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State Counsellor discusses ground situation in Sagaing Region with frontline workers combatting COVID-19



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets Sagaing regional government and medical officials on the video conference from Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

“PEOPLE are the key in struggling against COVID-19”, said State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi during the video conference yesterday from the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw with

Sagaing Region government’s Social Affairs Minister Dr Zaw Win, Medical Superintendent of the 300-bedded General Hospital in Kalay Township Dr Aung Myo Win, and Dr Myint Myint Thein, Vice Chairperson of the

Myanmar Medical Practitioners Association, Monywa office.

After introductory remarks by the State Counsellor, Dr Aung Myo Win gave a short briefing about prevention and treatment of COVID-19 disease, readiness

of places for positive patients, formation of medical treatment units, training for preventive measures, transport arrangements for patients, medicines and medical supplies, active participations of local people,

civil service personnel and civil service organizations, health conditions of positive patients, future plans, and requirements for land and building facilities.

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One more coronavirus case on Friday, total tally reaches 177

1. The National Health Laboratory released the results of their second batch of testing of 163 lab specimens at 10:00 pm on 8-5-2020 and discovered a new case of COVID-19.
2. There are currently 177 COVID-19 positive cases in Myanmar as of 10:00 pm, 8-5-2020.
3. Out of confirmed cases, a total of 67 persons have recovered, and 43 of them have been discharged from the hospitals. They will be kept under isolation at the designated places.
4. There have been 6 deaths among confirmed cases.
5. On 8 May, 256 samples from NHL (Yangon), 93 samples from DMR, 233 samples from No (2) Defence Services Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw were tested.

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"People are the key"

One more coronavirus case on Friday, total tally reaches 177

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Case no.	Age	Gender	Address	History of contact with COVID-19 confirmed cases	History of travel abroad	Lab result for COVID-19	Remark
177	84	Female	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes (Cases-151, 152, 153, 154, 162)	None	Positive	Originally under quarantine (Insein Public Hospital)

Number of lab specimens tested by Department of Medical Research (8-5-2020)	93
Number of lab specimens tested by National Health Laboratory (First+second batch) (8-5-2020)	256
Number of lab specimens tested by Tatmadaw 1000-Bedded Hospital (2), Nay Pyi Taw (8-5-2020)	233
Number of new confirmed cases for COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2)	1

	New	Total
Confirmed cases of COVID-19	1	177
Recovered after medical treatment	5	67
Deaths	0	6

Ministry of Health and Sports (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Tatmadaw releases statement on ICOE report

THE Tatmadaw True News Information Team released a statement regarding the Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) report yesterday.

The statement says the Tatmadaw completely received the ICOE report published in January 2020 and its 30 supplements. It said the Tatmadaw True News Information Team had announced on 20 March 2020 that they will publish news on the court-martial investigation regarding Gu Dar Pyin village and will investigate Maung Nu village and Chut Pyin village with a court of inquiry related to events mentioned in the report. The statement says the court-martial for Gu Dar Pyin village had accumulated suffi-

cient evidence and concluded its investigation on 30 April 2020. It says the procedure closely adhered to guidelines, orders and notifications issued by the National Level Central Committee on Protection, Containment and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and ensured no security violations were committed. The statement says the court-martial report will be published after receiving approval from the relevant authoritative body and the court of inquiry investigation into Maung Nu village and Chut Pyin village will continue, according to the military advocate-general's office.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Notification for farmers on monsoon agricultural loans

1. Myanmar Agricultural Bank under the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry will begin issuing monsoon agricultural loans beginning on 15 May 2020. The loan rate will remain the same from last year at K150,000 per acre. The interest rate has been reduced from 8% per annum from the previous year to 5% per annum. New loans will only be issued for those who have repaid their old loans.

2. As COVID-19 is still spreading across Myanmar, the deadline for repaying the monsoon loan for 2019 has been extended to May 2020 with no penalties.

3. The following arrangements have been made with state/regional, district and township administrative bodies:

(a) Banks with large spaces will issue the loans at the bank building. Banks with small spaces will choose a suitable spacious location, such as the town hall or a school building, to issue the loan.

(b) Regional administrative bodies will transport the loans to sub-townships and areas under travel restrictions if necessary.

(c) Farmers and cultivators are urged to closely adhere to guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports to protect themselves and the people around them.

4. Mobile payment services for loans will be organized with local mobile financial services depending on demand from farmers and the overall regional situation.

5. Farmers and cultivators are urged to swiftly contact their local Myanmar Agricultural Bank for more information.

Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Myanmar has brought back 608 citizens to home from foreign countries



Myanmar citizens came back home by relief flights after they stranded in foreign countries due to suspension of flights amid COVID-19. PHOTO: MNA

MYANMAR has arranged relief flights for a total of 608 citizens who wanted to come back home from Japan, India, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, Bangladesh and Singapore where they were stranded due to suspension of passenger flights. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs helped for the returns under the directive of National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treat-

ment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The Myanmar Airways International carried back 93 persons from Malaysia, while 104 persons from the Republic of Korea and a total of 16 persons from Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdoms were brought back from the Incheon International Airport.

On arrival at the Yangon International Airport, the Minis-

try of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and the Yangon Region government helped for their 21-day quarantine period at the designated places and the respective hotels in line with the guidelines of immigration and healthcare processes. The government will also send a relief flight to Singapore to carry the remaining 146 citizens.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

State Counsellor discusses ground situation in Sagaing Region with frontline ...

FROM PAGE-1

Dr Myint Myint Thein presented about public concern regarding the COVID-19 disease, employment and livelihood difficulties, difficulties being faced in other vaccination programmes and requirements, and the role of CSOs and the need to give them systematic training.

Social Affairs Minister Dr Zaw Win talked about a loan programme for SMEs to reduce economic impacts on them, reopening of factories after inspections, monitoring being carried out to ensure that factories were following health guidelines, the conduct of awareness campaigns, acceptance of returnees from foreign countries, conducting systematic health tests, keeping them in the quarantine centres systematically, and sending them back to the respective townships.

The State Counsellor said that necessary instructions have already been given to make preparations for diseases that occur with the onset of the monsoon season; programmes for children's vaccination should be considered for the whole country; since it was not known how long the COVID-19 disease would last, it would be necessary to enhance the people's endurance; that it was important to give mutual encouragement and collaborate; to give immediate reports if there were problems and requirements, that the Ministry of Health and Sports was ready to assist, support, coordinate as needed. She then explained about the plans of the Union Government to fulfil the requirements.

In her concluding remarks, the State Counsellor expressed thanks to all and the volunteers who have been helping with goodwill and that their efforts provided much strength for the government; COVID-19 is a disease that needed the cooperation of all the people, and that she had already stated that people were the key; that government members, public service personnel, CSOs and common people were "the people"; if everyone performed his or her duty, there would not be any problem;



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets Sagaing regional government and medical officials on the video conference from Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

if everyone did their duty, no matter how big the challenge COVID-19 might be, no matter how hard the struggle might be, this challenge could be overcome.

The State Counsellor further added she took the diligent performance of duty very seriously; that in life it was not possible to be free from duty; everyone would have to live with duty till their last breath; self-interest and the interest of others must be considered; making sure that the COVID-19 disease is not transmitted to another person is in a way also protecting oneself; if your neighbourhood were infected, it would also be a great danger for yourself; that was why it was impossible to differentiate whether you were doing it for yourself or for others; that was why it was important for all to work for the interest of everyone; with regard to COVID-19, it was all for one and one for all.

