ill-will, and to contain greed with discipline.

She said no one in need will be left behind and to be patient in the distribution.

This is the first time the Union Government is providing this type of support to people with no regular income on a national scale.

The COVID-19 Containment and Emergency Response Committee is reviewing lists of people with no regular income from the states and regions and the distribution for Nay Pyi Taw, states/regions and self-administered zones/divisions will begin on 10 April. —Htet Hlian  
(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

## Private donors supply food to local people in Yangon



Private donors supply basic household food including rice and cooking oil to the local people with no regular income in Ward-8 in Thakayta Township yesterday. The aid reached to over 9,000 people from 2,000 households. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWA**

## Announcement on free motivation services for people in Community Based Facility Quarantine, other quarantine

WHEN the 14-day quarantine programme is carried out nationwide in efforts to prevent the COVID-19 disease spread, the people in the quarantine might be under stress due to the restrictions brought by the quarantine. Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is performing the motivation services, and those wishing to have consolation with the ministry may contact it with confidence. The Social Welfare Department's employees from Nay Pyi Taw Council, Union Territory, regions and states who received a special consoling training will provide the services from

9:30 am to 4:30 pm every day.

With the coordination of the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, the programme is sponsored by telecommunication operator: MPT, Mytel, Telenor and Ooredoo in this time of COVID-19 crisis.

Information related with those who receive consolation will be confidential, and will provide them with further assistance if necessary.

Contact numbers are as follow.

Sr	State/ Region	MPT	Mytel	Telenor	Ooredoo
1.	Kachin	09-889900011	09-661015555	09-770771000	09980000101
2.	Kayah	09-889900022	09-661025555	09-770772000	09980000102
3.	Kayin	09-889900033	09-661035555	09-770773000	09980000103
4.	Chin	09-889900044	09-661045555	09-770774000	09980000104
5.	Sagaing	09-889900055	09-661055555	09-770775000	09980000105
6.	Taninthayi	09-889900066	09-661065555	09-770776000	09980000106
7.	Bago	09-889900077	09-661075555	09-770777000	09980000107
8.	Magway	09-889900088	09-661085555	09-770778000	09980000108
9.	Mandalay	09-889900099	09-661095555	09-770779000	09980000109
10.	Mon	09-889911177	09-661105555	09-770771001	09980000117
11.	Rakhine	09-889911188	09-661115555	09-770771100	09980000118
12.	Yangon	09-889911122	09-661125555	09-770770001	09980000112
13.	Shan	09-889911133	09-661135555	09-770770010	09980000113
14.	Ayeyawady	09-889911144	09-661145555	09-770770011	09980000114
15.	Nay Pyi Taw	09-889911155	09-661155555	09-770770099	09980000115
	Head Office	09-889911166	09-661005555	09-770770100	09980000116

Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement

## Service fees slashed half for investors amid Covid-19: MIC

By Nyein Nyein

MYANMAR Investment Commission (MIC) slashes 50 per cent of service fees to a certain period from 10 April, DICA Director-General U Thant Sin Lwin said on 9 April.

"MIC will reduce service fees by half to a certain period from 10 April. The fees are charged to investors. The period will depend upon the Covid-19 consequences," he highlighted.

"The DICA has prepared to extend the period until the end of Covid-19 crisis," he added.

MIC shows its readiness to accept the projects regarding the production of the mask, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment, in responding to the activities of prevention, containment and treatment of Covid-19. Furthermore, to create jobs for residents, MIC is discussing with the related departments to prioritize and clear the proposals of the labour-intensive businesses and infrastructure projects, he stressed.

Besides, a committee to remedy the economic impacts caused by the Covid-19, led by MIC chairperson, was formed

with nine members on 13 March. The working committee has been taking measures to provide loans and to relax the process and procedure of the respective departments.

In addition to the committee to remedy the economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, the monitoring group to address the repercussions of the Covid-19 crisis has also been formed.

MIC and state/regional DICA offices are participating in the government's loan programme for the businesses affected by Covid-19, he added.

"We have received 796 loan applications as of 7 April, and the entrepreneurs have sought K127 billion of loans," he noted.

Regarding the loans, the respective evaluation team and the lending team will conduct the process in line with the procedures. They are implementing to give loans as soon as possible.

The concerted efforts exerted by the State and the respective associations will remedy the economic impacts hit by the Covid-19 to a certain extent, MIC stated.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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North Okkalapa, Thingangyun hospitals receive medical aid against Covid-19

THE executive committee members from Golden City Charity Foundation have donated medical aid for Covid-19 control and prevention to two hospitals and other institutions on 9 April.

The North Okkalapa township general hospital and Thingangyun township general hospital received medical supplies worth K2 million each for the prevention and containment of the Covid-19 infection.

Moreover, the foundation donated medical aid which is worth K1 million to Yankin Township Health Department and No 1 ward administration office. They also donated medical supplies worth K500,000 to Yankin Township Red Cross Society.

Golden City Charity Foundation has donated protection equipment and disinfectants worth K3.5 million to ensure a safe environment within the Golden City project. The foundation is always supporting as much as



Executive committee members from Golden City Charity Foundation donate medical aids for COVID-19 control and prevention in Yangon yesterday. PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG

they can to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in real-time. Moreover, the foundation donated two sets of the oxygen supply e pipeline worth USD 3,000 for the patients in an isolation ward in Natmauk general hospital, Magway region on 31 March. — Myint Maung (Translated by Hay Mar)

Some train services to be suspended during Thingyan holidays: MR

MYANMA Railway (MR) will suspend the running of some passenger trains including circular trains operating during Thingyan holidays.

Under the guidance of the National-Level Central Committee for Covid-19 Prevention, Control and Treatment, MR of the Ministry of Transport and Communications will suspend the running of some passenger trains from 10 to 19 April 2020.

The 11/12 up and down Yangon-Mandalay trains, 41/42 up and down Mandalay-Myitkyina mail trains, 89/90 up and down Yangon-Mawlamyine trains and 63/64 up and down Yangon-Pyay trains will be op-

erated regularly and running of the remaining passenger trains will be suspended during Thingyan holidays. And there will be no Naypyidaw-Yangon trains.

Moreover, the cargo trains and the parcel trains will be operational on Yangon-Mandalay and Mandalay-Myitkyina railways if there will be the cargo and foodstuffs to transport.

Because of the outbreak of Covid-19, MR will also suspend the running of some trains operating with a few passengers on board. Also, MR suspended running of 31 up airbag Mandalay-Myitkyina train on 3 April and 32 down Myitkyina-Man-

delay train on 4 April.

MR of the Ministry of Transport and Communications has been operating Mandalay-Myitkyina-Mandalay trains with new airbag coaches imported from Dauonsys Co., Ltd from South Korea starting from 21 March 2020.

Only a few people are using the circular trains in Yangon region. With a decline in the number of passengers using the circular trains because of the outbreak of Covid-19, running of 69 trains has been suspended starting from 29 March.

A total of 168 circular trains are being operated usually in

Yangon region. Now, MR has suspended the running of 69 circular trains because of the virus fear despite 99 circular trains still being operated.

MR will announce the schedules of the remaining 99 circular trains in the respective railway stations.

Furthermore, MR is taking Covid-19 preventative measures such as checking body temperature and using the sanitizer hand gels in the entrance gate of the railway stations. MR is also spraying the disinfectants on the trains. —Htet Htet

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Myanmar, China resume \$10 mln border trade per day: MoC

THE bilateral border trade between Myanmar and China has declined by over US\$139 million as of 27 March because of the spreading of Coronavirus (Covid-19), according to the Ministry of Commerce (MoC).

