

NATIONAL

“Myanmar’s Development Assistance Coordination Unit and Partners form a united front in the fight against COVID-19”

PAGE-3

NATIONAL

Union Minister U Soe Win discusses loan programmes for Myanmar with World Bank official

PAGE-2

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VII, No. 22, 2nd Waning of Kasone 1382 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Friday, 8 May 2020



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi writes about homemade cotton mask competition

STATE COUNSELLOR Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has invited interested persons to join in the Homemade Cotton Mask Competition on her Facebook page. She wrote that she was planning to organize a Homemade Cotton Mask Competition; interested participants were permitted to make one mask or more than one mask; the mask was to be self-made either by hand or by sewing machine; and that participants were free to choose any design they liked.

She further said that she was going to make a mask herself and that she would post a picture of herself wearing that mask on her Facebook page on 13 May. The competitors should post the pictures of their masks in the “comment” section of her Facebook page. Prizes would be presented to three participants who received the most “like” from the people during 13 and 15 May. In choosing

the winners, whether the masks were made in a hygienic way or not would also be considered. She said all were urged to participate happily in the competition by making hygienic beautiful homemade cotton masks.

(Translated by Kyaw Myaing)

Prizes would be presented to three participants who received the most “like” from the people during 13 and 15 May.

Myanmar citizens stranded in Singapore return home

TO bring back Myanmar citizens stranded in foreign countries due to suspension of international airlines, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been working with Myanmar embassies in respective foreign countries and coordinating with ministries concerned in the foreign countries, in accordance with the guidance of the National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment on COVID-19 Disease.

A total of 144 Myanmar citizens facing difficulties in Singapore were brought back to Myanmar by the Myanmar National Airlines, and the first group of the people arrived at Yangon International Airport at 3:15 pm Yesterday.

When they arrived at the airport, Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and Yangon Region Government took respective responsibilities in ac-

cordance with the health guidelines released by the Ministry of Health and Sports to put them under the facility quarantine at designated places and hotels.

Similarly, 96 Myanmar citizens from the Republic of Korea arrived back Yangon on 30 April, 2020 under the same programme; 195 from Japan on 2 May 2020 and 38 from Bangladesh and 135 from Thailand on 6 May, and 144 from Singapore on 7 May, 2020, totalling 608. —MNA



Myanmar citizens line up at the immigration counter of the Yangon International Airport. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI**

14 new coronavirus cases on Thursday, total tally reaches 176

THE Ministry of Health and Sports reported 14 new coronavirus cases yesterday, bringing the total number of people diagnosed to 176.

The new cases are one 12-year-old, one 18-year-old, ten 20-year-old, one 43-year-old, and one 52-year-old.

Of the new cases, two were from Tamway Township, and twelve from Insein Township, Yangon Region.

Out of the 176 confirmed cases, six patients have died, 62 have recovered, and 37 were allowed to be discharged from the hospitals.

There are a total of 70 new persons under investigation in the past 24 hours from 12 noon of 6 May.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

SEE MORE ON PAGE-5

"People are the key"

**Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Union Election Commission
Notification 90/2020**
1st Waning of Kasone, 1382ME
(7 May 2020)

Four Defence Services Personnel representatives from Pyithu Hluttaw substituted

According to a request made in accordance with Section 33 of the Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law to substitute four Defence Services Personnel Representatives who are parliamentarians, the Union Election Commission has scrutinized and substituted the following four Pyithu Hluttaw representatives shown on the left column under the Notification 1/2016 of the commission dated 18-1-2016, the Notification 29/2017 of the commission dated 14-11-2017, the Notification 61/2018 of the commission dated 15-5-2018 and the Notification 4/2019 of the commission dated 15-1-2019 with those shown on the right column.

The Defence Services Personnel Representatives of Pyithu Hluttaw to be substituted were nominated by the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services in the second Multi-party General Election held on 8 November 2015.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| (1) BC 19598
Col Win Lwin Oo | BC 23089
Col Saw Kyi Naing |
| (2) BC 19991
Col Tin Tun Oo | BC 21662
Col Than Hlaing |
| (3) BC 20726
Col Maung San | BC 18837
Col Min Thaw |
| (4) BC 22635
Lt-Col/Col Khin Maung Swe | BC 28286
Lt-Col Zaw Min Oo |

(Hla Thein)
Chairman
Union Election Commission

**Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Union Election Commission
Notification 91/2020**
1st Waning of Kasone, 1382ME
(7 May 2020)

Five Defence Services Personnel representatives from Amyotha Hluttaw substituted

According to a request made in accordance with Section 33 of the Amyotha Hluttaw Election Law to substitute five Defence Services Personnel Representatives who are parliamentarians, the Union Election Commission has scrutinized and substituted the following five Amyotha Hluttaw representatives shown on the left column under the Notification 2/2016 of the commission dated 18-1-2016, the Notification 20/2017 of the commission dated 21-8-2017, the Notification 62/2018 of the commission dated 15-5-2018 and the Notification 35/2020 of the commission dated 27-1-2020 with those shown on the right column.

The Defence Services Personnel Representatives of Amyotha Hluttaw to be substituted were nominated by the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services in the second Multi-party General Election held on 8 November 2015.

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| (1) Air 1914
Brig-Gen Zaw Myint San | Air 2084
Col Aung Myo Kyaw |
| (2) BC 20870
Col Khin Maung Naing | BC 22621
Col Khaing Min |
| (3) BC 20595
Col Naing Oo | BC 21109
Col Saw Tun Aung |
| (4) BC 19727
Col Hla Win Aung | BC 23802
Col Sein Win |
| (5) BC 19753
Col Than Htaik | BC 20601
Col Aung Myo |

(Hla Thein)
Chairman
Union Election Commission

**Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Union Election Commission
Notification 92/2020**
1st Waning of Kasone, 1382ME
(7 May 2020)

Seven Defence Services Personnel representatives from Region and State Hluttaws substituted

According to a request made in accordance with Section 33 of the Region Hluttaw or State Hluttaw Election Law to substitute seven Defence Services Personnel Representatives who are parliamentarians, the Union Election Commission has scrutinized and substituted the following seven Region Hluttaw and State Hluttaw representatives shown on the left column under the Notification 3/2016 of the commission dated 18-1-2016, the Notification 26/2017 of the commission dated 30-10-2017 and the Notification 63/2018 of the commission dated 15.5.2018 with those shown on the right column.

The Defence Services Personnel Representatives of Region Hluttaw or State Hluttaw to be substituted were nominated by the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services in the second Multi-party General Election held on 8 November 2015.

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Kachin State Hluttaw
(1) BC 20615
Col Kyaw Kyaw Oo | BC 23752
Col Khin Maung Maung |
| (2) BC 27944
Major Tay Zar Lin | BC 43169
Major Nyan Lin Tun |
| Bago Region Hluttaw
(3) BC 25204
Major Nay Lin | BC 20080
Col Nay Win Aung |
| Magway Region Hluttaw
(4) BC 29989
Captain Tin Htay | BC 19310
Col That Naing |
| (5) BC 46804
Captain Soe Thu | BC 59266
Captain Zin Min Tun |
| Yangon Region Hluttaw
(6) BC 24035
Major Win Naing Aung | BC 23013
Col Thant Zin Oo |
| Ayeyawady Region Hluttaw
(7) BC 48200
Captain Thein Tan | BC 62522
Captain Kyaw Thu |

(Hla Thein)
Chairman
Union Election Commission

Union Minister U Soe Win discusses loan programmes for Myanmar with World Bank official

UNION MINISTER for Planning, Finance and Industry U Soe Win held a discussion on teleconference about loan programmes of the World Bank for Myanmar with Ms Mariam J. Sherman, the Country Director for Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos, yesterday morning.

During the meeting, they held talks on the support of World Bank in Myanmar's implementation on COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP) and the loan programmes from the international financial institutions, including US\$50 million loan for the Myanmar COVID-19 Emergency Response Project, \$5 million loan for the Essential Health Services Access Project (EHSAP), \$8 million loan from the Global Pandemic Emergency Facility (PEF), increasing IDA loan of the World Bank up to \$200 million for the Myanmar:



Union Minister U Soe Win meets on teleconference with World Bank's Country Director. PHOTO: MNA

National Food and Agriculture Systems Project, \$100 million loan from IDA for the Essential Health Services Access Project as an additional financing, \$10 million grant from Global Financing Facility from the World Bank, and its other supports for Myanmar in implementing the

joint project of Country Partnership Framework (2019-2023).

The meeting was also attended by Deputy Ministers U Maung Maung Win, U Set Aung, Dr Min Ye Paing Hein and departmental heads.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Temporary unemployed workers can apply for social welfare benefits

Workers with registration for social welfare programme and who temporarily lost their jobs from factories, workplaces and organizations can apply for 40 per cent of their daily wages as their businesses were temporarily shut down during the inspections of joint teams comprised with the representatives of Region/State governments, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population to check following rules and recommendations to control COVID-19 disease.