She said she wished to remind everyone that some people who had COVID infection did not show any symptoms; be-

cause they did not exhibit any symptoms they thought that they were normal, their neighbours also thought that they were normal; as a result, they felt quite safe and thus were reluctant to wear face masks and practice social distancing; one cannot know just by looking at a person; some people have recovered from the infection without having symptoms; therefore it was very important to be very cautious about the disease; and awareness campaigns are needed repeatedly, especially for wearing a face mask to develop into a habit like wearing shoes whenever going outside the homes.

Some people cannot afford to buy single-use facemask and that it is encouraged to make homemade cotton masks in line with the guidelines of Ministry of Health and Sports; it was very practical for the grassroots people; that was why the wearing of face masks should be encouraged as much as possible; many ways should be found to make the people want to wear

masks; it was difficult to follow social distancing in the long term; Myanmar was not well developed enough like other countries to hold meetings through video conferencing and internet for all matters; in many situations, there was still a need to work in close proximity with each other; and that these issues needed to be overcome gradually.

Protecting yourself is not only for yourself but also for the protection of your surroundings; protecting others also means protecting yourself; if we proceeded with that understanding in mind, we would be able to overcome the COVID-19 disease; however, there needs to be endurance, calmness, and diligent efforts.

She ended by sending good wishes for the good health and happiness of all the citizens and for successfully overcoming the COVID-19 challenge with collective strength.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin and Kyaw Myaing)

Union Education Minister joins online meeting of Global Partnership for Education

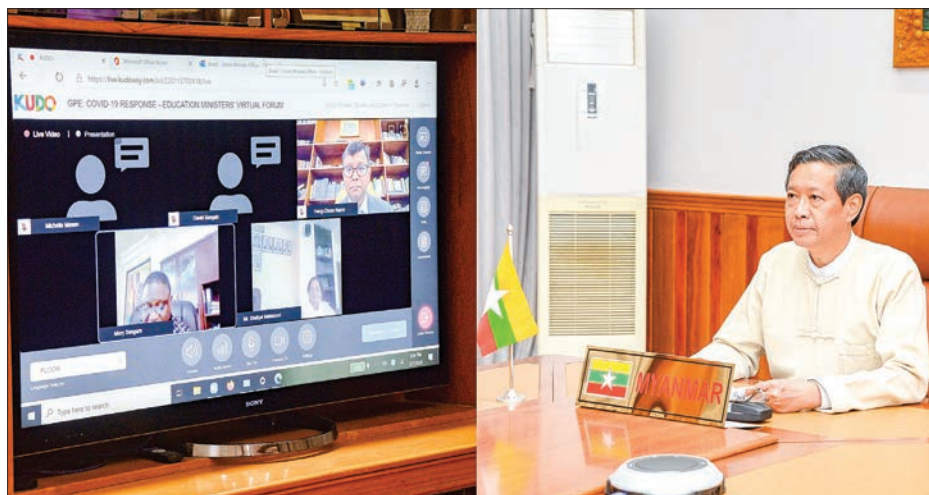
UNION Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi joined online meeting of ministers on the Global Partnership for Education on 7 May.

The meeting was aimed to mitigate difficulties in access to education during the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.

Myanmar became a member of GPE in 2018.

In the topic about education and sustainability discussed by the ministers of GPE member countries, the Union Minister held talks on US\$73 million grant jointly presented by the GPE and the World Bank, teachers training courses in summer vacation and education reform programmes with new curriculum.

He also discussed the establishment of Myanmar Digital Education Platform (MDEP) could benefit to the teachers from the government sector, monas-



Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi meets GPE member-country ministers via video conferencing. **PHOTO: MNA**

tic education, and nationally certified schools. The MDEP will be helpful to the teachers of ethnic languages, volunteer teachers, and will be possible for

opportunities of e-learning.

The Union Minister also explained DBE Boxes for far-flung areas, trial tests of education channels and the need of

technical assistance for this project.

The short term project of MDEP is intended for conducting teacher training courses, trainings for teaching-learning methods of new curriculum, online library for teachers and parents. Its long term objectives is to support e-learning for online and offline for life-long studying beyond face to face learning.

Dr Myo Thein Gyi explained implementation of education guidelines by the State Counsellor to promote gender equality in education sector. The ministers of member countries made discussions on general equality, harm reduction for women and ways for overcoming detriment to education during the COVID-19 pandemic. — MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

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7 agreements reached at Govt, NCA-S EAOs meeting on COVID-19 preventive measures



Representatives of the government and NCA-S EAOs hold a videoconference meeting to work together in measures against COVID-19. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE 7 points of agreement on the control and treatment of COVID-19 disease were made during a video conferencing yesterday between the government coordination committee and the Peace Process Working Team (PPWT) of NCA-S EAOs (Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement – Signatories, Ethnic Armed Organizations).

Dr Tin Myo Win, the Chairman of committee, delivered an opening remark, with conveying the message of State Counselor for the success of meeting, and explained the objectives of committee not to discriminate against race, religions and location in line with 'no one left behind policy' and to communicate with non-signatories in NCA to implement measures

against the COVID-19 disease.

He added the government will fulfill the needs of ethnic armed organizations in their facing against the pandemic, and international assistance will be sought for these areas, if necessary.

Salai Hta Lar Hay, leader of PPWT, expressed their appreciations for the formation of coordination committee on 27 April to prevent and contain the disease.

He confirmed PPWT will work together with this committee in line with paragraph 25 in the Chapter 6 of NCA for effective measures against the pandemic.

The meeting made agreements on the issues of disease control measures, treatments,

returnees from foreign countries, international assistance, searching the persons who contacted with the positive patients and organizing follow-up discussions.

U Hla Maung Shwe, the member of Peace Committee's Advisory Board, said, "This is the first online meeting with EAOs. Over 20 participants exchanged views on the topics. The coordination committee will make detailed discussions with each member of EAOs. So far, we reached the 7 points of agreement."

U Myo Win, the coordinator in implementation of NCA and the representative of NCA-S EAOs, said, "We discussed joint measures against COVID-19 in the controlled areas of EAOs.

We will also work together for treatments. However, it is not possible for medical treatments in these areas, and the positive patients will be taken to the hospitals of respective regions and state. The EAOs will take the role to follow and search the persons who contacted with positive cases."

Both sides will work together in handling migrate workers and IDPs, seeking funds from both the government and international organizations.

The government committee will hold talks with the Karen National Union on 11 May and with the New Mon State Party in the following day.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

MRCS celebrate World Red Cross Day online

MYANMAR Red Cross Society President Dr Maung Maung Myint delivered a speech at a video conference to mark the World Red Cross Day at its Yangon branch office yesterday.

The video conference was attended by MRCS Vice President Dr Amara Maung Naing, full-time and part-time executives, secretary-general and

deputy secretaries-general, ICRC Myanmar representative Mr Stephan Sakalian, Head of Country Office (Myanmar) International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Mr Joy Singhal, officials from affiliated red cross societies, chairpersons of state/region red cross supervisory committees and other officials.

Firstly, Dr Maung Maung delivered an address on World Red Cross Day and the representatives from ICRC and IFRC delivered separate speeches.

Next, a video on red cross societies across the nation assisting in COVID-19 prevention was played and everyone applauded the efforts of everyone

working on the front lines to prevent the spread of the virus.

World Red Cross Day is celebrated on the anniversary of the birth of Henry Dunant, the founder of the ICRC, 8 May every year. The theme for this year is 'keep clapping'.—Myanmar Red Cross Society

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



The World Red Cross Day 2020 was held online, cheering the front-liners who are fighting against the outbreak of COVID-19. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister U Ohn Maung joins digital presentation of COVID-19 impact on tourism

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung made discussions at the digital presentation of 'Healing Solutions for Tourism Challenge' organized by the United Nation's World Tourism Organization yesterday.