The bilateral border trade has been dropping by \$1 million per day since the trade between Myanmar and China has resumed at the end of February. Now, Myanmar can trade over \$10 million worth commodity per

day, announced the Ministry of Commerce.

Although the trade through Muse 105th Mile trade zone is not suspended after China has restricted the travelling to control Covid-19, the bilateral trade has decreased by over \$1 million. Starting from 24 February 2020, the trade operation has resumed and the trade value has reached the normal situation of above \$10 million per day, stated the announcement by the Ministry

of Commerce.

Since the cargo trucks from uninfected China provinces are permitted to enter Shweli and Kyaekhaung borders, Myanmar has imported over 16,900 tonnes of CMP raw materials worth \$54.602 million through the Muse border within 2 months, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar imports 30 truckloads of CMP raw materials per day from the first week of March to 10 March. From 11 to

22 March, the number of trucks reached up to 60. Currently, Myanmar is importing 70 trucks of CMP raw materials per day.

The total trade value between Myanmar and China has exceeded \$3.1 billion from 1 October to 27 March, a drop by \$139 million compared to the same period of last year, stated the Ministry of Commerce. — Aye Cho

(Translated by Hay Mar)



## Rubber export income jumps by \$17 mln in 2019-2020FY H1

MYANMAR has exported rubber worth US\$130.8 million as of 27 March in the current financial year since 1 October 2019, which shows an increase of \$17 million compared with the corresponding period of the previous fiscal, indicated the data by the Ministry of Commerce.

The export income has increased in the current fiscal despite a slight drop in export volume against last year.

More than 104,000 tonnes of rubber was shipped to the external markets in the current fiscal year, whereas the export volume was over 118,500 tonnes in the year-ago period.

In early April, rubber prices range K1,000-1,900 per viss ( a viss equals to 1.6 kg) depending on quality and variety, as per data of the local rubber market.

An improvement in Myanmar rubber exports will be directly related to the price offered, according to the Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association (MRPPA).

The volatile rubber price is related to global climate change,

and government subsidy will be required for growers in need, said an official of the MRPPA.

Rubber is primarily produced in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago, and Yangon regions in Myanmar. There are over 1.6 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar, with Mon State accounting for about 500,000 acres, followed by Kayin State (270,000 acres), according to the MRPPA.

About 300,000 tonnes of rubber is produced annually across the country. Seventy per cent of rubber produced in Myanmar goes to China. It is also shipped to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Korea, India, Japan, and other countries.

At present, Myanmar is exporting only raw rubber sheets owing to lack of machinery and technology. Export rubber varieties include synthetic rubber, ribbed smoked sheet RSS 1,3,5, Myanmar Standard Rubber MSR-20, Technically Specified Rubber TSR-20, and Crepe Rubber.

The MRPPA has sought



Workers working at a domestic rubber production in Yangon. **FILE PHOTO**

special rubber zones in the regions and states to produce value-added rubber and quality raw materials at the 15th regular meeting with private entrepreneurs, led by Vice President 1, which was held last year.

About 150,000 tonnes of rubber was exported in the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Myanmar shipped over 190,000 tonnes of rubber, with an estimated value of \$250 million, to external markets in the 2018-2019 fiscal year, an in-

crease of 41,000 tonnes which helped boost earnings by \$60 million compared to the year-ago period, according to the data released by the Ministry of Commerce.—GNLM (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

## Myanmar exports over 1.64 mln tonnes of rice worth \$475.4 mln in 2019-2020FY H1

THE volume of rice and broken rice exported between 1 October and 27 March in the 2019-2020 fiscal year has been estimated at over 1.64 million metric tons, worth \$475.449 million, according to an announcement from the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

In the current financial year, Myanmar has shipped rice to 59 foreign markets.

China is the main buyer of Myanmar rice. The European Union countries account for over 15 per cent of rice exports, while about 37 per cent of rice grown

in Myanmar goes to African countries.

In the nearly half of the current fiscal, Myanmar has exported broken rice mostly to Belgium, followed by Senegal, Indonesia, the Netherlands, and Guinea. Broken rice has been placed in 52 foreign markets.

Earlier, border trade was relatively high compared to sea trade in terms of rice exports. Since the previous financial year, border trade has dropped since trade in agricultural products has been halted on account of

China clamping down on illegal trade, and currently, it accounts for just 14.2 per cent of the total rice exports, while maritime trade constitutes 85.8 per cent.

Rice exports through the land borders have generated an estimated \$65 million, whereas income from maritime trade touched \$410.27 million as of 27 March in the current FY, as per data from the Commerce Ministry.

The Ministry of Commerce released the export plan of rice and broken rice on 7 April, in-

tending to maintain price stability, boost export and increase the farmers' income.

The exporters who sought licence between 16 and 20 March must sell 10 per cent of well-milled polished Emata rice variety stated in the export declaration as country's reserved rice.

They must send that 10 per cent of reserved rice to the state's warehouse before exportation or within one week after export. Those exporters who failed to comply with the notification will get their licences revoked and face legal actions under the Essential Supplies and Services Law. The ministry will release further notification concerning permits and regulations, the Trade Department stated.

At present, MRF is prioritizing domestic market stability and self-sufficiency and working towards these goals by coordinating with government departments and stakeholders in the supply chain, including exporters, traders, depot owners, and millers, according to a press statement issued by the federation on 13 March 2020.

MRF is monitoring the impact of Covid-19 in the foreign and domestic market, and working with stakeholders in the re-

spective regions and states to govern the market. The federation calls on the government to take systematic measures on exports by involving exporters.

The government, as well as some associations, have rice reserve schemes. At present, millers and companies are distributing rice at a much fairer price, according to the MRF. Therefore, people need not be concerned, MRF stated.

MRF always checks the balance between the rice stocks and self-sufficiency in the country. Myanmar produces more than 14 million tonnes of rice in the monsoon and summer seasons. Only 8.5 million tonnes of rice are needed for local consumption and about 2 million tonnes of rice are used for vermicelli production, leaving an extra four million tonnes of rice to send to the external market.

This year, over 4 million tonnes of quality and low-quality rice are stockpiled.

Myanmar shipped 3.6 million tonnes of rice in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, which was a record in rice exports. The export volume plunged to 2.29 million metric tons, worth \$691 million, in the 2018-2019FY.—Ko Khant (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



A container ship docking at a terminal in Botahtaung, Yangon. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**



# The nation must be resilient to overcome COVID-19 challenges

THREE COVID-19 patients died within the past few days, as their weak immune systems were not strong enough to resist the attack of the COVID-19 virus.

When it comes to successfully battling diseases, resistance or immunity becomes the important factor.

Likewise, to overcome challenges ahead, the people of Myanmar need resilience.

While wrestling with the idea of how we can fight the global pandemic and how many people will suffer as a result of COVID-19, we should not forget about our resiliency.

It is this resiliency that exists within the human spirit, allowing us to overcome obstacles and rebuild our lives.

It is our community, built by human beings who choose to live together and support one another.

The government's programme of supplying five basic household foods to non-regular income families will kick off today. No one is to be left behind in receiving food, in the face of this crisis.

Coincidentally, The European Union has announced the creation of a €5 million (almost 8 billion Myanmar Kyat) emergency cash fund, named "Myan Ku", to support thousands of Myanmar garment workers who have lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We heartily welcome the move, believing it would ensure the workers, our citizens, remain resilient in overcoming challenges during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.

To build resiliency in our minds and bodies, people are advised to follow the government's guidelines for good hygiene, because prevention is still the best medicine in Myanmar.

Frequent handwashing, keeping clear of people in settings where disease can spread — these are common-sense practices. Even so, making them habitual takes time, so people need to start now.

Those in particular danger are the elderly and others who have chronic diseases.