Applications can be submitted to the township social welfare programme offices or at the online web portal (<http://ssbmyanmar.org>).

Employers can also contact respective township offices or at the headquarters at phone numbers 067 341 7151, 067 341 7912 and 067 341 7925 for information.

(Translated by Aung Khin)

“Myanmar’s Development Assistance Coordination Unit and Partners form a united front in the fight against COVID-19”

NAY PYI TAW—The Development Assistance Coordination Unit (DACU) met via video-conference with Myanmar’s Partners to discuss how best to coordinate the financing and implementation of the newly launched Overcoming as One: COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP), which observers have valued at over US\$2 billion [MMK2.8 trillion].

Delivering opening remarks, Union Minister of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun noted that, “Guided by CERP, the Government of Myanmar is working in partnership with the international community to unlock support that will prevent the loss of lives, contain the risk of aftershocks, and further our investment in a sustainable recovery.”

Deputy Minister of Planning, Finance and Industry U Set Aung provided an overview of the CERP’s key Goals and Actions, including an account of actions taken to fast-track CERP Action Plan implementation. Deputy Minister of Planning, Finance and Industry U Min Ye Paing



Union Minister U Thaung Tun convenes the video conference with the Development Assistance Coordination Unit (DACU). PHOTO: MNA



Hein stressed the importance of using a data-driven approach to ensure development finance targeted those most vulnerable.

Members of the Cooperation Partners Group (CPG) joined with representatives of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), the Myanmar CSO Partnership for Aid and Development Effectiveness (MCPAD) and the INGO Forum to express their full support to the CERP, and to working closely with the DACU to contribute

to the CERP’s implementation and Myanmar’s longer-term national development priorities as expressed within the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP). Topics discussed also included finalisation of an updated Development Assistance Policy (DAP), and the launch of a revised set of MSDP-aligned Strategic Coordination Groups (SCG) within the coming weeks. Established based upon internationally accepted principles of effective development cooperation, the DACU is the Government-led

body responsible for ensuring development assistance to Myanmar is efficient, effective, coordinated, and nationally owned.

With USAID and the UN Resident Coordinators Office serving as Co-facilitator’s, the CPG provides Myanmar’s development partners with a forum for information sharing on development effectiveness and coordination issues.

In providing concluding remarks, Union Minister U Thaung Tun took the opportunity to encourage both the DACU and

partners to continue to take full advantage of meetings such as all sides work together to help transform Myanmar’s development aspirations into realities.

Meeting participants included ADB, EU, DFID, Canada, Denmark, France, Israel, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the Philippines, FAO/ILO, IMF, INGO Forum, Japan/JICA, MCPAD, the Netherlands, Norway, Thailand, UMFCCI, UN Women, UNCDF, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNIDO, UNOPS, UNRCO, USAID, and World Bank.—MNA

Union Ministers meet on teleconference with WB Country Director for COVID-19 response plans in Myanmar

UNION MINISTER for Planning, Finance and Industry U Soe Win, together with Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun, talked with the representatives of development partner organizations led by Ms Mariam J. Sherman, the Country Director of World Bank for Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos,

yesterday. At the meeting, Union Ministers discussed COVID-19 response plans of Myanmar, and financial supports to the sectors of CMP, tourism and SMEs which were seriously impacted by the outbreak of pandemic.

They also clarified Myanmar’s negotiation with international financial institutions

such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for receiving low interest loans and grants, as well as the quickest financial supports to the farmers.

Officials from the World Bank, the US/USAID, the UK/DFID, the Australia/DFAT, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and

IMF expressed their appreciations on the Economic Relief Plan (CERP) of Myanmar, and offered their financial and other assistance to Myanmar, for the programmes such as the COVID-19 response activities.

The Union Ministers expressed thanks for the assistance of development partners in COVID-19 response programme,

and said the Ministry of Health and Sports, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement will discuss using the international loans and grants as the key ministries related to these funds.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Russia embassy donates cash fund to national COVID-19 central committee

THE Embassy of Russian Federation contributed cash donation to Myanmar’s National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) yesterday.

The donation ceremony was held at the meeting hall of the Department of Medical Research (headquarters) in Dagon Township, Yangon.

Russian Ambassador to Myanmar Dr Nikolay Listopadov explained the donation of K2.2 million from the families of his mission and Director-General of Department of Medical Research Professor Dr Zaw Than Tun expressed thanks before returning an honorary certificate for the donation.— MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Russian Ambassador Dr Nikolay Listopadov hands over K2.2 million to the Director-General of Department of Medical Research Professor Dr Zaw Than Tun. PHOTO ZAW MIN LATT

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Printed and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

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

Myanmar National Committee on Women meet for COVID-19 response programmes

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye, in his capacity as the Chairman of Myanmar National Committee on Women, presided over its meeting on video conferencing at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the meeting, the Union Minister discussed global social economic impacts on women and children, suffering from both natural disasters and COVID-19 diseases, Myanmar's responses to the pandemic with forming committees, requirements of rehabilitation works for the existing and future plans for addressing problems from this pandemic, healthcare programmes for women and female workers, and prevention of sexual violence during this period.

Deputy Minister U Soe Aung also called for the reports from women committees.

The Social Affairs Ministers, as well as the chairper-



Myanmar National Committee on Women discusses activities on COVID-19 measures yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

sions of women committees from Nay Pyi Taw Council, States and Regions, also discussed their ongoing activities for addressing violence against women and quarantine programmes for preg-

nant women who returned from foreign countries.

Then, officials from related government agencies made discussions about their works, followed by civil organizations on

woman affairs presented their activities and relief programmes in facing against the problems from COVID-19 outbreak—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Disaster Management Department has spent over K329 mln relief funds

THE Disaster Management Department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has used K 329.1 million from its budget for foods, construction materials and other relief items after the strong winds that devastated buildings from 9 April to 7 May.

During this period, a total of 377 houses and 13 religious buildings were destroyed, and some damages occurred at 5,982 houses and 124 religious buildings.

On 6 May, the strong winds destroyed house and religious buildings in Lewe Township in Nay Pyi Taw, Kachin State,



The Disaster Management Department is giving relief funds for the loss of properties from natural disasters. PHOTO: MNA

Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Shan and Ayeyawady.

Two people were also injured in these devastations.

Awareness of natural dis-

asters such as strong winds unseasonal heavy rains, hailstones and thunderbolts has been raised in early monsoon period, and assistance can be available

through hotline phone numbers 067 3404666 and 067 3404777 of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. —MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

IDP camps receive relief aid to prevent COVID-19

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is distributing relief items for prevention of COVID-19 disease at the IDP camps in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan states.

The ministry provided 8,554 face masks, 10 sets of hand washing basins, 2 thermometers, 10 hand-speakers and 10 memory sticks with audio files of COVID-19 awareness campaign to the 10 IDP camps in Kachin State.

It also distributed 2,234 face masks, 282 bottles of hand washing soaps, 14 thermometers, 14 hand-speakers and 14 memory

sticks with audio files of COVID-19 awareness campaign to 14 IDP camps in Sittway Township of Rakhine State.

The ministry also gave 10 bags of lime powders each to two IDP camps in Kutkai Township, Shan State.

In addition to material supplies, the ministry is conducting awareness campaigns and counselling services in Nay Pyi Taw Council area and other areas of the country.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



COVID-19 relief aid presented at an IDP camp in Kachin. PHOTO: MNA



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing checks PPE at the 6th Coordination Meeting of senior Tatmadaw officers on COVID-19 measures. **PHOTO: C-IN-C OF DEFENCE SERVICES OFFICE.**

Tatmadaw holds 6th coordination meeting on COVID-19 measures

COMMANDER in Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presided over the 6th Coordination meeting of senior Tatmadaw officers for measures against COVID-19 disease yesterday.

The report from the Office of Commander in Chief of Defence Services said that, at the meeting, the Senior General discussed the importance of home stay, avoiding unnecessary travels of Tatmadaw members and their families, enforcement

of healthcare guidelines, possible ways for more testings of disease, following guidelines and inspections at the factories and business owned by the Tatmadaw. He also advised to make required checks on the returnees at the border crossings, medical tests for Hluttaw representatives of the Tatmadaw and their administrative officers, collecting real time reports and performing duties responsibly. -MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

14 new coronavirus cases on Thursday, total tally reaches 176

FROM PAGE-1

1. The National Health Laboratory (Yangon) tested 83 samples, the Department of Medical Research tested 102 samples, totalling 185, on 7 May 2020. The results showed that 14 lab specimens tested positive for COVID-19.
2. There have been a total of 176 confirmed cases in Myanmar up to 8:00 pm on 7 May.
3. Out of the old confirmed cases, 12 new cases (Case-26, 46, 62, 62, 63, 66, 69, 72, 79, 84, 118, 120, and 132) were tested negative for two times, bringing the total number of recovered persons to 62 until 7 May.
4. Six positive patients have died.
5. There are a total of 70 new persons under investigation in the past 24 hours.