The meeting on video conferencing was also attended by Deputy Minister U Tin Latt and officials of the ministry. After the opening remark of UNWTO

Secretary-General Mr Zurab Pololikashvili, the nine finalists discussed on the three topics of Healing for people, Healing for prosperity and Healing for destinations. The event was aimed to identify the most disruptive startups, entrepreneurs and drive solutions to mitigate. — MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Union Minister U Ohn Maung makes discussions at the digital presentation of 'Healing Solutions for Tourism Challenge'. **PHOTO: MNA**

Initial vehicle registration to resume

THE Road Transport Administration Department will be resuming its initial vehicle registration departments in Htauk Kyant and Ywar Thar Gyi of Yangon and in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay on 11 May.

The vehicle registration process will not exempt any late fees if they coincide with the period when the de-

partment's services were suspended. The two departments in Yangon were closed from 26 March to 10 May and the other two departments were closed from 30 March to 10 May.

Therefore, any late fees after 31 August will not be waived and existing penalties will be enforced.—MNA
(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Tatmadaw Hluttaw reps, admin staff tested negative for COVID-19

TATMADAW Hluttaw representatives and administrative support groups who will be attending the 16th regular session of the Second Pyidaungsu, Pyithu and Amyotha Hluttaws all tested negative for COVID-19.

A total of 219 persons had their lab spec-

imens tested at the Defence Services General Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw using the COBAS 6800 analyzing machine and none of them had the virus.

In addition, the 14 officers and families quarantined at Transit Centre in Nay Pyi Taw also had

their lab specimens tested by the COBAS 6800 where their results showed negative on COVID-19, according to the report of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

COVID-19 Call Centre opens daily

THE Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Containment and Emergency Response Committee has opened the COVID-19 Call Centre in Yangon. It is opened daily.

In efforts to speed up the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 disease, the call centre is established by four communications operators and the Blue Ocean Company with the coordination of the

Medical Research Department of the Health and Sports Ministry and Post and Telecommunications Department from 8 am to 8 pm daily at the Medical Research Department in Yangon.

Over 43 staff from the Medical Research Department and 17 volunteers from the Myanmar Medical Association totally 60 workers have been working at the centre since 8th April.—MNA

Comparisons of inbound foreigners through international airports/seaports and border crossings

Sr	Month	2018-2019 FY			2019-2020 FY		
		Tourist	Business	Total	Tourist	Business	Total
1	October	52647	21005	73652	91836	27590	119426
2	November	77498	21482	98980	115898	27488	143386
3	December	82474	19538	102012	127950	24967	152917
4	January	93125	18689	111814	123622	26032	149654
5	February	102016	24612	126628	46879	21948	68827
6	March	95932	23693	119625	14479	21979	36458
7	April	71148	22848	93669	0	61	61
Total		574840	151867	726707	520664	150065	670729

Remark: Although international inbound flights have been suspended since 30 March 2020, the foreign visitors in the list are from special flights related with COVID-19.

Comparisons of inbound foreigners through international airports and border crossings

Sr	International airports and border crossings	April 2019		April 2020		Remark
		Tourist	Business	Tourist	Business	
1	Yangon Airport/Seaport	42514	16493		61	
2	Mandalay Airport	21572	4242			
3	Nay Pyi Taw Airport	136	228			
4	Myeik Airport	0	0			
5	Tachileik	4315	502			
6	Myawady	1424	1245			
7	Kawthoung	630	60			
8	Hteekee	49	58			
9	Tamu	269	16			
10	Reedhorda	239	4			
Total		71148	22848	0	61	

Remark: Although international inbound flights have been suspended since 30 March 2020, the foreign visitors in the list are from special flights related with COVID-19.

Trade Mark Ads

Call Thin Thin May, 09251022355, 09974424848

Over 16,000 acres of land put under cultivation of soybean in Mohnyin

MORE than 16,000 acres of land were put under cultivation of soybean, a winter crop, this year in Mohnyin district in Kachin State, according to the district Department of Agricultural Land Management and Statistics.

A total of 16,573 acres of soybean were grown in the townships within Mohnyin district: 7,000 acres in Mohnyin township; 3,570 acres in Hopin town; 1,201 acres in Moe Kaung; 4,500 acres in Phakant; and 302 acres in Ka-maing.

U Myint Thaug, the research officer from township Agricultural Research Department, said, "The soybean is mostly grown after harvesting of monsoon paddy as a double crop. In 2007, the soybean was grown a lot. Four per cent of soybean production from across the country is in



Soybeans are mainly grown in Mohnyin Township, with 90 per cent of total acres in Kachin State.

PHOTO: KYAW KYAW

Kachin State. Mohnyin township grows over 90 per cent of soybean in Kachin State, he added.

The soybeans of Mohnyin township are produced as the

traditional food to make bean fish paste, dried soybean and preserved chilli bean curd. Moreover, these traditional foods are also exported. The soybean price

is over K15,000 per viss in the market, according to the soybean local growers. —Kyaw Kyaw (Mohnyin)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Local investments up over K300 bln in seven months of 2019-2020FY

By Nyein Nyein

THE value of Myanmar citizens' investments has exceeded K1,200 billion in the seven months of this fiscal year (2019-2020), an increase of more than K300 billion compared to the same period of last year, according to the official statistics of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA). Between 1 October and 30 April in this FY, MIC and the state and region investment committees have permitted 73 local enterprises, bringing in the capital of over K1,251,223.915 million.

During the corresponding period of last FY, the local investors have driven K893,916.740 million into 89 projects.

This FY witnessed a total of 16 investments, a decrease when compared to the previous year. However, the amount of investment has risen this year because the business with large capitals flowed into the country, according to DICA.

Among the local investments in the seven months of this FY, the industry sector was topped as the largest investment, followed by other service sectors: the hotel and tourism sector, the real estate development sector, the agriculture sector, mining sector, oil and gas sector, livestock and fisheries sectors and power sector.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

MPU eCommerce Pay added to online export/import licence payment system

By Nyein Nyein

THE trade payment for online export/import licencing system (fully online) can be made through MPU eCommerce Pay, according to the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce.

To ensure the convenience of the trading businesses during coronavirus pandemic emergency period, the Trade Department launched online services for export/import licences system (fully online) starting from 1 April. The trade-related payment was made with the MCB eCommerce pay of the Myanmar Citizens Bank previously.

Now, the MPU eCommerce Pay system has started to be used in all banks, connected with Myanmar Payment Union (MPU) on 8 May. So, the entrepreneurs can make their payments either via

MCB ePayment system or MPU eCommerce Pay.

With the issuing of the export/import licences fully via online system starting from 1 April during the coronavirus infection emergency period, HS codes for 91 import items and 73 export items have been issued for the fully online system for the first time while 455 import items have been issued for the second time and 196 import items for the third time.

As per the fully online licencing system, items registered only under the HS code line are available. The applicants need to fill out the online application, and the invoice and approval from the related departments are required to be attached in pdf format.