So, families need to take precautions for them and need to think about keeping elders somewhat isolated from public settings.

Now is the time for preparing anything that can be done — by everyone who may, at some point, find it wise to stay home — which would be key in blunting the effects of the virus.

We are confident that our people can come through this crisis, and also come out more resilient at the other end. So let us all be resilient, to overcome challenges ahead during this time of crisis.

# Returned Myanmar Migrant Workers

By Lokethar

RECENTLY Myanmar migrant workers to neighbouring countries have been returning in large numbers. Among them are workers who have been working abroad for quite some time in various sectors of the economy in the receiving country. Most of the workers have been working in the Agriculture, Fishery, Construction, Manufacturing and some other sectors. As a result many of them have gained experience, knowledge and skills in the occupations they were engaged in. The longer they had worked the more skilled they would be in the occupation concerned.

One of the objectives of the Myanmar law relating to Overseas Employment of 1999 is "to enable the systematic utilization within the country of the knowledge, experience and skills gained abroad according to the type of overseas employment undertaken". Hence, it would be beneficial to the returnee workers who seek employment within the country as well as to the industries concerned if these returnee workers were to register themselves in the "Employment Exchanges" of the States or Regions concerned as "Job Seekers"

for possible employment placement (after the period of Facility Quarantine, Home Quarantine, Community Quarantine if any, or other Isolation measures).

In doing so they should be asked to write their CVs containing such Information as their Name, NRC Number, Migrant Workers ID card number, Address and Contact Telephone number, the name of the Company/Workplace, Type of Occupation and length of the period of service, copy of work permit, and other relevant data including testimonials from the employers, if any.

The "Employment Exchange" concerned, if they have no current "Vacancy Order" from the local employers, could maintain data of the returnees for future placement. On the other hand they could send the data to the "Central Clearing Unit" of the Employment and Training Division of the Department of Labour for further processing and/or data entry as required.

If the returnee migrant workers do not have documents recognizing their skills, they could be advised to apply to the National Skills Standard Authority (NSSA) of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and



Myanmar migrant workers wait at the second Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge in Myawady for screening on 26 March, 2020. PHOTO: MNA

Population, for assessment and recognition of their skills. Getting a certificate of recognition of their skills could help them better to seek skilled employment both within the country and abroad, if they are so inclined.

It may be that some of the returnees may have saved some money and would like to set up a small business. If so they should be advised to contact the Micro, Small and Medium Businesses

Organization concerned for any technical assistance, or additional financing they may need. As for exchanging any foreign currency for Myanmar Kyat they should seek the assistance of the Banks or Authorised Money Changers. If the returnees have any wages or payment due from their employer abroad, they should seek the services of the Overseas Employment Agent that sent them. Perhaps it's time to set up

(if one has not already been set up) a "Migrant Worker Welfare Fund" as suggested in my report as the National Consultant to the "Migrant Worker Welfare Fund Feasibility Study" conducted under the ILO ASEAN TRIANGLE Project of 2014/15. Such a fund could, among other things, also help to meet cost of welfare measures required to assist Returnee Migrant Workers in dire circumstances.

It goes without saying, that the returnees must observe all the requirements of the Corona Virus Control measures which have been or are to be put in place by the authorities concerned, including the period of quarantine imposed for their health and safety and to prevent the possible spread of the disease within the country.

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# Coronavirus tracked: the latest headlines

The 2020 Tour de France is currently scheduled for June 27-July 19 but few expect the race to go ahead on those dates due to the severity of COVID-19 pandemic.

EU puts pressure on the Netherlands to clinch virus rescue

EU finance ministers resume efforts Thursday to agree a rescue plan for Europe's hardest-hit nations after the Netherlands

blocked a compromise over bailout conditions.

The 27 ministers will restart their meeting by video-conference at 1600 GMT, one day after talks broke down following more than 16 hours of ill-tempered negotiations.

"Our citizens' trust depends on us. We must come to an agreement," tweeted Mario Centeno, the Portuguese finance minister who chairs the Eurogroup.

The Hague surprised many with its inflexible stance, insisting that Italy and any other government caught short by the outbreak meet reform commitments if they turn to Europe for financial aid.

Experts doubt isolated Turkmenistan's virus-free 'show'

Isolated Turkmenistan, which held mass aerobic exercises and a cycling event with coordinated tracksuits this week, is one of only a handful of countries to have reported no coronavirus cases.

But like its authoritarian cousin North Korea, experts doubt the country can be immune to the pandemic and worry the ex-Soviet republic may not be telling the full story.

World Health Day celebrated on April 7 has become an important propaganda piece in Turkmenistan, a Central Asian country ruled by a former dentist, Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov who tolerates no opposition and portrays himself as a fitness fanatic.

This year was no exception with the regime's television network showing state workers cycling in close formation on a cold, damp day in the capital Ashgabat and participating in stretching

sessions in government buildings.

Tour de France is racing against time

For the Tour de France, one of the last of the summer's major sports events still standing in the face of the coronavirus pandemic, the stop-watch is ticking.

While the Tokyo Olympics, the Euros, tennis and golf majors and the Giro d'Italia have already been postponed or even cancelled, the Tour is still scheduled to start on June 27.

Christian Prudhomme, the Tour director, made clear that before the race he wants "two months of exposure for the riders."

That means training rides and

competitors confined, the chances of their getting back on the road by late April look slim.

The race also needs France to end its lockdown, not just so the riders can ride but because the Tour attracts 10 to 12 million spectators who stand by the roads to watch.

Last week, when he announced the postponement of the Dauphine, an eight-day Tour warm-up stage race in the south-east of France due to start on May 31, Prudhomme said: "The most important word in Tour de France is France, and health concerns come first."

SOURCE : AFP

Now is the time for preparing anything that can be done — by everyone who may, at some point, find it wise to stay home — which would be key in blunting the effects of the virus.

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Myanmar Gazette

## Heads of Service Organizations confirmed

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed the following persons as Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names on expiry of the one-year probation period.

Name	Appointment
(1) Professor Dr Htay Hla	Rector University of Medicine, Magway Department of Human Resources for Health Ministry of Health and Sports
(2) Professor Dr Hla Hla Win	Rector University of Public Health, Yangon Department of Human Resources for Health Ministry of Health and Sports

## Australia supports MoHS's COVID-19 response

AUSTRALIA announced yesterday that it will provide Personal Protective Equipment-PPE and medical equipment worth AU\$ 500,000 (K400 million) to the public health system and health workers in Myanmar.

The statement issued by the Australian embassy in Yangon said that it will support the Ministry of Health and Sports with the equipment: 380,000 surgical masks, 2,500 sets of PPE (500 full, 2,000 partial) 20,000 examination gloves, 5

patient monitors, 5 ICU beds, 10 suction machines, 10 syringe pumps, 10 oxygen flow metres, 5 defibrillators, 9 autoclaves, 9 Tracheostomy sets and 10 head pendants (4 oxygen outlets, 2 air outlets, 2 vacuum outlets).

Australia is working with the Myanmar Health and Development Consortium, the MoHS and the Central Medical Store Depot to procure the equipment in Myanmar, and to distribute to where most needed, said the statement. —Htet Hlyan

**Myanmar Daily Weather Report**  
(Issued at 4:00 pm Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2020)

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

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2020:** Rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagaing, Mandalay, Bago and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Shan, Chin and Rakhine States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

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

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

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2020:** Partly cloudy.