New confirmed cases of COVID-19 issued at 8pm, 7 May

Case no.	Age	Gender	Address	Contact with COVID-19 positive cases	History of travel abroad	Name of hospital transferred	COVID-19 lab test result	Remark
163	43	Male	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-155)	No	Waibargi Specialist Hospital	Positive	Persons are quarantined in designated locations.
164	52	Male	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-155)	No	Waibargi Specialist Hospital	Positive	
165	20	Male	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-152,153,154)	No	Waibargi Specialist Hospital	Positive	
166	25	Female	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-152,153,154)	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	
167	22	Female	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-152,153,154)	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	
168	22	Female	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-152,153,154)	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	
169	12	Female	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-152,153,154)	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	
170	28	Female	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-152,153,154)	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	
171	29	Female	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-152,153,154)	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	
172	22	Male	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-152,153,154)	No	Waibargi Specialist Hospital	Positive	
173	18	Male	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-152,153,154)	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	
174	24	Male	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-152,153,154)	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	
175	23	Male	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-152,153,154)	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	
176	28	Male	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Case-152,153,154)	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	

COVID-19 Laboratory results at 8 pm, 7 May 2020

Samples tested at the National Health Laboratory on 7 May	83
Samples tested at the Department of Medical Research on 7 May	102
COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) (new confirmed case) (positive)	14

Latest confirmed cases, recovered cases, and deaths at 8pm, 7 May

	New cases	Total cases
Confirmed cases of COVID-19	14	176
Recovered patients	12	62
Deaths	0	6

The closer and better the world cooperates, the faster we'll overcome COVID-19

By Kristian Schmidt



Kristian Schmidt, Ambassador of the European Union to Myanmar

ON 4 May, more than 50 world leaders, heads of international organizations and companies followed an invitation from the European Union to come together to fight a double-headed virus; corona and selfish nationalism. Together, they pledged to invest 7.4 billion euros – more than 11.13 trillion kyats – for testing, treatment and most importantly: a vaccine.

The COVID-19 virus does not stop at national borders. Our response to this pandemic can therefore not be isolation – while we distance ourselves physically from each other to help prevent the further spread of the virus, we need to move closer together as nations to effectively fight it. A truly global approach means that once the vaccine is developed, access will be given to everybody, not just the highest bidders. We need to prepare now, together, to have sufficient production capacity for the vaccine to be deployed to every corner of the world. In fact, countries like Myanmar, with limited testing capability or local pharmaceutical industry, should be among the first to receive the vaccine.

COVID-19 has affected all of us, taken lives and jobs, separated us from our loved ones, confined us in our homes, turning our world upside down. There are legitimate questions as to whether the Chinese authorities could have been more transparent instead of silencing Wuhan doctors, who raised their concerns. But now is not the time to make vague allegations, nor to stigmatize any race or nationality with finger-pointing, discrimination, disinformation or conspiracy theories. We need global scientific cooperation, not politics, to lead the way, to focus on finding the source

of the coronavirus so we can effectively fight it and get back to a normal life as soon as possible. At the World Health Organization's annual World Health Assembly on 18 May, the European Union will propose an independent investigation to find the source of this pandemic.

The coronavirus has hit Europe hard. So far, health authorities reported almost 1.5 million confirmed infections and 145,000 deaths linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. Millions of Europeans have spent weeks inside their homes, and many schools remain closed. Like in Myanmar, millions of Europeans have lost

Myanmar's people and economy is very harsh. Growth this year will be halved, or worse. The European Union stands in solidarity with Myanmar, and we have shown that in a number of practical ways, using our many programmes across the country to help government inform people how to help fight the spread of the virus and how to stay healthy and safe. Our projects also provide essential hygiene and personal protective equipment to communities, officials and health workers across the country.

A special effort is made to ensure that humanitarian aid continues to reach the most vulner-

able, including IDPs and people affected by conflict. As government revenues decline during this crisis, we have accelerated our disbursements to the Ministry of Education to keep education on track. The National Health Laboratory, a pivotal part of Myanmar's COVID-19 response, is already receiving strong joint support from the European Un-

ion and the French Development Agency, to increase its capacities to test and boost its preparedness for this and the next epidemic. To me and to the EU, supporting the women in the garment sector is a special, top priority. Tens of thousands of jobs have already been lost, and many more are at risk. First due to the disruption of raw material supply from China, then cancelled orders from global buyers and now factory closures under quarantine. These women did nothing to deserve this misery. Most of them are young women from across Myanmar who, with their salaries, support their children and families back

workers, helping them through this crisis.

The world will overcome COVID-19. The closer we cooperate, the faster we'll put it behind us. But will we learn from it? Our ambition should not be to return to "normal". This is a wake-up call to the world with several messages: First, we cannot afford to weaken or politicize key international institutions like the WHO or the UN as a whole. Second, if and when the zoonotic (viral transmission from animal to human) origin of COVID-19 is confirmed, it must lead us to take strong, collective action to ban all wildlife trafficking, including in Myanmar's border areas with the current Chinese market. Bats and pangolins belong in nature, not on the dinner table.

Third, a virus is not "nature's revenge" – we did this to ourselves, and we should think deep and hard about our respect for planetary boundaries. We need a leap forward into a modern, clean, and sustainable economy which uses resources responsibly and protects the world's biodiversity. Our new normal must be a green normal, where we do not compromise on decisive measures against climate change, protecting our future livelihoods and our planet.

Fourth, global trade and transport is not to blame for this – but the pandemic reminds us that global norms and standards are there for a reason and must be upheld.

And fifth, while this crisis has disproportionately hit the poor and the vulnerable, it has also exposed our interdependence and that no society is stronger than its weakest link. We need societies with safety nets, not as an emergency measure, but as a permanent feature, and we need it for the international community.

On 9 May, the EU marks Europe Day and the 70th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration. In 1950, former French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman in a powerful speech laid out his vision of a peaceful, prosperous Europe that is built on such unity and solidarity. In the face of the coronavirus crisis, his words ring truer than ever: We are stronger together.



EU "Myan Ku" Emergency Cash Fund is underway for garment workers. PHOTO: EU

their income, jobs and livelihoods as the streets all over Europe fell silent. Europe has taken a hard blow, but we are still standing, and the European spirit of solidarity – within Europe and with our partners around the globe – has been mobilized.

Let me pay tribute to the Myanmar government for taking up the fight against the coronavirus with admirable calm and professionalism – despite limited resources and a lack of key medical supplies, in particular in remote areas. The low number of confirmed infections in Myanmar is probably partly due to the low number of testing, but overall, Myanmar has done better than several developed nations with vast resources.

These strict measures, however, come at a price, and the socio-economic impact on

Let me pay tribute to the Myanmar government for taking up the fight against the coronavirus with admirable calm and professionalism – despite limited resources and a lack of key medical supplies, in particular in remote areas.

able, including IDPs and people affected by conflict. As government revenues decline during this crisis, we have accelerated our disbursements to the Ministry of Education to keep education on track. The National Health Laboratory, a pivotal part of Myanmar's COVID-19 response, is already receiving strong joint support from the European Un-

home. Half a million jobs have been created thanks to the EU's market opening under the EU's Generalized Scheme of Preferences, and this success story must be preserved. Now that the crisis hit, I am glad that the EU could respond quickly to the dramatic situation with a "Myan Ku" Emergency Cash Fund that is set to disburse cash to up to 90,000

Defence Services personnel and fire brigade members conduct disinfections to contain COVID-19

DEFENCE Services personnel and fire brigade members, together with employees of civil service departments and organizations, carried out disinfections to prevent spread of COVID-19 viral diseases at 135 places in 63 townships of Nay Pyi Taw, States and Regions.

They used 319 gallons of disinfectants, 87 kilogram of its powder and 24,360 gallons of water.



Spraying COVID-19 disinfectants on Sule Pagoda Road in Yangon on 30 April 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**



Spraying COVID-19 disinfectants at Hluttaw Office building in Myothit Ward of Haka Township, Chin State, 30 April 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**



Spraying COVID-19 disinfectants at Sule Square in Yangon on 30 April 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**



Spraying COVID-19 disinfectants at Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee Guest House (1), on 30 April 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**



Spraying COVID-19 disinfectants in Kengtung Township of Shan State on 30 April 2020.



Spraying COVID-19 disinfectants at Yunnanese Buddhist Temple at Aung Nan East Ward in Chanayetharzan Township, Mandalay Region, on 30 April 2020.

Moving forward with sympathy, understanding how to tackle COVID-19 mental health issues

IN this time of COVID-19 crisis we are facing two pandemics. One is the Coronavirus. The other one is threatening, caused by societal panic with its accompanying fear and anxiety, along with the stress caused by concerns for daily livelihoods. The second could do more harm and last longer than the first, if we don't manage it well.

Experts have warned of the isolation felt by many, especially the elderly who are quarantined. There are also the anxieties that will affect daily waged workers and those working just to make ends meet. Others will worry about the future of their jobs.

Mental health issues are likely to emerge as significant side effects of the new disease, requiring the attention of public-health policymakers.