Moreover, the necessary guidelines for the online systems

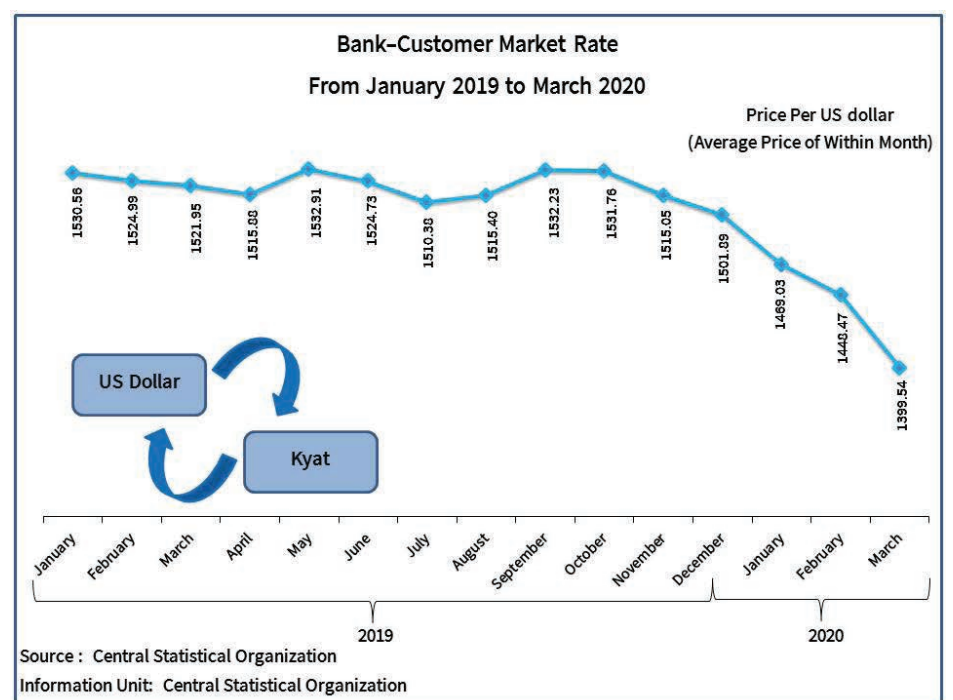
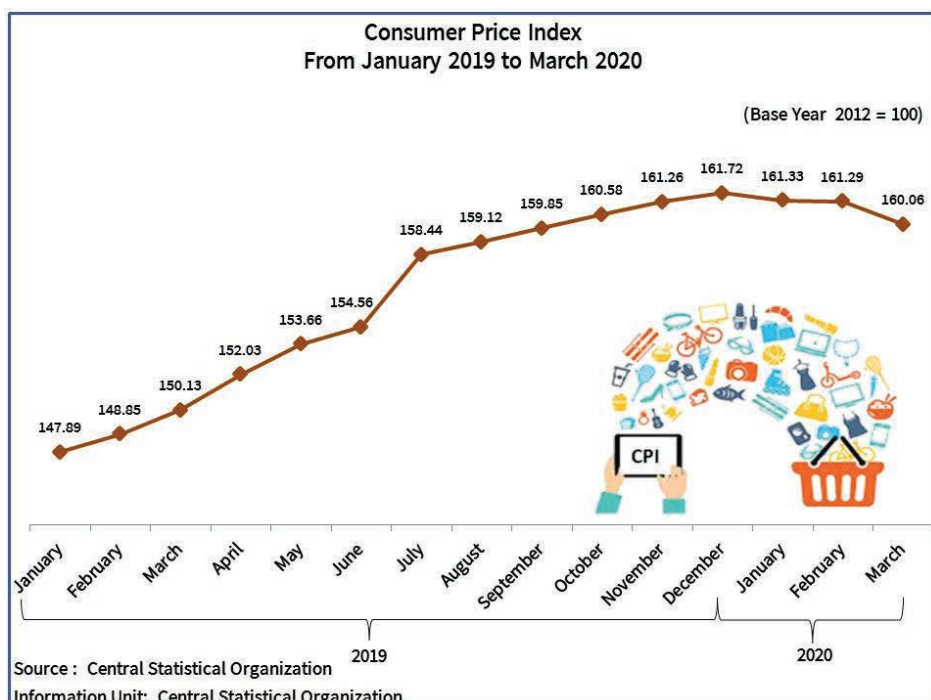
have been uploaded onto the website so that the entrepreneurs can see their application status in time, according to the Trade Department. With the outbreak of coronavirus spreading around the world, the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce gives priority to the reduction of person-to-person contact and to mitigate the spread of viral infection.

Therefore, the Ministry, issuing the export/import licence application, granted permission to the applicants and issued the permits through the online system starting from 1 April.

Under the new services, the entrepreneurs can conduct the process of licence application, make fees payment and receive licences through online as long as they have access to the internet

connection. The Trade Department offers an online system for a total of 815 items including CMP garment and necessary import items such as pharmaceuticals and related items, hospital equipment, foodstuffs, fertilizers, palm oil, and oil products, milk and dairy products, electronic devices, fuel oil, lubricants, motorbikes and bicycles, agricultural products, lead, sugar, natural gas, and other products. Licence applications can be processed on www.myanmartradenet.com.mm. The companies need to sign up membership, according to the Trade Department. In order to conduct Customs clearance, the electronic data will be sent to the Myanmar Automated Cargo Clearance System (MACCS) of the Customs Department.

(Translated by Hay Mar)



Social cohesion

UN chief launches global appeal to counter COVID-19-related hate speech

UNITED Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Friday launched a global appeal to address and counter “the virus of hate” – hate speech related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“COVID-19 does not care who we are, where we live, what we believe or about any other distinction. We need every ounce of solidarity to tackle it together. Yet the pandemic continues to unleash a tsunami of hate and xenophobia, scapegoating and scare-mongering,” said Guterres in a video message.

Anti-foreigner sentiment has surged online and in the streets. Anti-Semitic conspiracy theories

have spread, and COVID-19-related anti-Muslim attacks have occurred. Migrants and refugees have been vilified as a source of the virus – and then denied access to medical treatment, he said.

With older persons among the most vulnerable, contemptible memes have emerged suggesting they are also the most expendable. And journalists, whistleblowers, health professionals, aid workers and human rights defenders are being targeted simply for doing their jobs, he said.

“We must act now to strengthen the immunity of our societies against the virus of hate.



UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe Secretary-General António Guterres records a video message on the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on children.

That’s why I’m appealing today for an all-out effort to end hate speech globally,” noted the UN chief.

Guterres called on political leaders to show solidarity with all members of their societies and build and reinforce social cohesion. He called on educational institutions to focus on digital literacy at a time when billions

of young people are online – and when extremists are seeking to prey on captive and potentially despairing audiences.

He called on the media, especially social media companies, to do much more to flag and, in line with international human rights law, remove racist, misogynist and other harmful content. He also called on civil society to

strengthen outreach to vulnerable people, as well as religious actors to serve as models of mutual respect. “And I ask everyone, everywhere, to stand up against hate, treat each other with dignity and take every opportunity to spread kindness,” said Guterres. “Let’s defeat hate speech – and COVID-19 – together.”

SOURCE: Xinhua

Unemployment benefits

US April employment to see largest collapse in history



Economists fear many temporary layoffs due to the coronavirus pandemic will become permanent. PHOTO: AFP

WITH shops and factories closed nationwide due to COVID-19, nearly all of the jobs created in the US economy in the last decade have been wiped out in a single month.

That shocking job losses figure, along with a historic surge in the unemployment rate, is

expected to be confirmed in the Labor Department’s monthly employment report for April – the first full month of the lockdowns.

The US is home to the world’s largest and deadliest coronavirus outbreak, with more than 75,000 fatalities and 1.2 million cases reported as of Thursday, according

to Johns Hopkins University.

And the economic damage has been swift and stunning.