## EU announces €5 million [7.9 billion kyat] emergency cash fund for Myanmar garment workers impacted by COVID-19

THE European Union has announced the creation of a €5 million [almost 8 billion Myanmar Kyat] emergency cash fund named "Myan Ku" to support thousands of Myanmar garment workers who have lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As of end March, over 25,000 workers from more than 40 factories have been laid off as Myanmar's formerly booming garment industry grapple with the devastating economic impact of COVID-19. It is estimated that out of the 700,000 predominantly female base of garment industry workers in the country, 350,000 are at great risk of either being suspended without pay or losing their jobs permanently.

"There are nearly 600 garment factories across Myanmar and since last March we have seen many closures and layoffs of workers in tens of thousands. We expect to see more this April. This Myan Ku emergency cash fund will be a critical lifeline to these vulnerable workers and their families as they face the extremely challenging months ahead," said Daw Khine Khine Nwe, Secretary General of the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association.

The Myan Ku Fund will provide direct cash transfers to affected garment workers employed in locally-owned, joint venture or foreign owned factories. Myan Ku means "quick assistance" in Myanmar language.

The cash relief will be disbursed through Wave Money 1) to workers in crisis who are jobless and/or face eviction from their homes; 2) to workers whose contracts were illegally terminated, thereby also countering irresponsible practices, and; 3) to workers of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) who agree to

retain workers and to provide at least a matching support. Recipients will be selected in consultation with trade unions and local civil society organizations.

EU Ambassador Kristian Schmidt said, "Garment exports to the European Union has been an immense success story, with Myanmar selling 70% of its garment exports to Europe, creating some 450,000 new jobs for women from across the country. This has helped improve the lives of millions of people throughout Myanmar; and given a significant boost to the expansion of labour rights, higher environmental standards and the emergence of a manufacturing base in the country, since we opened our markets in 2011. It is thus of great sorrow that we witness factories shutting down and tens of thousands of young female garment workers losing their jobs.

Immediate action is needed to support these women and their families."

The COVID-19 crisis is disrupting the global supply chain, hit by the lack of imported raw materials, suspended demand worldwide, and the risk of contagion at the garment workplace.

"CTUM and the workers of Myanmar are very much encouraged by the swift political decision and the concrete support by the EU on this Myan Ku action. The political leadership of Myanmar are now providing the needed actions for preventive action and containment, the people are responding and participating. The preventive actions implemented locally, and with the support from the international community, Myanmar will surely overcome the pandemic and its consequences successfully," said U Maung Maung, President

of the Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar.

Meanwhile, Dr. Zaw Oo, Executive Director of the Centre for Economic and Social Development, said, "CESD appreciates the swift and substantial support from EU to the Myanmar garment industry before the combined effects of supply chain disruptions and order cancellations can have a knock-on effect. According to a rapid assessment of the garment sector conducted by the CESD, as many as 40% of the factories are severely affected by Covid-19, and out of them, one third of factories are dependent on the EU market. The assistance can cushion the impact and keep the solidarity between tripartite stakeholders to fight against the pandemic.

The assistance should also help develop and design the long-term strategies of social protection and rehabilitation for the CMP sector."

The European Union has mobilised the €5 million Myan Ku cash fund through its Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus Response Mechanism (NRM) managed by UNOPS. In cooperation with Wave Money, the Myan Ku project will be implemented by SMART Textile & Garments, the European Union's long-standing flagship project to strengthen production standards and corporate social and environmental responsibility in the Myanmar garment sector.

The Myan Ku project team are cooperating with government, social partners and brands, and in close coordination with the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association (MGMA) and the Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar (CTUM).—GNLM

## CTUM expresses thanks to EU for emergency fund

Following the EU's announcement on emergency fund for Myanmar garment workers yesterday, the Confederation of the Trade Unions Myanmar-CTUM released a statement expressing thanks to the EU for the move.

"On behalf of the workers of Myanmar and our affiliates, CTUM thanks the European Union and its member countries, the tax payers who are the ordinary people for the emergency cash fund for the Myanmar garment workers who lost their jobs due to the COVID 19 pandemic," said the statement.

"We also thank EU Ambassador HE. Kristian Schmidt for expediting the process and the SMART Textile and Garments for the thoughtful and concrete inputs to the EU," said the statement.

This Emergency Fund will be paying cash directly to the workers of the private sector garment and who lost their jobs in unexpected ways due to the COVID 19 pandemic and will cushion the hard social impacts. These are

- 1) to workers in crisis who are jobless and/or face eviction from their homes;
- 2) to workers whose contracts were illegally terminated, thereby also countering irresponsible practices, and;
- 3) to workers of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) who agree to retain workers and to provide at least a matching support. Recipients will be selected in consultation with trade unions and local civil society organizations.

The distribution process, which has never been done before will be complex and complicated but with the participation of the workers themselves we believe that the hurdles will be overcome, said the CTUM.—GNLM

### ECONOMIC CRISIS

## World faces worst time since Great Depression: IMF's Georgieva

The International Monetary Fund expects "global growth will turn sharply negative in 2020," with 170 of the fund's 180 members experiencing a decline in per capita income



IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said the coronavirus will hit the global economy harder than anything since the Great Depression / © AFP/File

THE global coronavirus pandemic is causing an economic crisis unlike any in the past century and will require a massive response to ensure recovery, IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva said Thursday.

The warnings about the damage inflicted by the virus already were stark, but Georgieva warned that the world should brace for "the worst economic fall-

out since the Great Depression."

With the number of cases now surpassing 1.5 million worldwide with nearly 89,000 deaths in 192 countries and territories, much of the global economy has been shut down to contain the spread of the virus.

The International Monetary Fund expects "global growth will turn sharply negative in 2020," with 170 of the fund's 180 members experiencing a decline in per capita income, Georgieva said.

Just a few months ago, the fund was expecting 160 countries to see rising per capita income, she said in a speech previewing next week's spring meetings of the IMF and World Bank, which will be held virtually due to the restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19.

SOURCE: AFP

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# Americans worry about economy amid pandemic

By Matthew Rusling

Amid the COVID-19 crisis, some worry about a recession while others believe the US economy will see a surging comeback once the virus blows over.

DENNIS, a teacher residing 40 minutes from the nation's capital, has seen his stock portfolio plummet by 200,000 US dollars in just a matter of weeks.

"I might have to put off retirement for a couple of years, until I can make it up," he told Xinhua, speaking of his retirement investments.

As the novel coronavirus spreads, it has wreaked havoc on US markets, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average dropping from over 29,000 points to Monday's 22,679.

The US Labor Department reported Thursday that over 6 million individuals filed for unemployment benefits — double the amount of the previous week. Economists expect the economy — which just a month ago was the strongest in 50 years — to fall into recession.

While the White House has signed a 2 trillion US dollar stimulus bill, the virus may well spring up in different pockets here and there, and Washington can not simply keep passing a stimulus bill every time there is a breakout and an area goes under

lockdown, some observers said.

The virus is spreading fast nationwide, with more than 360,000 COVID-19 cases confirmed as of Monday, including more than 10,000 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Rose, a Northern Virginia resident who is now working from home, noted that while she understands that elderly and unhealthy individuals are disproportionately impacted, she frets over the virus' rapid spread.

That could, of course, make people think twice before going back to restaurants and coffee shops even when they re-open.

Others, however, view things differently. Some say they are not worried about getting sick as long as they maintain the government's recommended social distancing of six feet from others and wash their hands frequently.

They noted that the main outbreak is in New York City. That city has a population density far greater than most other areas in the United States — a nation with endless, spacious suburbs and wide open spaces



Shoppers with scarves and masks line up outside a supermarket in Arlington, Virginia, the United States, 4 April, 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA

— and is thus more conducive to the spread of illness. About half of all coronavirus deaths in the United States are registered in New York and neighboring New Jersey.