To manage the fear and anxiety in the time of COVID-19, it is recommended to limit media exposure, especially with social media, maintain normal sleeping and eating patterns and, most importantly, get your information from credible experts and sources.

Fear, worry, and stress are normal responses to perceived or real threats, and during times when we are faced with the uncertainty of the unknown. So it is normal and understandable that people are experiencing fear, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Also, COVID-19 has brought significant changes to our daily lives, as our movements are restricted in support of efforts to contain and slow the spread of the virus.

On a daily basis we are facing new realities, such as working from home, temporary unemployment, home-schooling of children, and lack of physical contact with other family members, friends and colleagues.

In this time of the virus, it is important for everyone to look after our mental, as well as our physical health, and we all should display more sympathy and understanding, as the pandemic does not seem to be going away any time soon.

Professionals with mental health backgrounds are also advised to take part in the National Volunteer Corps.

Meanwhile, it is welcome news that WHO will continue to provide accessible and actionable information on coping with COVID-19-related stress and anxiety, and will support all member states to strengthen mental health services, as part of the COVID-19 response.

To save lives and minimize the impact on the nation, we must continue to stand together to tackle what is the greatest public health challenge of a generation.



Fourth-Year Performances of the Rakhine State Government

By Thi Thi Min
Photo: Saw Maung Thein

Rakhine State Government: Working on multifaceted and motley assortment of tasks for the development of Rakhine State and socio-economic growth of the people.

IN smart and speedy steps, the Rakhine State Government is working hard in the tasks such as that of the Rakhine State security; that of the regional development; that of the agriculture, animal breeding; that of the electricity supply; that of the of tourism industry; that of the creation of job opportunities; and that of the socio-economic development through local and foreign investment.

An interview was called on Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and the implementation of Rakhine State Government is submitted to the esteemed readers and the people.

Q: Kindly share us the Rakhine State development including regional peace and security.

A: The Rakhine State Government has successfully implemented the development tasks with visible conditions during the fourth year period. Development outcome are the result of the endeavors exerted by the Rakhine State Government with the assistances of the Union Government, the international organizations, and the people.

In carrying out the security tasks, the three main bodies namely (1) Border Guard and Command Office; (2) the Number four Security Control and Command Office; and (3) Rakhine State Police Force Office have ardently shouldered their assigned tasks.

As of today, although not the entire Rakhine State is safe, most areas including Sittway Town are in stable and secured conditions. Battles are still there. The three main bodies are maintaining the matters on security and stability. In this connection, illegal and unlawful activities have been taken action.

In 2019, total of (305) persons have been arrested in (180) cases with narcotic drugs valued at MMK (7 point 9) million. Crushed narcotic powder, marijuana, black opium, and alprazolam tablets have been seized. The criminals have been arrested who committed the unlawful enticement and persuasion of the people with the Islamic faiths.

At the prisons, the visiting hours for the guests have been extended for more hours to meet



Darlat Creek Bridge on the Minbu-An-Sittway Road completed in the 2018-2019 financial year.

the inmates. With the "Thit Sar Project", the Citizenship Scrutiny Cards have been issued. Those who are ten years and (18) years are issued with relevant cards.

Moreover, tasks are being done in accordance with the 1982 Myanmar Citizenship Laws. Moreover, the "National Verification Process" is ongoing in Rakhine State. The tasks are being undertaken by the Ministry of Security and Border Affairs of Rakhine State.

Q: Tell us on the education matters in Rakhine State.

A: During 2019 - 2020 educational year, there are (174) basic education state high schools; (224) state high school (branches); (218) basic education state middle schools; (304) state middle school (branches); (708) post basic education primary schools; (1,377) basic primary schools; (280) primary school (branches); totalling (3,285) schools.

Interestingly, upgrading of schools have been carried out at (21) basic education state high schools; (114) high school (branches); (123) basic education state middle schools; (133) middle schools (branches); (67) post basic education state primary schools; (35) basic education state primary schools; (34) primary schools (Branches); totalling (525) schools have been upgraded.

During 2019 - 2020, there were

(122) Matriculation Examination centers, where (42,416) boy students and (10,165) girl students appeared for the exam. Total of (23 point 97) per cent passed the examination with (629) students with one distinction; (144) students with two distinctions; (47) students with (3) distinctions; (26) students with four distinctions; (22) students with five distinctions; (16) students with six distinctions.

In Rakhine State, (21 point 45) per cent of the students passed the Matriculation Examination in 2018 and (23 point 9) per cent in 2019, resulted with the increase of (2 point 52) percent. With a view to pull up the percentage, relevant educational workshops, the paper reading sessions; and public talks were conducted.

Q: Kindly share us on health matters.

A: In healthcare sector, the Department of Medical Service has spent MMK (2,959 point 626) millions in (28) projects; (68) healthcare buildings; and (65) staff housings. The Public Health Department has spent MMK (3,960) millions in (44) projects; and (58) hospital buildings. Total of (155) nurses have attended three-year course at Sittwe Nursing and Midwifery Training School.

Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlements Department have

provided cash assistant MMK (16,465,620,000) to (249,073) mothers. Moreover, MMK (829,530,000) have been distributed to (27,651) elderly persons as social pensions.

There are young children and their mother residing in far flung areas that could not have access to pre-primary schools. The Rakhine State Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlements Department has arranged (65) units of "mother and children round table care". Total of (20) children under (5) years are grouped into one round table. The lead mother is provided with MMK (50,000) for one month, and each child is provided with MMK (350) for one day.

Cash aid amounting MMK (853,990,080) have been distributed to the population in the conflict zones and natural disaster areas. Awareness and knowledge talks were provided for (4) events; BDMC event for once; and one multiplier course for mitigating natural disaster for once.

Q: Tell us on job opportunities in Rakhine State.

A: With a view to have job opportunities, the Department of Labour and the GIZ have organized training courses in Sittway such as dress making course; household wiring courses; and motorbike repair course.

In Kyauktaw Township, the

training course such as household wiring course and plumbing courses were imparted.

In collaboration with the IOM, the Department of Labour has arranged workshops to impart knowledge on safe migration matters. In collaboration with the ILO, the survey and collection of data and statistics on the workforce is carried out on yearly basis.

Total of (12) persons with different ethnicity have been imparted with training courses. Nationalities namely ethnic Rakhine; ethnic Maramar Gyee; ethnic Khamee; ethnic Dinek; ethnic Thet, ethnic Chin (Lat Tu) have been inducted at vocational schools of weaving at Sittway and also at gemology vocational school.

Q: Kindly share us on electricity supply.

A: There are many visible developments in electricity supply. Our Rakhine State could make improvement far better the other state / regions. There are improvements. There are celebrations held in many villages across the country for the successful completions of electricity supply on (50) per cent coverage. In Rakhine State, we could provide (58) percent of electricity, and therefore we achieve more compared to others.

Especially, Manaung Township has access to electricity for (24) hours. It was done with the solar power electricity supply system. To get the electricity from the central grid of the nation, we have used (11) kV power transmission line stretching (162 point 9) miles; 400 Volt power line stretching (210 point 51) miles; 233 units of (11 point 4) kVA transformers. From the power substation of Maungdaw Town, electricity could be supplied to border areas. It was carried out with the assistance of JICA.

With the capacity of 66 kVA, the Kyein Chaung Power Supply system is being installed. The sub-power station is designed for many voltages is being constructed, and the surrounding (16) villages with (1,453) households have been provided with electricity.

In Kyauk Kyeen Village of Thandwe Township, (66) kV power supply sub-station has been



Chief Minister U Nyi Pu

constructed and distributed electricity to (69) villages with (4,748) households. JICA has assisted the project.

At Kan Zun Kaing Village in An Township, (33) KV power supply sub-station has been constructed, and that (53) surrounding villages with (4,269) households have been provided with the electricity.

In using the National Electrification Programme or (NEP) system, additional (17) villages in townships namely Sittwe, Ponnagyun, Yanbye (Rambree), Thandwe, and An will be supplied with electricity.

During the fourth year period, budget provide from the Rakhine State Government have been used for power supply tasks in (24) townships. Total of (2,084) villages have been distributed with electricity with the variety of sources such as the electricity, the diesel fuel; the solar system; covering (56) percent of total area in Rakhine State.

Q: Tell us on agriculture and forest in the Rakhine State.

A: In collaboration with Thailand, (10) acres in Aung Daing Village of Sittway Township has developed a "Combine Agricultural System" which is termed as "Community Development Center" with the concept of "Sufficiency Economy Philosophy"

In Rakhine State, there are (14) Reserved Forests; (25) Protected Forests; (1) Environmental Areas; totalling (40) natural areas. Another (5) more protected forest would be expanded, totalling (45) areas, covering (2,659,740) acres.

SEE PAGE-10

Myanmar Gazette

Head of Service Organization confirmed

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed the appointment of U Min Aye Ko as Director-General of the Union Minister Office, Ministry of Ethnic Affairs, on expiry of the one year probationary period.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

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

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Fourth-Year Performances of the Rakhine State Government

FROM PAGE-9

Q: Kindly tell us on agricultural farm lands.