It will be the “largest collapse in history,” Roiana Reid of Berenberg Capital Markets said in an analysis of the April employment report.

In the two years of the 2008

global financial crisis, the world’s largest economy lost 8.6 million jobs. During the recovery, from February 2010 to February 2020, 23 million positions were created.

Reid is projecting 21 million job losses last month, which is about in line with the consensus forecast.

But Diane Swonk of Grant Thornton is among the more pessimistic economists, saying the damage will be much higher: 34 million destroyed in a single month.

That includes the 26 million job losses reflected in the weekly initial claims for unemployment benefits in the month, “plus an additional eight million workers who either were unable to process their application for UI or were undocumented workers who lost jobs,” she said.

“What’s even more stunning is the breadth of losses,” Swonk said. “They spanned virtually every industry and income category.”

And the 701,000 drop in payrolls in March likely will be revised to a figure much worse than

initially reported when the Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS) includes more accurate data from companies.

- ‘Nowhere near peaking’ -

The consensus among economists is that the jobless rate will surge to just over 16 per cent from a historic low of 3.5 per cent in February, but some analysts also believe the rate could be much higher.

And even that double-digit rate underestimates the impact of the virus, since many employees are simply leaving the workforce altogether.

President Donald Trump and his economic team are hopeful for a quick rebound, once the virus is under control and businesses can reopen and rehire their workers.

“This country can’t stay closed and locked down for years,” Trump said Thursday.

But with new claims for unemployment benefits still at staggering levels, the jobless rate could go much higher still.

SOURCE: AFP

Wear face masks: I protect you, you protect me

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi warned the public to wear face masks in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, saying that wearing masks provides protection to the wearer, as well protection for others.

She noted that transmission of the coronavirus occurs before those who are infected show any symptoms. Therefore, infected persons think themselves free of infection from the Coronavirus, and those close to some infected people have the same view.

It is also a welcome step that regional authorities have issued a new regulation to help stem the transmission of the coronavirus, by enforcing the wearing of face masks.

Meanwhile, the Mandalay Region government announced yesterday that wearing a mask "is a must" for local people when they go outside, as of 9 May. A first step in greater protection is designated from 9 to 15 May with the order "wear or buy". If a person is caught not wearing a mask in public, he or she would

be required to purchase two masks at the cost of K100.

After 15 May, a person caught not wearing a mask in public must buy two masks at the cost of K5000.

With current COVID-19 health guidelines, including hand washing campaigns, the mass education about the safe use and removal of masks is necessary. To encourage the people, it must be explained that if a mask is contaminated at removal, it has already protected them from contagious droplets.

In fact, wearing a mask is about limiting transmission from those unaware they are infected, instead of acting as a protective measure for healthy subjects.

If you are likely to be in close contact with someone infected, a mask reduces the chance of the disease being passed on. If someone is showing symptoms of coronavirus, or have been diagnosed, wearing a mask can also protect others.

This is why masks are crucial for remaining safe, especially in this time of the COVID-19 crisis.

Masks are effective at capturing droplets, which is a main transmission route of coronavirus, and some studies have estimated that masks provide a roughly fivefold protection, versus there being no barrier (although others have found lower levels of effectiveness).

Wearing a mask in public can serve as our unified action in the fight against the pandemic, while also reminding the people of the importance of practising social distancing measures.

With the mindset of "I protect you, you protect me" provided by masks, we can overcome the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Fourth-year performance of Kayah State Government

By Nandar Win
Photo: Taryar

Overcoming challenges with understanding, sympathy to bringing prosperity to Kayah State

EVERYONE knows that Kandarawady or Ngwedaung refers to Kayah State that is decorated with natural beauties. Located in the southeast of the country, Kayah State is the smallest state among the seven states. Its area is 4529.56 square miles.

The state is 102 miles from the north to the south and 70 miles from the east to the west.

It has two districts - Loikaw and Bawlake districts- formed with seven townships and two towns. Loikaw, the capital of the state, has the Taungwe Pagoda and Myakalat and Shwetwa pagodas located on the strangely formed rock hills, apart from the natural scenery around it.



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi opening the archway of the 68th Kayah State Day Ceremony in Loikaw.



Kayah State Chief Minister U L Paung Sho.

According to 2014 census, the state has a population of 286,627, and its ethnic races Kayah, Kayan (Padaung), Yinbaw, Gekho, Lahta (Zayan), Layaw, Yintalae and Kawlawmonu (Manumanaw), Bamar,

Kayin, Shan, PaO and Intha. They are living in peace and harmony.

Developing tourism industry

Kayah State government made energetic efforts for rapid progress of its tourism sector. On 27 October 2016, it opened Thai-Myanmar border at its easternmost sector.

Loikaw-Maesae road, the main artery of Kayah State, is a tarred highway reaching the border with Thailand. The road has brought socio-economic development in addition to smooth transport.

Loikaw and Maehongson have been acknowledged as sister cities, and MoU was signed

for mutual development of the tourism sector. The development of the sector has generated job opportunities and improved the socio-economy.

Kayah State government presented a proposal to improve the road between Loikaw and Nyaungshwe (Inlay region) in Shan State, that will be beneficial of the people of the two states.

Border trade

Maesae border trade point was opened in 2014, and a bilateral border trade road was commissioner on 27 October 2016. Hence, the volume of border trade reached USD 2.07 million in fiscal year 2019-2020.



Kayah State Chief Minister U L Paung Sho and officials opening the new building for the Basic Education High School in Nwarlawoe Village in Loikaw Township, Kayah State.

Myanmar mostly sold agro products including garlic, onion, pepper and potato, and bought back soft drinks, instant coffee, and cement.

Maesae border is issuing individual trade certificates for the ethnic races who cannot set

wonderful cultures and traditions, natural sceneries, it has must prospects for development of hotels and tourism sector. It has Taungwe Pagoda, Ngwedaung Dam, seven lakes, Hteepwing lake, Kyatgu cave, Hteesaeakha falls, Koingan springs, Hteeprunu cave,

in the CBT of Kayah State were shown at ITB- Berlin, and won Diamond Award in 2016. Kayah State also won the ASEAN Community Based Tourism Award in 2017 and the ASEAN Clean Tourist City Award in 2019. The fourth Sakura festival was observed at Buddha Park in Loikaw on 19 January this year to enhance the Japan-Myanmar friendship and increase the number of Japanese visitors to Myanmar during the cherry blossoming time. Kayah State welcomed over 75,000 local visitors and 12,973 foreign visitors in 2019. The state also conducted tourism related courses for local tour industry.

Transport

The Government has prioritized the transport sector for socio-economic development. It has fully tarred over 551 miles of roads in the state in fiscal year 2019-2020. The people-centred government built 1449 bridges in fiscal year 2019-2020. Kayah State built over 50 miles of roads in the fourth year alone.

Electricity

The No 1, 2 and 3 Balu creek hydropower plants are generating 248 megawatts. An 11Kv power cable is distributing power from the No 1 plant to nearby villages. The No 2 plant is linked with 132Kv power line and 33Kv power line.

The Kayah State government adopted priority programmes for farming, technological dissemination, production development, natural disaster prevention, irrigation projects and infrastructure development.

up a company. The system has facilitated the flow of goods to other towns of the country.

The relevant bodies are curbing illegal trade and collecting taxes on the legal goods. In fiscal year 2018-2019, the border gate earned Ks 28.065 million from tax revenues. Kandarawady Trade Centre was opened on 26 April 2016 in Loikaw. It will hold trade exhibitions, market promotion activities and trade fairs where agreement will be reached.