Still, it remains unknown whether the United States will see outbreaks in other parts

of the country until there is a vaccine, which is at least a year away. Anita, a chiropractor who has gone from working full time to part time, also worries about the effect of the virus on her industry, with clients postponing their appointments in a bid to self-isolate.

However, US President Donald Trump tweeted Monday that there is "light at the end of the tunnel," as the virus nears its peak, and some in the area believe the economy will make a comeback once the spread of the virus begins to decline. SOURCE: Xinhua

## Wuhan virus lockdown over, but lingering fears slow recovery

HAIRSTYLIST "Ah Ping" is back in business now that Wuhan's coronavirus lockdown has been lifted, but his salon has no customers, only empty chairs and lingering fears over a contagion that continues to haunt the city.

Wuhan is waking from its coronavirus nightmare, loosening tight restrictions on movement and business as the global pandemic's launchpad tries to move on.

But full recovery remains hampered by fear of a potential new wave of infections.

Many businesses and all schools are still closed, restaurants aren't allowed dine-in customers, and some neighbourhoods remain sealed off behind barriers.

Residents need to

show they have a "healthy" rating on a mandatory phone app to leave their homes, use public transport, or enter most public spaces.

"When people come out, infections will probably rise. I'm really afraid of this," said "Ah Ping", a nickname.



Passengers board flight MU2527 of China Eastern Airlines at the Tianhe International Airport in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province, 8 April, 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA

The 43-year-old, who declined to give his full name, also worries about getting his life restarted. He paid his salon's quarterly rent of 15,000 yuan (\$2,100) in full just before Wuhan was locked down on 23 January. Now another rental payment is due. SOURCE: AFP

## Coronavirus reaches Yanomami people in Amazon

BRAZIL said Wednesday a first case of the new coronavirus had been detected among the Yanomami people, an Amazon indigenous group known for its remoteness and its vulnerability to foreign diseases.

"Today we confirmed a case (of the virus) among the Yanomami, which is very worrying," Health Minister Luiz Henrique Mandetta told a news conference.

"We have to be triply cautious with (indigenous) communities, especially the ones that have very little contact with the outside world."

The Yanomami patient, a 15-year-old boy, is being treated in the intensive care unit at a hospital in Boa Vista, the capital of the northern state of Roraima, officials said.



The Yanomami people live in remote areas of the Amazon and are known for their vulnerability to foreign diseases. PHOTO: AFP

Brazil has now confirmed at least seven coronavirus cases among the indigenous population, according to the newspaper Globo. The first was a 20-year-old woman from the Kokama ethnic group who was confirmed positive a week ago. Brazil is home to an estimated 800,000 indigenous people from more

than 300 ethnic groups.

The Yanomami, who are known for their face paint and intricate piercings, number around 27,000. Largely isolated from the outside world until the mid-20th century, they were devastated by diseases such as measles and malaria in the 1970s.

SOURCE: AFP





Questions are being asked if Italy's tourism-dependent economy with attractions such as Rome's Spanish Steps (Piazza di Spagna) can ever be the same again. **PHOTO: AFP**

## World tourist trap Italy turns into a coronavirus no-go zone

ROME — Tourists from across the world flock daily to Italy to marvel at its art-filled cathedrals and Roman ruins.

But the rolling hills of Tuscany and the ancient city of Pompeii have looked almost abandoned since the coronavirus pandemic turned the Mediterranean country into a strict no-go zone.

The resulting economic hit to one of the world's most visited nations is profound. Tourism employs an estimated 4.2 million Italians — just under a fifth of the entire official workforce.

The question many are asking is whether the Italian economy — the European Union's third-largest and dependent on

tourism for 13 per cent of output — will ever be the same again.

It will take “one or two years to get back to where we were,” Italy's tourism secretary Lorenza Bonaccorsi told AFP.

But Bonaccorsi conceded that 2020 might as well be “written off”.

### Knock-on effects

Easter traditionally marks the real beginning of the tourist year. Hotels are supposed to be hiking their prices — not locking their doors for the coming weeks and possibly months

But they are closed along with all other businesses across the nation of 60 million.

The government, with world's highest COVID-19 death toll, is debating how and when to end its month-long lockdown.

But will hotels be able to draw tourists even if they were allowed to operate again?

Italy's Confturismo tourism association estimated the crisis would result in lost income of 22 billion euros as 45 million tourist nights go missing. “But with the lockdown extended, that is going to mean 90 million lost nights — and that only at the beginning of the year through to May,” said Alberto Corti of Confturismo.

For the rest of the year, the association does not even want to hazard a guess.— AFP ■

## French regulator orders Google pay copyright fees to media groups

PARIS — France's competition regulator said Thursday that Google must start paying media groups for displaying their content, ordering it to begin negotiations after refusing for months to comply with Europe's new digital copyright law.

The agency said it “requires Google, within three months, to conduct negotiations in good faith with publishers and news agencies on the remuneration for the re-use of their protected contents”.

“This injunction requires that the negotiations effectively result in a proposal for remuneration from Google” that must be



France wants Google to negotiate on neighbouring rights. **PHOTO: AFP**

applied retroactively to October 2019, when France became the first country to ratify the EU law.

The new rule on so-called “neighbouring rights” is designed to ensure news publishers are compensated when their work is shown on websites, search engines and social media platforms.

But Google, which effectively has a lock on internet searches in Europe, refused to comply, saying that snippets of articles, pictures and videos would be shown in search results only if media groups consent to let the tech giant use them at no cost.

If they refuse, only a headline and a bare link to the content will appear, Google said, almost certainly resulting in a loss of visibility and potential ad revenue for the publisher.

Media groups and news agency Agence France-Presse lodged a complaint with the competition regulator last November.— AFP ■

## Drive-through services expand in Japan as coronavirus spreads

TOKYO — Drive-through services in Japan, once limited mainly to take-out meals, have begun to include tests for the new coronavirus and face-mask distribution as the country battles the virus pandemic.

For food service operators, meanwhile, drive-through offers hope for retaining customers as people increasingly practice social distancing and avoid conventional outlets.

Japan has yet to introduce nationwide drive-through testing for the virus that causes COVID-19, but the cities of Niigata and Nagoya adopted the method in March. Doctors and medical staff in protective gear stand outside cars to check people, going through a list of diagnostic questions and taking swabs from their throats.

The western prefecture of Tottori will also introduce the drive-through testing at public health centres and hospitals later this month, Gov. Shinji Hirai said Thursday.

Around 260 people in the prefecture have taken the virus test so far and none of them tested positive. As of Wednesday, the

prefecture received over 3,800 phone consultation requests regarding the virus.

“We need to take measures before things get worse and stop the spread (of the virus) at an early stage even if we start to see infections here,” the governor said. The speed of the process and the advantage that cars offer to avoid crowds has drawn attention.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said on a television programme Tuesday he would consider introducing roadside testing hubs as he pledged to double Japan's virus testing capacity to 20,000 samples a day, shortly after declaring a state of emergency for Tokyo, Osaka and five other prefectures. South Korea has been aggressively conducting drive-through testing since February, followed by such countries as the United States, Brazil, Britain, Italy, Malaysia, Spain and the United Arab Emirates. Japan has been criticized domestically and internationally for not broadly conducting virus tests, which makes it difficult to accurately assess the COVID-19 prevalence rate.—Kyodo News ■



Supplied photo taken in March 2020 shows a demonstration of drive-through coronavirus testing in the city of Niigata. **PHOTO: KYODO**

## S Korea freezes interest rate at all-time low of 0.75 pct

SEOUL — South Korea's central bank froze its policy rate at an all-time low of 0.75 per cent on Thursday.