A: In the fourth year period, Rakhine State Land Management Work Committee have convened (4) meetings and decided (174) land cases. Form number (7) has been issued to (1,157) farmers covering (5,797) acres authorizing access to work on the land.

It also authorized land access permits to (67) farmers covering (575 point 30) acres. It authorized (3 point 95) acres of land to four farmers as authorized by the Central Committee for Land Management.

In connection with the land confiscation matters, (755) land cases out of (842) disputes have been redressed. Among the remaining (87) cases, Rakhine State Land Management and Scrutiny Committee have resolved (74) cases. Therefore, (13) land cases are under process for disposal.

Central Committee for Land Management and Scrutiny have transferred (416) lands complaints cases and that (307) complaint cases have been resolved. The remaining complaint cases of (109) are expected to redress at the end of 2020.

Total of (336) direct complaint cases have been handled and that (284) complaint letters have been resolved. The remaining (52) complaint letters are expected to be settled at the end of 2020.

During four years period, (323) land confiscated cases covering (30,696) acres have been released, and that the lands are being handed over to (4,373) original owners.

In the cases where the confiscated lands could not be released and give back, the appropriate land compensation is being considered on (18) cases owned by (62) farmers. The land covers (163 point 798) acres and that MMK (1,506 point 662) millions have been compensated.

With regards to the direct complaint cases, there are (2) case files involving (28) farmers. It covers (117 point 60) acres and that MMK (439 point 50) millions have been compensated.

Q: Please share us on the basic structures in Rakhine State.

A: Since we assumed responsibilities of Rakhine State admin-



66/11 KV-5 MVA Sub-Power Station in Maungtaw.

istration, we endeavored for the stability and development. For the sustainable socio-economic development, we have drawn projects with the cooperation of local experts and international organizations including UN agencies.

The State Counsellor has given guidelines and directives that the basic structures are to be given priority for the entire development of the area. In line with that directive, we focus attention on basic structure, and that we could say the necessary basic structure have been completely established. Especially, we have done in the areas such as that of the communication, the electric supply, the water supply, and that of social sector. The developments are visibly reflected in the roads and bridges.

In the southern part of Rakhine State, (1300) feet bridge is under construction over the river in Gwa Township. When completed, Rakhine State could be conveniently travel in the whole of the state, and also links with Ayeyawady Region and Bago Region.

Q: Please explain the budget allocation and spending for the development

A: 2019 – 2020 budget allocation saw MMK (208 point 497) billions on state Rakhine State budget and that MMK (190 point 903) billions on the Union Budget side, totaling MMK (399 point 400) billions. 2020 – 2021 financial years have been ear-

marked with MMK (216) billions.

Q: Please tell us on the tourism industry.

A: In Sittway, Thandwe, Kyaukpyu, Taungup, Gwa, and Ngapali, additional approval have been given to (7) hotels with (243) bed rooms, and (17) guest houses with (320) bed rooms. Three more tourist work licenses have been approved. Therefore, Rakhine State has now (46) hotels with (1,866) bed rooms, and that (48) guest houses have (1,005) bed rooms. We have approved (9) tourism work licenses.

In cooperation among the Rakhine State Government, the Hotel and Tourism Department, and local organizations, “Ngapali Beach Autumn Festival 2019” was held on 20 October 2019. The festival was held with the objective to attract visitors to Ngapali.

It was successfully held with much funfair with the traditional sports competitions, the presentation of traditional food, and the showcasing and selling of local handicrafts.

With a view to development sustainable tourism industry and to induct investment in tourism industry, “Rakhine State Tourism Master Plan (2020 - 2030)” is on the agenda.

With the aim in drafting “Tourism Master Plan”, a workshop was convened with the topic “Comprehensive Strategy for Responsible and Sustainable Tourism Development for Rakhine State 2020 – 2030” at Amaz-

ing Ngapali Resort in Ngapali from 25 and 26 January 2020.

Q: Kindly share us on the economic zone and the investment in Rakhine State.

A: For the development of Maungdaw area, the Kanyin Chaun Economic Zone has started in 2017 with the funding of (65) per cent from the Rakhine State Government and (35) per cent from the private side.

Now, the project is (75) per cent completed. It is expected to open during 2020. When the economic zone opens its doors, “One Stop Service” would be applied in expediting the suitable industries to be established in the zone.

Kyaukpyu Special Economic Zone Management Committee Chairman and the CITIC Group Chairman have signed and exchanged “Exchange of Letter (EOL)” on 10 April 2017. The guideline agreement was signed on 8 November 2018.

During the visit of Chinese President to Myanmar, the agreements regarding MOU and the agreements on share matters on the Kyaukpyu Special Economic Zone have been signed on 18 January 2020.

From 2019 to March 2020, Myanmar nationals have invested MMK (2,033 point 780) millions for one industrial project; MMK (2,104 point 5) millions for one Hotel Industry; foreign investors have injected US\$ (2) millions for one industrial project; totalling three projects

have been authorized. As a result, (403) job opportunities have been created.

Q: Tell us on the city development tasks in Rakhine State.

A: The Rakhine State City Development Body has spent MMK (13,406 point 798) from the Rakhine State funds and constructed (24 point 5) miles with asphalt roads; gravel roads and concrete roads.

The Rakhine State Government spent MMK (1508 point 371) millions on (167) projects on concrete bridges; the water pipes; and other tasks.

The (25) water supply projects has spent MMK (1687 point 950) millions. With the JICA – ODA Loan, “Ye Mann Company” has undertaken the water filter system with blower system at Kandaw Gyi Lake spending MMK (103) millions in 2019 – 2020. The project is completed.

Work programme is on the agenda for Gwa Town water supply with pipe connection at Kyein Ta Li Town storage reservoir by spending MMK (150) millions with Rakhine State funds.

Q: Tell us on the plan to place Mrauk-U area in World Heritage list.

A: On 24 September 2019, the “Nomination Dossier Draft” was submitted for UNESCO heritage list after discussion among local and foreign experts, and the professionals from the UNESCO. On 27 January 2020, the draft was submitted to UNESCO in Paris of France.

Q: Share us on the activities in raising reading momentum in uplifting knowledge in Rakhine State.

A: In conclusion, I would like to say that the Rakhine State Government is endeavouring to uplift the literature, knowledge and education of the children. For broader participation, the “Community Center” has been established in cooperation with the Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD) and Daw Khin Kyi Foundation. Since 2018, with the use of mobile library on vehicles of Daw Khin Kyi Foundation with assortment of books numbering (3,000), total of (602) rounds of awareness raising tasks have been successfully conducted.

Translated by UMT (Ahlon)

Mandalay Region reopens over 600 SME factories and workplaces

A total of 640 factories and workplaces in Mandalay Region has started to resume their operations as of 5 May, according to a working committee on publication of genuine information and monitoring false news of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Ministry of Health and Sports has urged the factories and workplaces to follow the mandatory health guidelines to contain the spread of coronavirus infection.

On 4 May, 573 factories were reopened and 22,203 workers returned to work. On 5 May, 67 more factories were reopened again, the committee stated.

There are about 1,180 large and SME factories in Mandalay Industrial Park, and 150 of which requested inspection. Now, 72 factories have resumed the operations.

Those factories which returned to operations undertake food production, pharmaceutical



A factory in Mandalay is seen. Mandalay Region has reopened a total of 640 factories and workplaces on 5 May. **PHOTO: HTEIK HTAR NAING (IPRD)**

production, production of essential devices in coronavirus infection treatment and prevention activities, veterinary medicine and feedstuffs, agricultural machinery and fertilizer plant.

The inspection teams are comprised of officials from the

Supervision Committee on Industrial Zone, the General Administration Department, the Health Department, the Department of Labour, the Industrial Supervision and Inspection Department and Mandalay City Development Committee

The state has urged people to work from home for certain businesses. The inspection team checks if the factories have marked off six-foot distance for social distancing and have prepared the mandatory face mask and glove for every individual

worker, systematic seating plan for transportation, thermometers, hand washing basin, systematic waste management, enough green space and healthy food. They also ensure that the factories must be ready for their workers to send the hospital if the common symptoms of coronavirus disease are found.

The factories and workplaces in the respective industrial zones across the country shall have to undergo mandatory inspection between 20 and 30 April to resume their operations in line with the regulations and guidelines on coronavirus infection issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population announced.

Over 3,300 factories have been inspected across the country as of 1 May. —Hteik Htar Naing (IPRD), Ko Khant

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Seintalone mango growers unhappy with price drop during abundant harvest time

DURING the abundant harvest time of Seintalone mango in Kyaukpadaung Township, Nyaung-U District of Mandalay Region, the growers are facing a hard time due to the price drop, said U Aung Win, a local farm owner.

The villages in Kyaukpadaung Township commercially grow Seintalone mango, yet they are offered at a bargain price owing to abundant supply in the market. Last year, the traders went to the farm and made an outright purchase of farms.