Hotels and tourism

As Kayah State possesses

Hsinbyutaung hill, Yaynipauk cave, Tanaanloh cave, Loinapha tracking.

Motor schooner ride in Balu Creek and canoeing and kayaking at the confluence of two creeks are available in Kayah State, and preparations are been made for opening the Loikaw-Mobyse sluiceway-Inlay waterway. Moreover, balloons over Loikaw and Loikaw-Moebye-Pekon RGC train ride will be available soon. Kayah State started the community based tourism (CBT) in 2016 after designating villages into specific zones. Video clips of the villages included

Myanmar Gazette

Heads of Service Organizations appointed

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed the following persons as Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names on probation from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
(1) U Aung Myint Deputy Director-General Consular and Legal Affairs Department Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Director-General Strategic Studies and Training Department Ministry of Foreign Affairs
(2) U Min Thu General Manager Myanmar Gems Enterprise Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation	Managing Director Myanmar Gems Enterprise Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation



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Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 4:00 pm Friday 08th May, 2020)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 09th May, 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region and isolated in Upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyarwady Regions, Kachin, Shan (South and East), Kayah, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5-8) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady and Taninthayi Regions, Shan (South and East), Kayah, Kayin and Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 09th May, 2020: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 09th May, 2020: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

SEE PAGE-10

Fourth-year performance of Kayah State Government



Vice President U Henry Van Thio inspecting the BP-13 Border Crossing in Kayah State.

FROM PAGE-9

It is providing electricity to villages in the surrounding areas and staff quarters through 11Kv power cables. Power supply reached 405 more villages in fiscal year 2019-2020. Hence, the rural electrification task increased by 93.32 per cent.

Rural development

The Government spent over Ks 9,000 million in building rural roads, bridges, water supply stations, toilets and other necessary facilities during the four years. Over 7,000 trainees completed 53 kinds of vocational education courses that were conducted for 303 times during the four years. Under the emerald green village project, a trust fund of over Ks 1,500 million was set up for 69 villages in seven townships of Kayah State. The Government also spent over Ks 134 million in implementing village development programme.

Investment

Kayah State Investment Committee was set up on 7 July 2017. Myanmar Investment Commission approved four investment projects in Kayah State during the period from 1988 to 2016. But now, Kayah State Investment Committee is issuing permits, and it has approved 18 more investment projects. Kayah State approved over USD 53 million and over Ks 24,500 million worth of investment projects during the administration of the current Government. They generated over 1,500 jobs.

Agriculture

The main crops of Kayah State are rice, maize, groundnut, sunflower, beans, sugarcane and cotton. In 2019, the state put 195,670 acres or 97.96 per cent of the target of 1,999,738 acres, under crops. Kayah State introduced the good agriculture practice (GAP)

in six townships in fiscal year 2019-2020. It provided over Ks 1,700 million for agriculture development during the fiscal year. The state conducted awareness talks and trainings for farmers of 156 villages in eight townships and government employees. The Kayah State government adopted priority programmes for farming, technological dissemination, production development, natural disaster prevention, irrigation projects and infrastructure development.

Health

Kayah State is carrying out healthcare services with 500-bed Loikaw Hospital, a 50-bed hospital, five 25-bed hospitals, ten 16-bed hospitals, seven station health centres, 21 rural health centres and 120 sub-rural health centres. It has 104 doctors, 394 nurses and 455 other health staffs, and is treating and diagnosing various kinds of diseases. Local

doctors also join forces with the German Interplast of Germany in treating patients. The hospitals are continuously conducting the Infection Prevention and Control under the guidance of the Ministry of Health and Sports, and also won the Patient Safety Champion award at World Patient Safety Day held in Nay Pyi Taw in 2019.

Education

Kayah State has 458 government schools, six private high schools, two private middle schools and three private primary schools, where 73,363 students are pursuing education. It has 4,218 teachers, over 16,000 students are learning ethnic languages at 368 schools, lectured by 443 teachers. Kayah State built 222 new school buildings at a cost of over Ks 10,593 million during the four years. Opened on 1 December 2019, Loikaw Education College had 320 students. Technological University (Loikaw) reached ISO 9001:2015 level recognized by England-based BVCH (SAS). Kayah State has education cooperation programmes, and conducted 12 kinds of vocational education trainings for 1,117 trainees.

Development affairs

Kayah State has one state level development affairs committee and eight township level groups. Their undertakings during the fourth year included water supply programmes, recreation parks, streets, drainages, bridges, night markets and other development facilities.

Minerals and forests

Kayah State produced over 8,000 tonnes of raw minerals during the four years. It is conducting awareness talks monthly

for mining companies to observe the laws, bylaws, orders and directives and to ensure worksite safety. It also permits mini mining enterprises for local people. During the fiscal year 2018-2019, Kayah State set up 200 acres for forest regeneration, 100 acres of high value forest, over 800 acres of forest plantations and distributed samplings to the people.

Sports

During the four years, Kayah State built sport infrastructures and promoted human resources. It opened a sports and physical education institute in Loikaw. It is now conducting courses on nine kinds of sports events 206 male and female trainees.

Ethnic affairs

A total of 62,028 story books for seven ethnic races have been presented for academic year 2019-2020. Documentary on Yintalae, a minority race in Kayah State is shot. Kayah State built the combined office of the ethnic literature and culture committees of the state. Kayah State Government approved over Ks 178 million from its 2018-2019 fiscal year budget. The state government also joint hands with World Vision Myanmar, Care Myanmar, NGO Gender Group, World Education, Mines Advisory Group, Save the Children in social, cultural, health, education and many other important sectors of the ethnic affairs. As usual, challenges are faced in carrying out region development undertakings and reforms. But they can be overcome through mutual understanding and sympathy; we will surely see the prospering Kayah State during our national drive for democracy.

(Translated by TMT)



Kayah State Chief Minister U L Pong Sho and officials pose for a group photo at the opening ceremony of new building for Ethnic Literature and Culture Committee of Kayah State.



Kayah State Chief Minister U L Pong Sho, Kayah State Hluttaw Speaker U Hla Htwe and officials opening the new road for Yayyo, Noekoe and Konethar Villages in Kayah State.

Donald Trump urges nuclear talks with China in call with Russia's Vladimir Putin

WASHINGTON — US President Donald Trump called on Thursday for involving China in new arms control talks with Russia, telling Russian leader Vladimir Putin that they need to avoid a “costly arms race,” the White House said.

“President Trump reaffirmed that the United States is committed to effective arms control that includes not only Russia, but also China, and looks forward to future discussions to avoid a

costly arms race,” a statement said.

Trump and Putin spoke by phone, also discussing the coronavirus pandemic, the White House said.

“President Trump reiterated that the United States is working hard to care for Americans at home and is also ready to provide assistance to any country in need, including Russia,” the statement said.

Russia and the United

States – rivals during the four decades of the Cold War – ripped up the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty this year, blaming one another for its demise.

That deal was seen as a cornerstone of global security and its burial sparked fears of a new arms race. Washington is threatening to quit the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or “New Start”, when it expires next year.—AFP ■



US President Donald Trump (left) and Russian President Vladimir Putin. (PHOTOS BY AFP)

Europe, US mark 75 years since end of WWII

BERLIN — Europe and the United States mark 75 years since the end of World War II on Friday in a sombre mood as the coronavirus pandemic forced the cancellation of elaborate ceremonies even as Berlin declares an exceptional holiday for the first time.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel will join President Frank-Walter Steinmeier in laying wreaths at Neue Wache – the country’s main memorial to the victims of war and dictatorship, followed by a speech by the president.