Bank of Korea (BOK) Governor Lee Ju-yeol and six other monetary policy members decided to leave the benchmark

seven-day repurchase rate unchanged at 0.75 per cent. It was in line with market expectations. According to the Korea Financial Investment Association's (KFIA) poll of 200 fixed-income experts, 89 per cent predicted the rate freeze. —Xinhua





A view of Shanghai pilot free trade zone. **FILE PHOTO: XINHUA**

## China vows to support foreign trade firms as virus hits global economy

BEIJING—China pledged continued support to aid its foreign trade firms and minimize the impacts of COVID-19 on the sector as the virus hit the global economy and international trade, the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) said Thursday.

The country's imports and exports improved in March, and work and production resumption of foreign trade firms has also been advancing in an orderly manner, said MOC spokesperson Gao Feng at an online press conference, noting that more than 76 per cent of key firms in the sector recovered over 70 per cent of their production capacity so far.

However, part of China's foreign trade enterprises, especially those in the textile industry, had to postpone or cancel orders as the virus spread around

the world and weighed on the global economy and international trade, Gao noted. Gao highlighted collaboration among governments, companies and business organizations to cope with the lack of production materials faced by foreign trade firms due to disrupted global industrial and supply chains.

China will strengthen macro-economic policy coordination with relevant countries and regions to facilitate customs clearance and logistics of important raw materials while encouraging foreign trade firms to avert risks by exploring new business opportunities and increasing spending on innovation.

Gao also said that the MOC will join hands with other related parties to ensure an open, stable and safe global supply chain. —Xinhua ■

## UK extends Bank of England overdraft over virus crisis

LONDON — The British government has expanded its overdraft with the Bank of England to help weather coronavirus disruption, it said Thursday.

The government's "ways and means facility" — effectively its overdraft account at the BoE — is also being used to temporarily help finance spending on COVID-19 emergency measures, the Treasury and central bank announced in a joint statement.

A limit of £370 million (\$455 million, 420 million euros) has been extended by an undisclosed amount,

while the government has pledged stimulus worth billions of pounds.

"HM Treasury and the Bank of England have agreed to extend temporarily the use of the... long-established Ways and Means facility," said a joint statement.

"As a temporary measure, this will provide a short-term source of additional liquidity to the government if needed to smooth its cashflows and support the orderly functioning of markets, through the period of disruption from COVID-19." —AFP ■

## India's economic growth seen plunging to multi-decade low in FY21, says US investment bank

MUMBAI — India's economic growth is expected to plunge to a multi-decade low of 1.6 per cent in the financial year 2020-21 (April-March) due to the COVID-19 pandemic, said

a report release by a US investment bank.

"Despite the policy support so far, and our expectations of more, we believe that the nationwide shutdown, and rising pub-

lic anxiety about the virus are likely to lead to a sharp deterioration in economic activity in March, and in the next quarter," the Press Trust of India news quoting the Goldman Sachs report

said.

Even without the pandemic, India's growth was expected to slide to a decade low of 5 percent for the just concluded financial year on 31 March and the virus has only added fuel to the fire.

Several investment bankers and credit rating agencies over the past few days have lowered their estimates on Asia's third largest economy following the COVID-19 pandemic that has led to nationwide lockdown and halting the trade and economic activity.

British Investment Bank, Standard Chartered had slashed India's forecast to 2.7 per cent from 4.4 per cent earlier, while rating agencies Crisil and ICRA had revised it down to 5.2 per cent and 2 per cent respectively. —Xinhua



People wait for their turn to buy medicine outside a pharmacy during a government-imposed nationwide lockdown as a preventive measure against the COVID-19 coronavirus in Amritsar on 28 March, 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V KUO HSIUNG VOY. NO. (1118 S/N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KUO HSIUNG VOY. NO. (1118 S/N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT/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 NEW GOLDEN SEA  
SHIPPING LINE

Phone No: 2301185

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V PACAO VOY. NO. (086N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PACAO VOY. NO. (086N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 12-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT/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 NEW GOLDEN SEA  
SHIPPING LINES

Phone No: 2301185

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V DOREEN

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V DOREEN VOY. NO. (-) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 10-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of IBTT 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 UNI SPRING LOGISTICS  
HOLDING PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301928

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V OLIVIA VOY. NO. (013S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V OLIVIA VOY. NO. (013S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 10-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/MIP where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185





## Asia virus latest: Australia raids cruise ship; Taiwan demands WHO apology

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

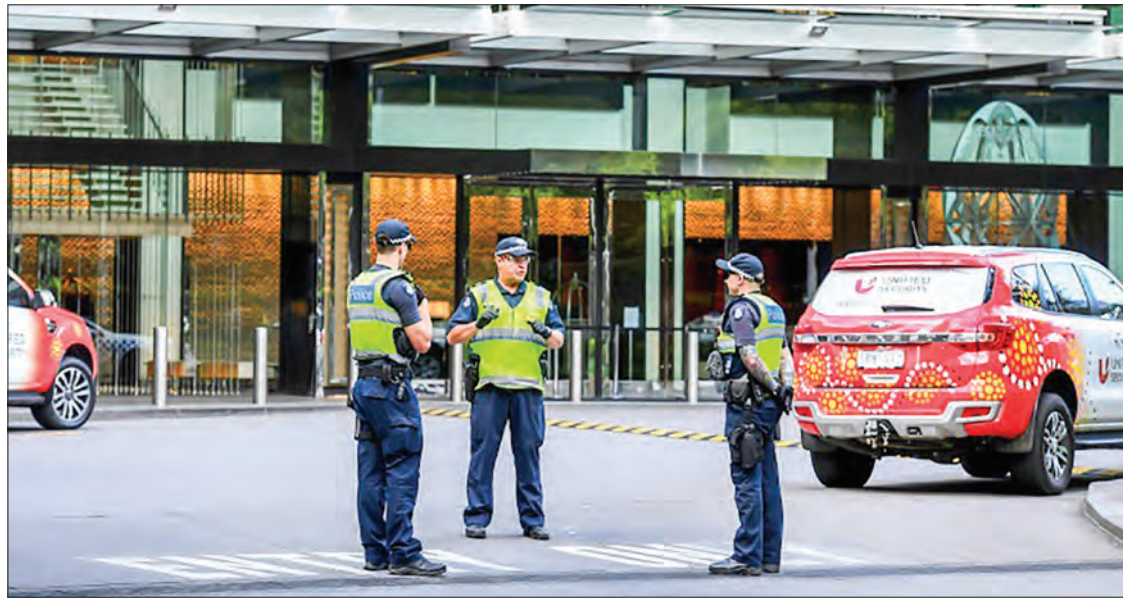
### Australian police raid virus-hit cruise ship

Australian police raided the coronavirus-stricken Ruby Princess cruise ship and seized its black box, as part of a criminal investigation after thousands of passengers were allowed to disembark in Sydney and 15 later died of the illness.

Police wearing protective suits and masks boarded the vessel in Port Kembla, some 80 kilometres (50 miles) south of Sydney, on Wednesday night, New South Wales Police said.

### Taiwan demands apology from WHO chief

Taiwan demanded an apology from the World Health Organization chief after he accused the island's government of leading personal attacks against him and his agency's response to the coronavirus pandemic. Relations between the WHO and Taiwan have worsened considerably since the pandemic began, even as health experts have lauded Taiwan for its response to the virus. Taiwan



Australian and New Zealand police will stop people from trying to take breaks away from home over the Easter weekend. **PHOTO: AFP**

closures after the Japanese government this week declared a month-long state of emergency to halt the spread of the virus.

The parks, which usually attract more than 30 million visitors each year, had originally hoped to reopen this month.