This year, the coronavirus risks lead to losses in Seintalone market due to transportation difficulties and trade disruption, Daw San San Myint, a grower from Kyaukpadaung Township.

The maximum price of Seintalone mangoes stands at K3,000 per 10, while the minimum price touches a low of K1,500-2,000 per 10.

Myanmar's mango is sent to China on a green-channel amid coronavirus impacts. At present, the bulk supply brings down the mango price at Muse border, said a trader from Khwar Nyo Trading Co., Ltd.

During the opening season of mango, the entry of mango (Seintalone variety) at early maturity stage also harmed the market, General Secretary U Kyaw Soe

Naing of Myanmar Mango Market and Technology Development Association told the *Global New Light of Myanmar* on 23 April.

The mango growers are urged to supply the quality mango to maintain the market reputation, he said.

"To maintain the market for a long term, we don't want the mangoes of early maturity place in the market," he pointed out.

Another problem is that transport delays to China can cause quality damage to Seintalone, according to the association.

Additionally, the mango farm-owners need to follow the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). They also need to obtain GAP certification. The Agriculture Department has been instituting criteria for long-term organic farming.

In the 2017-2018 financial year, Myanmar exported 50,000 tonnes of Seintalone mangoes. The country aims to raise the export volume of Seintalone to 100,000 tonnes in 2020, according to the online news released by the Ministry of Commerce.

Of about 200 mango varieties originated in Myanmar, Seintalone, Shwehintha, Padamyar Ngamauk, Yinkwe, Machitsu varieties are primarily grown.

The foreign market prefers



Seintalone mangoes are seen. **PHOTO: KO HTEIN (NGATHAYOUK)**

Seintalone variety.

Myanmar's mangoes are primarily shipped to China, and also to India, Bangladesh, Thailand, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, and Japan.

Ayeyawady Region possesses the largest mango plantation acres, having about 46,000 acres. Bago Region is the second-larg-

est producer with 43,000 acres and Mandalay has 29,000 acres of mango. There are over 24,000 acres in Kayin State, over 20,400 acres in Shan State and over 20,000 acres in Sagaing Region, according to the association.

—Ko Htein (Ngathayouk), Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Myawady new town project available on online expo in May

By Nyein Nyein

THE plots of land in Myawady Myothit (new town) project are offered on an online property expo, said Managing Director U Nay Min Thu of iMyanmarHouse.com, one of the real estate websites in Myanmar.

The two-week-online real estate show will be held from 7 to 21 May 2020 on iMyanmarHouse.com.

Under the guidance of Kayin State government, Steel Stone and Chit Linn Myaing Company will jointly sell the land of Myawady Myothit project through iMyanmarHouse.com.

The designated land is five-minute-drive from Myawady Myoma market. The plots of land, which are 540 acres wide, are situated on extended wards No. 6 and 7, next to five wards. The buyers can apply for a land grant.

"The real-estate website launched online sales amid coronavirus pandemic. The interested buyers can see the project detail online," he said. Over 600 plots of land have been sold from that project during two-day expo held in early 2020. The plots of land are offered at a much fairer price. It is expected to sell well on the online expo, U Nay Min Thu added.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Venezuela's Maduro says captured US 'mercenaries' to be tried

CARACAS (Venezuela)—Venezuela will try two Americans allegedly captured during a failed bid by mercenaries to invade the country, President Nicolas Maduro said Wednesday, as the US vowed to “use every tool available” to bring them home.

Venezuela announced Monday that it had arrested the two former US special forces soldiers on suspicion of trying to topple Maduro in an operation supported by the US-backed opposition.

“They are convicts, confessed, caught red-handed and are being judged by the republic’s attorney general, by Venezuela’s civil courts, and the process will be full of guarantees and fair,” said Maduro.

The leader of the cri-

sis-wracked South American country insisted the Americans, identified as Luke Denman and Airan Berry, were being “well treated, with respect.”

Maduro showed the passports of Denman, 34, and Berry, 41, on state television. The US army has confirmed they were former members of the Green Berets who were deployed to Iraq.

In Washington, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the government would “use every tool that we have available to try to get them back.”

US President Donald Trump had denied any involvement by his administration with the mission, and Washington accused Maduro of launching a “disinformation campaign.”

Russia, a close ally



Venezuela President Nicolas Maduro says two Americans will face trial for allegedly being part of a mercenary force that tried to invade the South American country. PHOTO: AFP

of Maduro’s, hit out at Trump on Wednesday and described his denials as “unconvincing.”

Venezuela’s Attorney General Tarek William Saab said Monday that

opposition leader Juan Guaido, who is backed by the US and more than 50 countries, had signed a \$212 million contract with “hired mercenaries” using funds seized by the United

States from the state oil company PDVSA.

Denman and Berry are among 17 people arrested for allegedly being part of an invasion force that was intercepted early

Sunday just off the coast, about 40 minutes from the capital Caracas.

Another eight alleged attackers were killed.

“They have confessed their guilt, they broke international law, they broke Venezuelan law,” Maduro said.

“They’re in the hands of justice now and we guarantee there will be justice in this case with these two Americans and with the rest of the mercenaries, and that the truth will come out.”

Bay of Pigs ‘remake’

The president repeated his accusation that Trump was directly behind the attack, claiming he contracted with a former US army medic, Jordan Goudreau, to train the mercenary force.—AFP ■

Microsoft unveils new PC models, eyes sales under social-distancing

NEW YORK—Microsoft Corp. unveiled on Wednesday its new Surface Go 2 tablet and the Surface Book 3 laptop computer, with the aim of boosting sales amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The 10.5-inch touch-screen tablet will hit the market next Tuesday with a price starting at \$399, at a time when many

people around the world are forced to work or participate in schooling from home due to the virus outbreak.

The demand for laptops and tablet computers is expected to grow, as many students do not yet have such devices even though social-distancing measures require them to study at home and com-

municate with teachers online.

Compared with its predecessor, the Surface Go 2 has a longer battery life and features an app enabling the rear-facing camera to scan documents more easily, the company said in a press release.

It added that the attached Surface Pen brings “the power of natural ink”

to tasks such as drawing diagrams and working out math problems on the device’s screen.

Microsoft’s new Surface Book 3 arrives on May 21 and will start at \$1,599. The high-end laptop will be available with either a 13.5-inch or 15-inch display.—Kyodo News ■

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Shoon Htet Wai Associates
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Ph: 09785083966
Date: 8th May 2020

Florian Schneider, co-founder of Germany’s iconic Kraftwerk, dead at 73

BERLIN (Germany) — Kraftwerk’s Florian Schneider, co-founder of the pioneering electronic music group that re-wired the future of pop, has died, the group’s management said Wednesday. He was 73 years old.

Schneider died following a short battle with cancer, according to a statement citing his fellow co-founder Ralf Hueter, obtained by AFP from Kraftwerk’s publicist in Los Angeles.

Schneider and Hueter began their artistic collaboration in 1968 as part of the so-called “krautrock” movement -- a broad experimental genre blending psyche-



Kraftwerk, shown here in 2005, crafted the blueprint for genres from new wave to synth-pop, hip hop to rock, industrial to techno. PHOTO: AFP

delic rock with electronic rhythms and early synthesizers, seen as a rebellion against the Anglo-Saxon pop brought in by British and American troops.

But Kraftwerk, launched in 1970, hatched a far more singular vision from their “Kling Klang” studio in the western German city of Duesseldorf.

Their influence on par with The Beatles, the duo crafted the blueprint for genres from new wave to synth-pop, hip hop to rock, industrial to techno.—AFP ■

China exports see surprise 3.5% jump in April, imports fall



The rise in exports from China in April confounded forecasts for a massive drop. PHOTO: AFP

BEIJING (China) —China's exports saw a shock 3.5 per cent rise in April despite the global impact of the coronavirus pandemic, official figures showed Thursday, partly due to rising medical exports.

But analysts warned of weakness ahead as key markets suffer downturns, as well as the brewing threat of a renewed trade war with the United States.

Imports fell 14.2 per cent on-year, a steeper drop than last month, according to the Customs Administra-

tion. A forecast of analysts by Bloomberg had predicted an 11 per cent dive in exports and a 10 per cent plunge in imports.

Exports of medical instruments and devices rose 11 per cent in the first four months from a year ago, according to customs data, while most other categories contracted.

ING chief economist for Greater China Iris Pang told AFP that China's exports of medical supplies provided a boost as the rest of the world grappled with

the pandemic.

Pang added that while exports of clothing shrank, sales of textile yarns, fabrics and other products grew, implying they were used to make medical supplies. Beijing says it has been successful in largely curbing the spread of the virus in the country, and many businesses and factories are now back at work after months of closure.

And Louis Kuijs of Oxford Economics noted that "April shipments may have been boosted by exporters

making up for shortfalls in the first quarter due to supply constraints then".

In the January-February period, the height of China's coronavirus outbreak, exports plummeted 17.2 per cent.