Unlike elsewhere on the continent, where May 8 is celebrated annually as Victory in Europe Day, the anniversary of Nazi Germany’s unconditional surrender to the Allies has always been just another work day in Europe’s biggest economy.

The city of Berlin has however declared a one-off public holiday to remember the day 75 years ago when the war that claimed over 50 million lives came to an end in Europe.

The move has prompted

some to call for the date to be made a permanent public holiday, touching off a heated debate in Germany. German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas declined to wade into the discussion on Friday, saying it was not “the essential issue”.

“What’s important is that this day is properly understood in Germany as a day of liberation and a day that can actually be celebrated,” Maas told public broadcaster ZDF.

‘Day of complete defeat’

Firmly rejecting the idea of giving prominence to the anniversary, the leader of Germany’s far-right AfD party, Alexander Gauland, argued that the date was too “ambivalent”.

“It was a day of complete defeat, a day of the loss of huge parts of Germany and the loss of the possibility to shape its future,” Gauland told the RND newspaper group.

Gauland, who has described the Nazi period as a mere “speck of bird poo” in Germany’s otherwise glorious past, immediately drew fire.—AFP ■



FILE PHOTO: German chancellor Angela Merkel (first on the left), France’s Emmanuel Macron (third from left) and other German dignitaries attend a wreath laying ceremony at the Neue Wache in 2018. PHOTO:AFP

US Justice Dept drops case against ex-Trump aide Flynn

WASHINGTON — The US Justice Department withdrew its case against former White House national security advisor Michael Flynn Thursday, handing President Donald Trump a major political victory.

In a nearly unheard-of reversal, the department said in a filing that Flynn’s December 2017 guilty plea for lying to the FBI in an interview over his Russia contacts was moot because the lies were insignificant. It also said the FBI’s original probe of him — part of the sweeping counterintelligence investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election — had no “legitimate investigative basis.”

The decision by close Trump ally Attorney General Bill Barr effectively reversed 18 months of work by the department and FBI under Barr’s predecessors.

It also added fuel to Trump’s allegation over the past three-plus years that the Russia investigation was a political “witch hunt.”

“He was targeted by the

Obama administration and he was targeted in order to try and take down a president, and what they’ve done is a disgrace,” Trump said Thursday.

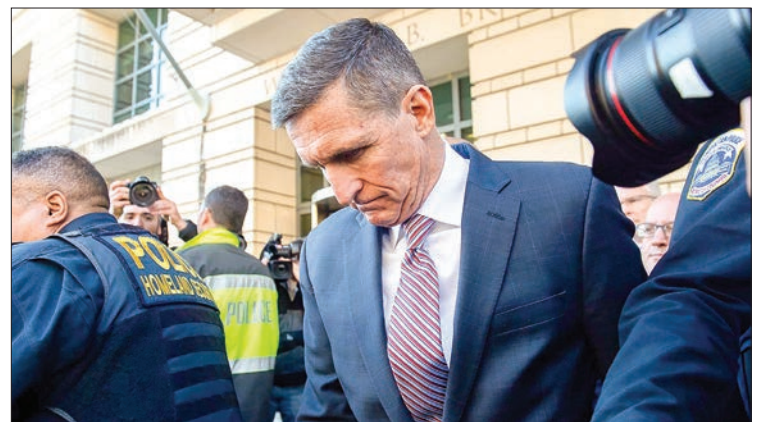
He took aim at the FBI and Justice Department officials behind the original investigation.

“I hope a lot of people are going to pay a big price, because they’re dishonest crooked people. They’re scum and I say it a lot. They’re scum, they’re human scum,” he said.

The move came as Flynn, the former Pentagon intelligence

chief and a retired three-star general, was fighting possible imprisonment, and minutes after the case’s lead prosecutor, Brandon Van Grack, withdrew in apparent disagreement with Barr.

“Our duty we think, is to dismiss the case,” Barr told CBS News. “A crime cannot be established here. They did not have a basis for the counterintelligence investigation against Flynn.” Current and former officials associated with the investigation voiced outrage and accused Barr of doing Trump’s bidding.—AFP ■



Former national security advisor Michael Flynn leaves the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., in late 2018. PHOTO: SAUL LOEB/AFP

Iran quake kills at least one, sparks panic in capital

TEHRAN — An earthquake struck early Friday near Iran’s highest peak and jolted Tehran, killing at least one person and injuring more than 20 as people ran for their lives.

The shallow 4.6 magnitude quake hit at 00:48 am (2018 GMT) near the city of Damavand, about 55 kilometres (34 miles) east of Tehran, the US Geological Survey said.

It saw scores of residents of Tehran flee buildings for the

safety of the capital’s streets and parks, AFP journalists reported.

Many spent the rest of the night sleeping in their cars on the side of the road, apparently too fearful to return to their homes.

Some wore face masks, a sign of the times in a country already struggling to contain the Middle East’s deadliest outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

The temblor struck as Iranians were either sleeping or rest-

ing after iftar, the meal breaking the daytime fast observed by Muslims during the holy month of Ramadan.

“We were sitting down when the earthquake struck,” said 45-year-old Tehran resident Ahmad.

“We felt it completely shaking (the building), and then we all went out of the house together to be outside and not to be in danger if an aftershock struck,”—AFP ■

Hong Kong gyms, bars and cinemas reopen as virus measures ease

HONG KONG — Hong Kong began to ease major social distancing measures on Friday with bars, gyms, beauty parlours and cinemas reopening their doors after the financial hub largely halted local transmissions of the deadly coronavirus.

Queues formed outside gyms in the semi-autonomous Chinese city on Friday morning for employees to check temperatures as people celebrated the return of some normalcy to the city.

Doris, a 39-year-old yoga teacher, said her first classes were already filled after weeks of teaching online. "I'm excited to share again... and see my students," she told AFP.

"I was quite impatient to get back to the gym," added Alexandre, a 26-year-old finance worker



People celebrated the return of some normalcy to Hong Kong as gyms and bars opened on Friday. **PHOTO: AFP**

after completing a workout in the city's commercial district. "It shows that life is starting to get back to normal even though we haven't been locked up like in Europe," he added.

Will Sutton, an Amer-

ican resident, tweeted pictures of his local gym with partitions placed between running machines.

"After three weeks without a workout, whatever... let's just get back to sweating!" he wrote.

The less health-conscious flocked to watering holes, some of which opened their doors as soon as the clock struck midnight.

"Last month we lost a lot of money," bar manager Nikita told AFP as he

received the first punters in four weeks. "But still, we are just super happy to be back open."

Most of Hong Kong's entertainment venues were shuttered in early April when the city suffered a second wave of infections -- primarily residents returning from Europe and North America as the pandemic spread rapidly there.

But health officials have made impressive headway against the disease thanks to efficient testing, tracing and treatment programmes with just over 1,000 infections and four deaths. New COVID-19 cases have been in the single digits for the last 18 days -- with eleven days showing a zero tally. All new infections are residents returning from overseas who are quickly quarantined. — AFP

Beer convoys en route to outback Aussie pubs as lockdown lifted

CANBERRA— Trucks laden with thousands of beer kegs headed to Australia's remote Northern Territory on Friday as pubs there prepare to reopen after a weeks-long virus shutdown.

With the fewest cases of COVID-19 of any of Australia's states and territories, the region has authorized pubs to serve drinkers inside their doors from May 15.

"I understand there's a whole bunch of kegs on their way to Darwin as we speak, running up the highway -- much eagerly anticipated, I'm sure," Prime Minister Scott Morrison told media in Canberra.