### Locked-down Chinese city builds temporary hospital

The Chinese city of Suifenhe in northeastern Heilongjiang

over the long Easter weekend, usually one of the most popular travel periods of the year.

"You can't rent a holiday house, you can't rent an Airbnb, you can't camp, you can't caravan, you can't boat, you can't fish," said Victoria Police Minister Lisa Neville. "This needs to be a very different Easter," she added.

### Cambodia restricts domestic travel

The Cambodian government issued a directive on Thursday restricting people from travelling across the country for one week to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus.

The directive, signed by Prime Minister Hun Sen, says certain categories of people, including government officers, health workers and transporters of goods, are exempt from the restrictions.

They mostly affect garment workers who planned to travel from Phnom Penh, the capital, to their hometowns for family reunions during four-day Cambodia's New Year that begins Monday.

In Cambodia, only 118 people have tested positive for the virus, of whom 68 have fully recovered and none has died. Hun Sen said that although Cambodia is not at an alarming stage of the pandemic, preventive measures must be taken seriously.

### China closes Russia land border

China has temporarily closed all land border crossings with Russia as it confirmed a growing number of coronavirus cases imported by people arriving from its northern neighbor.

The closures, aimed at stem-

ming the spread of coronavirus, were announced by the Chinese Embassy in Moscow on Wednesday.

According to health authorities in the northeastern province of Heilongjiang, 111 infection cases from Russia were confirmed there on 25 Tuesday, with symptoms and 86 without. Dozens more cases were confirmed the following day in people who had returned from Russia, the authorities said.

On Tuesday, Suifenhe, a border city in Heilongjiang, announced a Wuhan-style lockdown, instructing people to remain at home, state-run China Central Television reported. Under the measure, one family member is allowed to leave once every three days to buy necessities.

### Australian distilleries switch to make hand sanitizer

With public health regulations having forced bars and restaurants across Australia to close, local distilleries have begun making hand sanitizer to meet

high demand and keep staff employed during the coronavirus pandemic. Archie Rose Distilling Co. in downtown Sydney is one of Australia's most recognized craft distilleries and ordinarily produces a range of whiskies, gins, vodkas and rums. However, when government regulations on the number of people allowed inside venues became increasingly restrictive, the business needed a way to keep its 16 permanent and casual staff employed.

"We saw, over the space of a week, the venue being able to hold a capacity of 150 (people), to a capacity of 100, to a capacity 50, to bars being shut down," the distillery's head of marketing, Victoria Tulloch, said.

### Sushi restaurant chain Sushiro expands H.K. network

Major Japanese sushi restaurant chain operator Sushiro Global Holdings Ltd. is expanding its operations in Hong Kong despite the ongoing coronavirus crisis.

Its wholly owned subsidiary, Sushiro Hong Kong Ltd., opened its third conveyor belt-style sushi outlet at Lai Sun Commercial Centre in Kowloon's Lai Chi Kok district on Monday.

It also plans to open another store in Wong Tai Sin, also in the Kowloon area, at the beginning of June, the Osaka Prefecture-based firm said.

The performances of the first and second restaurants in Hong Kong remained strong in the second half of last year, a Sushiro spokeswoman in Osaka told NNA on Wednesday, adding Sushiro hopes annual sales of the third and fourth outlets will each top 330 million yen (\$3 million).

*SOURCE: AFP; Kyodo News Updates*



Police officers in protective gear prepare to board the coronavirus-stricken Ruby Princess cruise ship and seize its black box at Port Kembla, Australia. **PHOTO: AFP**

used to be able to obtain observer status at the WHO's annual assembly, but diplomatic pressure from Beijing in recent years has pushed the island out of major international bodies.

### Markets, oil rise

Asian markets were mostly in positive territory Thursday following another strong day for Wall Street as traders bought into optimism that the coronavirus crisis could be nearing its apex, while crude extended gains on hopes top producers will agree to a massive output cut.

### Tokyo Disney parks extend closures

Tokyo Disneyland and DisneySea said they will extend their

province, which has seen an influx of imported coronavirus cases from Russia in recent days, is building a temporary hospital to treat those who have been infected.

The hospital will provide more than 600 beds and is expected to be completed by 11 April. The city, on the Russian border, has already placed residents under lockdown and closed the land border.

### Australia, New Zealand police halt Easter getaways

Hundreds of police officers in Australia and New Zealand have been deployed to stop holidaymakers from reaching beaches, campsites and vacation homes



Undated photo of hand sanitizer made by Earp Distilling Co. in Newcastle. **PHOTO: AFP**



# UN Security Council to meet on coronavirus pandemic

UNITED NATIONS — After weeks of disagreement — especially between the United States and China — the UN Security Council will meet Thursday to discuss the coronavirus pandemic for the first time.

Led by Germany, nine of the council's 10 non-permanent members requested the closed-door meeting — a video conference to maintain social distancing — last week, fed up with the body's inaction over the unprecedented global crisis.

Talks are moving in the right direction, diplomats said, and Washington is no longer insisting UN language refer to the virus as coming from China, which had

infuriated Beijing.

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is expected to focus on efforts to fight the pandemic, peacekeeping missions and fostering unity between the non-permanent members and the five permanent ones.

There are two competing texts up for debate.

One, spearheaded by Tunisia on behalf of the 10 non-permanent members and obtained by AFP, calls for “an urgent, coordinated and united international action to curb the impact of COVID-19” and urges an immediate global ceasefire on humanitarian grounds. That draft resolution has been in development since

30 March, though a vote on it is not yet scheduled.

The second text, proposed by France, focuses on Guterres's call last month to cease all hostilities around the world as part of a “humanitarian pause” to fight the pandemic. That one has so far only had input from the permanent members, which diplomats from non-permanent countries told AFP has been “very frustrating.”

Efforts to convene a meeting have been stymied by the hospitalization of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Chinese reticence to participate without first setting a clear agenda. —AFP ■



The meeting will be held as a video conference to maintain social distancing. PHOTO: AFP

## Locked-down Spain celebrates Holy Week with music and humour

BARCELONA — In the week leading to Easter Sunday, hundreds of colourful processions featuring penitents in cone-shaped hoods and centuries-old religious floats traditionally flood the streets of villages and cities across Spain.

But with a nationwide lockdown in place to curb the spread of COVID-19, Spaniards are finding ways to mark Holy Week from their homes, by blasting religious music from their balconies or viewing videos of last year's parades.

In the western city of Salamanca, the association of religious brotherhoods that organises processions is posting pictures on social media of religious icons that would normally be paraded through the streets at the hour that would have taken place.

“And on our YouTube channel we are posting a video of the procession from last year,” as-

sociation president Jose Adrian Cornejo told AFP.

There is one part of the processions that can still go ahead — the singing of “saetas”, short, flamenco prayers sung from balconies which are especially popular in the southwestern region of Andalusia. Saetas are usually sung as effigies of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary are carried past, but this year they are being performed to empty streets.

Type in “saetas of confinement” on YouTube and several events come up, including one by Alex Ortiz in Seville — which is not staging Easter processions for the first time since 1933 — who sings of a “sad spring” without “drums or bugles” in the streets.

### Toilet paper roll icon

Pablo Murillo, a Catholic father of four, said he was celebrating Holy Week with “more seclusion”. —AFP ■



With processions called off, many religious brotherhoods in Spain have focused on helping fight the coronavirus pandemic that has claimed more than 14,500 lives in the country. PHOTO: AFP

## Biden-Trump showdown looms after Sanders ends presidential bid



Democratic presidential hopefuls former US vice president Joe Biden (l) and Senator Bernie Sanders greeted each other with a safe elbow bump before the start of the 11th Democratic Party 2020 presidential debate on 15 March, 2020. PHOTO:AFP

WASHINGTON — Leftist US Senator Bernie Sanders suspended his presidential campaign Wednesday, clearing the way for rival Joe Biden to secure the Democratic nomination and challenge Donald Trump in November.