US trade threat

In spite of the bounce-back — the first return to positive territory for exports this year — analysts do not expect the trend to last as China's key trading partners fall into recession. —AFP ■

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Dated 8th May 2020

Nintendo reports 33% gain in FY 2019 net profit on brisk game sales

TOKYO—Nintendo Co. saw a 33.3 per cent increase in its net profit from a year earlier to 258.64 billion yen (\$2.43 billion) for the business year through March on upbeat sales of its Nintendo Switch game consoles and software such as "Animal Crossing." The company said Thursday its operating profit soared 41.1 percent to

352.37 billion yen on sales of 1.31 trillion yen, up 9.0 per cent.

For the year through March 2021, Nintendo projected a 22.7 per cent decline in its net profit to 200 billion yen and an operating profit of 300 billion yen, down 14.9 per cent, on sales of 1.2 trillion yen, down 8.3 per cent.—Kyodo News ■

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTER CHANGING

The manufacture of ZIBO NAB AGROCHEMICALS LIMITED (CHINA) have registered the following products in Pesticide Registration Board of Myanmar to distribute in Myanmar. Now, we have to change from old distributor name "AGRIMAN MYANMAR CO., LTD", to new distributor name "Y AGRO SOLUTION CO., LTD". If any object or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon, from here to next 14 days. AGRIMAN MYANMAR CO., LTD. Ph-09969007222.

Sr.	Trade Name	Active Ingredients	Type of Pesticide	Registration No.
1.	NAB-Wonder 10 EC	Quizalofop-P-ethyl 10% EC	Herbicide	P2019-4602

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTER CHANGING

The manufacture of ZIBO NAB AGROCHEMICALS LIMITED (CHINA) have registered the following products in Pesticide Registration Board of Myanmar to distribute in Myanmar. Now, we have to change from old distributor name "MYANMAR SHWE THEIN TRADING CO.,LTD", to new distributor name "Y AGRO SOLUTION CO.,LTD". If any object or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon, from here to next 14 days. MYANMAR SHWE THEIN TRADING CO.,LTD. Ph-09969007222.

Sr.	Trade Name	Active Ingredients	Type of Pesticide	Registration No.
1.	NAB-Friend 80 WP	Thiophanate-methyl 50% + Thiram 30% WP	Fungicide	F2019-1939

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTER CHANGING

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Sr.	Trade Name	Active Ingredients	Registration No.
1.	BNS Fome	Fomesafen 25% SL	P2017-3643
2.	BNS Atra 80	Atrazine 80% WP	P2017-3653
3.	BNS Ema 5.7	Emamectin Benzoate 5.7% WDG	P2017-3650

Russian mercenaries are fighting in Libya, UN diplomats confirm



A man walks through the rubble of a building that was damaged when strongman Khalifa Haftar's forces shelled the neighborhood in the Libyan capital Tripoli on 1 May, 2020 – Haftar has been receiving help from Russian mercenaries, a UN report says. **PHOTO: AFP**

UNITED NATIONS (United States)—Mercenaries from the Wagner Group, a Russian paramilitary organization seen as being close to Vladimir Putin, are fighting in Libya, UN diplomats said Wednesday, citing an experts' report on the country's

arms embargo.

It was the first time the UN has confirmed claims first made in US media that the group is supporting military strongman Khalifa Haftar. Moscow has denied being responsible for deploying the group.

The report also revealed that Haftar was being supported by Syrian fighters.

The Wagner Group is a shadowy private security firm and thousands of its contractors are believed to be in foreign conflicts from Syria and Ukraine to

the Central African Republic.

A senior US State Department official has told AFP the group is “an instrument of the Kremlin's policy” in Libya.

“The Panel has identified the presence of private military operatives from ChVK Wagner in Libya since October 2018,” the UN report says, according to several diplomats who spoke to AFP on condition of anonymity as the document has not yet been made public.

“Wagner has been providing technical support for the repair of military vehicles, participating in combat operations and engaging in influence operations,” the UN report says.

They are also involved in “more specialized military tasks such as acting as artillery Forward Observation Officers and Forward Air Controllers, providing electronic countermeasures expertise and deploying as sniper teams,” it continued.

“Their deployment has act-

ed as an effective force multiplier” for Haftar, it said.

The experts said they could not independently verify how many Wagner mercenaries were in Libya, but estimated their deployment at between 800 and 1,200.

The report, submitted on April 24 to the UN Security Council, notes that there are tensions between Wagner and Haftar's command.

No call for sanctions

It also revealed that Haftar is receiving help from Syrian fighters, further complicating the conflict.

In February, Turkey said that pro-Turkish Syrians were fighting in Libya in support of the internationally-recognized Government of National Accord (GNA). Haftar has opened a consulate in Damascus, where the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is backed by Russia. —AFP ■

Israel top court approves coalition deal, new govt to be sworn in 13 May



Bills passing into law a controversial coalition deal between Israel's erstwhile political rivals Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and ex-military chief Benny Gantz are finally to be put to the vote in parliament. **PHOTO: AFP**

JERUSALEM—Israel's Supreme Court on Wednesday approved a coalition deal between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his rival-turned-ally Benny Gantz, paving the way for a unity government to be sworn in next week.

The alliance formed last month between the right-wing incumbent and his centrist challenger followed three inconclusive elections in less than a year.

Under the three-year deal, Netanyahu will serve as prime minister for 18 months, with

Gantz as his alternate, a new position in Israeli governance.

They will swap roles midway through the deal, with cabinet positions split between Netanyahu's Likud party and Gantz's Blue and White alliance, as well as their respective allies. Israel has been without a stable government since December 2018 and the deal offers rare political stability as the country seeks to repair the economic damage wrought by the novel coronavirus, which has infected more than 16,000 people in the country. —AFP ■

Nearly 1 in 5 US children left hungry since virus crisis: study

WASHINGTON (United States)—Nearly a fifth of young children in the United States are not getting enough to eat since the coronavirus pandemic erupted, according to research out Wednesday highlighting the broader health impact of the crisis.

The Brookings Institution report said a survey found that 17.4 per cent of mothers with children aged 12 or under reported that their offspring were

not eating enough due to lack of money.

“It is clear that young children are experiencing food insecurity to an extent unprecedented in modern times,” said lead researcher Lauren Bauer.

“Food insecurity in households with children under 18 has increased by about 130 per cent from 2018 to today,” she added.

The survey to measure the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic uncovered figures

worse than during the financial crisis of 2008.

Bauer described the results as “alarming,” telling the New York Times that households were cutting back on portion sizes and kids were being forced to skip meals.

Disrupted school meal programs could also be factor, she said, with families not collecting meals from distribution sites and older siblings competing for limited supplies at home.

Bauer called for the government to increase food security programs and boost benefit levels.

At least 30 million American workers have lost their jobs in the economic shutdown imposed to thwart the spread of the virus.

The April employment report, due out Friday, is expected to show the jobless rate soaring — perhaps as high as 20 per cent — reaching levels not seen since the Great Depression last century. The new coronavirus has infected nearly 1.2 million people in the United States and killed around 72,000, and analysts fear some of the economic damage may be long-term. —AFP ■



Children pick up free lunch in Arlington, Virginia on March 16, 2020, after schools closed due to coronavirus. Disrupted school lunch programmes could be a factor in alarming rises in hunger among US children since the outbreak began, the study says. **PHOTO: AFP**

Gas leak at Indian chemical plant kills at least 6

VISAKHAPATNAM (India) — At least six people were killed and 1,000 hospitalized after a pre-dawn gas leak at a chemical plant in eastern India on Thursday that left unconscious victims lying in the streets, authorities said.

The gas escaped out of tanks at a complex owned by South Korea's LG Chem that had suspended operations because of India's coronavirus lockdown.

Footage on Indian television channels showed people, including women and children, lying motionless in the streets of Visakhapatnam, an industrial port city in Andhra Pradesh state.

Local police commissioner RK Meena said six people had been confirmed killed, however the full scale of the disaster was unclear late on Thursday morning.

At least 1,000 people had been sent to different hospitals, according to B K Naik, district hospitals coordinator, who said

many others were feared to be unconscious in their homes.

"There are people who were sleeping," Naik told AFP.

"We are working to get people to the hospital. They need oxygenation and fresh air."

Pictures taken by AFP at the King George Hospital in the city showed two or three patients on each bed, many of them children, and many unconscious.

Some of the patients were lying on the beds in the sparse hospital wearing just shorts and without tops or shoes. Other AFP photos showed vapour still rising from the tanks.

Prayers

"I pray for everyone's safety and well-being in Visakhapatnam," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Twitter.

The plant, operated by LG Polymers, is a subsidiary of LG Chem, is on the outskirts of Visakhapatnam.



A gas leak at a chemical plant in eastern India left people lying unconscious in the streets. PHOTO: AFP

The city and the surrounding area are home to around five million people.

LG Chem released a statement in South Korea late on Thursday morning indicating gas had stopped leaking from the plant.

"The gas leak situation is now under control and we are exploring all ways to provide speedy treatment for those who suffer from inhaling the leaked gas," the statement said.