The feisty 78-year-old democratic socialist shook up the 2020 race with his relentless pursuit of “economic justice” for all Americans and a demand for universal health care.

But he acknowledged his campaign had fallen short, as party voters determined Biden

would be a stronger candidate to go up against Trump in the general election.

“I have concluded that this battle for the Democratic nomination will not be successful,” Sanders told supporters in a livestream from his home, where he has remained for the bulk of the coronavirus pandemic that put all in-person campaigning on hold.

“Vice president Biden will be the nominee,” he said, adding that he congratulated his rival, a “very decent man, who I will work with to move our progressive ideas forward.”

Sanders, who challenged Hillary Clinton for the party's nomination in 2016, mounted a formidable 2020 bid.

He raised astonishing amounts of money from record numbers of donors, becoming the frontrunner early this year and earning the most votes in the first three state-wide contests.

But he was eclipsed by a surging Biden, who won the vast majority of remaining primaries and now holds a commanding lead in the all-important race for delegates who choose the nominee. Sanders brought his liberal ideological platform — including a call for universal health care and a \$15 hourly minimum wage — into the mainstream.

“Together we have transformed American consciousness as to what kind of nation we can become, and have taken this country a major step forward in the never-ending struggle for economic justice,” Sanders said.

Several lawmakers have come out in support of his policies, and Biden has shifted leftward to incorporate some Sanders positions, although he does not support Sanders's Medicare for All plan. —AFP ■

## Curfew in Honduras extended until April 19 to contain coronavirus

TEGUCIGALPA — The curfew in Honduras will be extended until 19 April as the country ramps up efforts to stem the spread of coronavirus, police said Thursday.

To ensure more effective control of the coronavirus, “it was decided to extend the absolute curfew until 15:00 Sunday, 19 April, 2020,” police tweeted.

The number of coronavirus

cases in Honduras currently stands at 343 with 23 deaths, official figures show. On 26 March, a 60-year-old Honduran became the country's first fatality due to the disease. —Xinhua ■



## 80 complete 14-day quarantine from MFF facilities

A total of eighty quarantined persons at the Myanmar National Football Academy and Myanmar National Football Team's apartment (1) in Yangon yesterday have accomplished their quarantined period of 14 days under the government's plan to fight the Covid19 pandemic, MFF said in its statement.

The quarantined people returned home yesterday morning and they were in good health to commute to the Yangon International Airport, Yangon Railway Station and Aung Mingalar highway bus terminals on their way to go home with the transportation arrangement of the Myanmar Football Federation.

Before leaving from the National Football Academy, the quarantined persons greeted General Secretary U Ko Ko Thein of the Myanmar Football Feder-

ation and the officials.

Also, the quarantined persons were given free-from-Covid19 health certificates, approved by the Ministry of Health and Sports. Myanmar Football Federation and Ayeyawady Foundation are currently coordinating with the Ministry of Health and Sports to combat Coronavirus disease

and three of Myanmar National Football Teams' apartment and National Football Academy are used as facility quarantine sites to accommodate a total of 170 people, according to the MFF.

The remaining quarantined persons will complete their 14-day period on 11 April, officials said. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



People going home after their quarantined period at Myanmar National Football Academy (Yangon) yesterday. PHOTO: MFF

## MFF provides foodstuffs for staff amid pandemic

THE Myanmar Football Federation provided essential foodstuffs including holdable sacks of rice, oil bottles and sacks of Iodine salt to 248 federation staff with a ceremony yesterday.

Some of the MFF staff are currently serving their duties under the work from the home plan while others are serving their duties at the quarantine camps of the Myanmar Football Federation during the Covid-19 combatting period this month in the country, MFF officials said.

Myanmar Football Federation is strictly following the rules and regulations set by the FIFA, Asian Football Con-

federation, ASEAN Football Federation and all the international matches of the Myanmar national football team are being postponed and domestic league -- Myanmar National League and its junior versions are already postponed.

By the order of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the transfer window period for the Myanmar National League clubs has been postponed to next month amid the Covid-19, according to the Myanmar National League.

Though the postponement was set next month, it will also depend on the pandemic-free conditions, said officials. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

## NBA legend Michael Jordan wins long-running China trademark dispute

BEIJING (China)—China's Supreme Court has ruled in favour of basketball legend Michael Jordan in a long-running trademark dispute, ending an eight-year legal battle with a Chinese sportswear firm that illegally used his name.

Upholding intellectual property rights is one of the core disputes of the US-China trade war, and a phase one deal signed in January saw Beijing pledge to improve protections of intellectual property.

The landmark ruling, made late last month, prohibits the Fujian-based Qiaodan Sports from using the Chinese translation of Jordan's name, Qiao Dan.

The retired Chicago Bulls player and six-time NBA championship winner has a huge following in China, a country that has legions of avid basketball fans. The Supreme Court decision overturns two previous verdicts in favour of the Chinese firm.

However, it still allows the firm to continue using its logo of a silhouetted basketball player — which has similarities with the "Jumpman" logo used by

Nike to promote its "Air Jordan" line of sports shoes.

However the Supreme Court referred the case over the use of the logo for retrial by the State Intellectual Property Office.

In 2016, Jordan won the right to his name in Chinese characters, but the Supreme Court upheld the firm's right to use its trademark "Qiaodan" in Romanised English.

Qiaodan Sports said in a Weibo statement Tuesday that the ruling "would not impact the normal use of [its] existing trademarks, nor would it affect normal business operations."

Founded in 2000, the sportswear franchise operates more than 5,700 stores nationwide. It has also applied for nearly 200 similarly named trademarks including different Chinese spellings of "Qiaodan", "Flying Power" and "Qiaodan King", according to the verdict.

In 2017, the sportswear brand New Balance was awarded \$1.5 million in copyright damages by a Chinese court over its famous "N" logo, which was illegally copied by a local sports shoe firm.—AFP ■

## Barcelona president seeks reshuffle of club board



Josep Maria Bartomeu was elected Barcelona president in 2014. PHOTO: AFP

BARCELONA (Spain)—Barcelona president Josep Maria Bartomeu, whose tenure has been undermined by tense relations with players this season, wants to reform the club's management because he distrusts certain directors, according to vice-president Emili Rousaud.

"Bartomeu called me and told me he wanted to change the management because he was suspicious of some of the directors, me included," Rousaud, who had been tipped to succeed Bartomeu as presi-

dent, told Cadena Ser radio on Wednesday.

"He told me things had been leaked to the press that upset the players and he thought I had been critical of how the board had handled it."

The relationship between Barca's players and board has been strained for several months, with Lionel Messi's public criticism of technical secretary Eric Abidal in February just one of a number of off-field controversies.

Messi took another swipe at the Barca board last week,

when confirming the squad would take a 70 per cent pay cut during the coronavirus crisis.

The Argentine accused Bartomeu of undermining the players during recent negotiations.

"It never ceases to amaze us that from within the club there were those who tried to put us under the magnifying glass and tried to add pressure to do something that we always knew we would do," Messi wrote on social media.

Messi's message was soon posted on the pages of nearly all of his Barcelona teammates.

The controversy further increased the pressure on Bartomeu and the Barcelona board ahead of presidential elections due next year.

However, Bartomeu will not be eligible to run for re-election in 2021 having served two terms. According to Catalan daily Sport, in addition to Rousaud, Bartomeu is also looking to replace club treasurer Enrique Tombas, reserve team director and spokesperson Silvio Elias and Josep Pont, who oversees commercial operations.—AFP ■