The plant had been left idle because of the coronavirus lock-

down, according to Swaroop Rani, an assistant police commissioner, in Visakhapatnam,

"(The gas) was left there because of the lockdown. It led to a chemical reaction and heat was produced inside the tanks, and the gas leaked because of that," Rani told AFP.

She said local villagers raised the alarm about 3:30am, saying there was gas in the air, and police officers who rushed to the scene had to quickly retreat for fear of being poisoned.

"One could feel the gas in the

air and it was not possible for any of us to stay there for more than a few minutes," she said.

LG Chem confirmed the plant was not operating because of the lockdown, but said there were maintenance staff at the facility.

"While it's true that the factory wasn't operating as it was under lockdown, there were maintenance workers inside," a company spokesman told AFP in Seoul. "A worker on night shift discovered the leak and reported it."—AFP ■

Seoul to send face masks to foreign veterans of Korean War

SEOUL (South Korea) — South Korea will provide one million face masks to foreign veterans of the Korean War to express gratitude on the 70th anniversary of the brutal conflict, Seoul officials said Thursday.

The 1950-53 Korean War, when South Korean forces backed by a US-led UN coalition fought to a standstill against North Korean and Chinese troops, ended in a truce, not a peace treaty.

Nearly two million soldiers

and medical officers from 22 UN member states — including the US, Britain and Turkey — took part, with 37,902 killed and 103,460 wounded, according to the Seoul government.

The South has since risen from the ashes of war to become the world's 12th largest economy and its handling of the coronavirus outbreak — based on an extensive "trace, test and treat" programme — has drawn widespread praise. "All of the 22

countries are currently having difficulties due to the coronavirus, and it is an urgent matter to provide face masks for the ageing war veterans — whose average age is 88 — who are vulnerable to the disease," Seoul's Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs said in a statement.

The masks were a symbol of Seoul's gratitude for "the service it received 70 years ago", it added.

The project received special government approval as the South currently imposes export restrictions on face masks to prevent possible shortages.

Half of the masks will go to the US, Seoul's major security ally, which provided 90 percent of the coalition troops. In most countries, South Korean embassies will be responsible for distributing the masks to the estimated 400,000 surviving veterans. "We have different plans for each and every country, but one of the plans involves our embassy staff delivering the masks to each veteran's home — as long as that's arrangeable," Jang Young-nam, a ministry official, told AFP.—AFP



Nearly two million soldiers and medical officers from 22 UN member states — including the US, Britain and Turkey — took part in the conflict. PHOTO: AFP

Thai PM orders gov't units, state firms personnel to spend more time working from home

BANGKOK — Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha on Thursday ordered all government units and state firms to have their personnel spend more time on working from home to reduce risks of COVID-19 infection and help relieve traffic congestion.

The prime minister, who concurrently acts as head of the Center for the COVID-19 Situa-

tion Administration (CCSA), instructed executive officials of all government agencies and state firms to manage to increase the number of weekdays from 25 per cent to 50 per cent for their respective officials and employees to work from home instead of leaving home for their workplaces, said an official attached to Government House.—Xinhua

Philippines reports 339 new COVID-19 cases, taking total to 10,343

MANILA — The Philippines on Thursday reported 339 new COVID-19 cases, raising the total number of the COVID-19 cases in the country to 10,343.

The Department of Health (DOH) said the country now has a total of 1,618 recoveries, with 112 more patients surviving the disease.

According to DOH, 27 new

deaths have been tallied, bringing the country's death toll to 685.

The DOH said 205 cases, or 61 per cent of the daily cases, came from the Central Visayas region in the central Philippines, 110, or 32 per cent, were reported in Metro Manila, while 24 cases, or 7 per cent, from other parts of the country.—Xinhua ■

Striker Kyaw Ko Ko discontinues contract with Sukhothai club

KYAW KO KO, a Myanmar professional footballer, has discontinued his contract with Thailand's Sukhothai Football Club, according to the football-tribe website.

Along with Kyaw Ko Ko, Sukhothai FC has also broken with Thai footballer Suttinun Phuk-

hom to cut-cost during the Thai League 2020 hiatus.

The parting ways came after a few months they had signed a one-year contract for this season.

Kyaw Ko Ko scored five goals in the 2011 Southeast Asian Games and helped the Myanmar

U23 team to secure a third-place finish and a bronze medal.

He is the star striker of Myanmar National Team. He was ranked 7 in the "World's Best Top Scorers" list by the IFFHS in 2014.

Considered one of the best players in the ASEAN, he is known for his dribbling, finishing, skill, pace, and ability to play with both feet.

In 2013, he moved to Yangon United with the highest transfer fee and became the main striker in Yangon United and Myanmar national football team.

In December 2017, Chiangrai United signed Kyaw Ko Ko for a 1-year loan. In a match against Pattaya United on 7 April 2018, Kyaw Ko Ko was tackled by Sarawut Kanlayanabandit and tore a ligament in his knee, ruling him out for several months and making him miss the 2018 AFF Championship.

On 26 December 2018, Kyaw Ko Ko moved from Yangon United to Samut Prakan City on a 1-year loan deal.

He won twice Myanmar National League champions and one General Aung San Shield champion. — Kyaw Khin ■



Myanmar's Kyaw Ko Ko (l) is challenged by Vietnam's Nguyen Thanh Long Giang during the bronze medal football match at the 26th Southeast Asian Games (SEA GAMES) in Jakarta on 21 November 2011. PHOTO: AFP

Hugs, rugby on agenda as New Zealand continues to ease lockdown

WELLINGTON (New Zealand) — Super Rugby in New Zealand is poised to resume when the country relaxes its COVID-19 lockdown, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said Thursday, with bars, retailers and schools also set to open.

Ardern is due to announce next Monday whether New Zealand will move to 'Alert Level 2', which allows significantly more freedom than Kiwis have experienced since lockdown began in late March.

While she stressed no decision had yet been made, Ardern acknowledged New Zealand's success in containing the virus had put it in a good position to cautiously relax the rules.

"Think of ourselves as half-way down Everest," she said.

"It's clear that no one wants to hike back up that peak and the descent is known to be even more dangerous." New Zealand, with

a population of five million, has recorded 1,139 coronavirus cases and 21 deaths.

The number of new cases has been in single digits since April 14, with just one new infection recorded on Thursday. Under New Zealand's four-tier alert system, social distancing protocols are enforced less stringently under level two, allowing

contact sports including the national game of rugby union.

"Professional sport will be able to resume domestically under level two," Ardern said. "Super Rugby and the netball premiership have already confirmed their intention to resume a domestic competition, which I know will be cause for great excitement." —AFP ■



New Zealand's Canterbury Crusaders are the reigning Super Rugby champions. PHOTO: AFP

Namaste in, high-fives out for post-virus cricket, says Rahane



Wickets are commonly celebrated with high-fives in cricket. PHOTO: AFP

NEWDELHI (India)—Namaste and clapping could replace handshakes and high-fives when cricket resumes after the coronavirus pandemic, India's Ajinkya Rahane said.

Wicket celebrations might look very different post-virus, the 31-year-old batsman said, predicting many changes on and off the field.

"I think we might go back to the good old days when fielders would still stand in their designated positions after the fall of a wicket and clap," Rahane said in an online briefing.

"Maybe handshakes will be replaced by a namaste," he added, referring to the Indian greeting where both hands are brought together in front of the chest.

"But once sport resumes, you can't take anything for granted. The safety of the fans

will be of utmost importance. There will be changes in lifestyle while travelling."

The COVID-19 outbreak has brought the sporting world to a halt, with the 2020 Olympics postponed for a year and cricket's richest club tournament, the Indian Premier League, delayed indefinitely. Rahane said the players will need around a month to prepare for their comeback, adding cricket should only return once there's a vaccine for the novel coronavirus.

"We would be needing three to four weeks of proper practice before playing any kind of competitive game," said Rahane, speaking as brand ambassador of the ELSA (English Language Speech Assistant) app.

"I am missing my batting. But obviously, cricket should only start when we get a vaccine to fight the virus." —AFP ■

German league to restart on May 15 after Merkel gives go-ahead

BERLIN (Germany) — The Bundesliga will resume on May 15, the German league confirmed Wednesday, after Chancellor Angela Merkel and state leaders gave the green light to restart behind closed doors following weeks of shutdown imposed to control the spread of the coronavirus.

The German Football League (DFL) confirmed the restart date to AFP subsidiary SID on Wednesday night.

"After weighing up all the arguments, the DFL Executive Committee decided today... to resume play in the Bundesliga and 2nd Bundesliga from 15 May

2020," the DFL said in a statement to magazine Kicker.

Germany's top-flight will become the first of Europe's major leagues to return to the field. "Matches will be allowed under the approved rules," said Merkel at a press conference in Berlin. Germany's top politicians approved a plan for the Bundesliga to resume in stadiums without spectators and with players regularly tested.

Permission was granted on condition that strict guidelines are followed — with a hygiene officer appointed to each team — to prevent contagion of the virus. —AFP ■