On Thursday, Northern Territory chief minister Michael Gunner welcomed the first shipment of 175,000 litres of "the good stuff".

"The beers are here and the jobs are back," Gunner said at a press conference surrounded by some freshly delivered cases.

The beer market has dipped 20 per cent since the lockdown with the loss of keg sales hitting brewers and pubs hard, said Lion Beer Australia -- one of the largest brewers in the country.

"March 23 was the most devastating and soul-destroying day our industry has ever experienced," the firm's Managing Director James Brindley said of the day pubs and restaurants across Australia were ordered closed as part of lockdown restrictions. —AFP

Fragile paradise: Pacific isles weigh risk of returning tourists

SUVA — South Pacific island nations have dodged the worst ravages of the coronavirus pandemic, but now face a stark choice between a risky reopening to tourists and economic collapse.

Today countries all over the world are weighing when to ease restrictions that would save jobs but risk the virus running amok.

But the tradeoffs are perhaps starker in the

South Pacific islands than almost anywhere else on Earth.

Most of these postcard-perfect archipelagoes have been spared outbreaks that would instantly overwhelm their barebones health systems.

Around a dozen Pacific island nations remain virus-free, most of them remote dots in the ocean that sealed their borders when they saw the carnage COVID-19 was caus-

ing elsewhere in the world.

One notable exception is Fiji, where 18 cases have been reported although the authorities hope to be able to declare the islands virus-free later this month.

But the economic impact of the pandemic has been devastating.

Communities across the region rely heavily on tourism -- in some places as much as 50 per cent of GDP -- that comes from parts of the world where

COVID-19 has been actively spreading.

Since the crisis began, flights have stopped, hotels have been abandoned, and revenue has dried up.

"When Australia closed its borders to international travel, our resort went to zero income in three days," Elizabeth Pechan, co-owner of Vanuatu's The Havannah resort, wrote in a recent blog post.

In Vanuatu alone, 70

per cent of tourism jobs have reportedly disappeared.

And the already impoverished nations have no US Treasury or European Central Bank to race to the financial rescue.

Still, an idea to include the islands in a quarantine-free travel "bubble" with Australia and New Zealand -- where infection rates are low -- is getting only a cautious welcome. — AFP

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Finland needs painful spending cuts after corona crisis: Economists

HELSINKI — Finland's government will have to implement a "pain package" of tax rises and spending cuts worth billions of euros to rebalance its finances after the coronavirus crisis, a group of leading economists warned on Friday.

In a government-commissioned report, four of the Nordic country's best-known economic thinkers warned of a "lost decade" of growth and a deep re-

cession sparked by the economic standstill of the coronavirus crisis.

"The corona crisis will impoverish Finland and significantly weaken the balance of Finnish public finances in the medium term," the authors, led by professor Vesa Vihriala, said in a statement.

The report warned that spending cuts, tax hikes and structural changes, worth at least 3-4 per cent of GDP, will

be needed to address the shortfalls.

"This will most likely be sufficient to keep the debt-to-GDP ratio below 90 percent during the 2020s," the report said.

The prospect of further cuts to public finances is likely to be unwelcome to Finland's centre-left coalition, whose leading Social Democrat party won last year's election on a platform of opposition to the previous five years of austerity. Receiving the report on Friday, the finance ministry's top civil servant, Martti Hetemaki, acknowledged that "being gloomy is being realistic," and said that difficult decisions "cannot be left for tomorrow". In the immediate term the report called for the safe lifting of restrictions in order to try and restore confidence in the market.—AFP ■



Finland on track for a 'pain package', economists warn.
PHOTO: AFP

EU court says it 'alone' has jurisdiction over ECB

BRUSSELS — The EU's highest court on Friday said it alone had legal authority over the European Central Bank, firmly rejecting a German Constitutional Court ruling critical of the bank's ambitious stimulus policies.

The highly unusual intervention came after the German ruling issued particularly harsh criticism of European court judges, setting up a clash between the EU institutions and their most powerful member state.

"In order to ensure that EU law is applied uniformly, the Court of Justice (ECJ) alone... has jurisdiction to rule that an act of an EU institution is contrary to EU law," a statement said.

"Divergences between courts of the member states as to the validity



The gloves are off. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

of such acts would indeed be liable to place in jeopardy the unity of the EU legal order and to detract from legal certainty," it added.

Germany's Constitutional Court said the Luxembourg-based ECJ had rubber-stamped ECB policy with confusing argumentation and declared it not legally binding.

EU-watchers feared the judgment could be a boost for nations like Hungary and Poland, whose reforms to the political

and judicial systems have drawn allegations they are undermining democracy.

Sidelining the EU court, the German judges gave the ECB three months to justify its policies and the bank has said it will try to find a diplomatic solution.

Without an explanation, German judges in Karlsruhe said they will ban the country's powerful Bundesbank central bank from participating in the stimulus.—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V IWAMI

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V IWAMI VOY. NO. (68) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8-5-2020 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 NYK BLUK & PROGETS
CARRIERS LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V IMKE SELMER

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V IMKE SELMER VOY. NO. (220028) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8-5-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of WILMAR where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S WILHELMSSEN SHIPS
SERVICES PTE LTD.

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ALVAN VOY. NO. (SCY 1078)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ALVAN VOY. NO. (SCY 1078) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9-5-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S LAND AND SEA
INTERMODAL LOGISTICS SDN BHD LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V AS FLORA VOY. NO. (003N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V AS FLORA VOY. NO. (003N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9-5-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S INTER ASIA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CAPE FLORES VOY. NO. (157N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V CAPE FLORES VOY. NO. (157N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9-5-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT 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 NINOS VOY. NO. (1120 S/N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V NINOS VOY. NO. (1120 S/N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 9-5-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

Wooden monasteries from environs of Saku

By Maung Tha (Archaeology)

ACCORDING to Myanmar histories, Saku takes a position, 11 miles northwest of Minbu in Magway Region.

Minbu and Saku in the history

Minbu is located at the confluence of Mann Creek and Ayeyawady River. Writer Letwe Minnyo (U Chan Tha) depicted a love scene between King Mohnyin and Shin Boh Mei in Minbu, quoting the poems on concluding of Temiya Jataka composed by venerable Sayadaw Minbu U Obhasa.

Minbu is 376 miles from Yangon along the waterway. As Ayeyawady River divides Magway and Minbu, Setkeinte Pagoda in Minbu faces with Myathalun Pagoda in Magway.

Myanmar Encyclopaedia mentions Saku was under management of a governor in Myanmar monarchical era. The town governor and town head built wooden monasteries decorated with Myanmar arts and crafts. The agriculture was of agrobased business in Saku region where locals cultivated crops in farmlands irrigated by water from Mann Creek. The paddy produced from Saku region was called Sakubyat.

In 1886, the district level offices were set up in Saku after British had occupied Myanmar. In 1962, the government of Revolutionary Council allotted district level offices in Minbu but township level offices in Saku. On 7 August 1972 when district administrative system was terminated, township offices were moved to Minbu from Saku. On 31

March 1973, Minbu (Saku) Township was constituted with Minbu and Saku towns, seven wards and 150 villages from 87 village-tracts.

Minbu (Saku) Township on 642.71 square miles of land is 46 miles in length and 42 miles in width. The township shares its border with Ayeyawady River in the east, Ngaphe Township in the west, Minhla Township in the south and Pwintbyu Township in the north. Ayeyawady River is crossing in the township from the north to the south while Hsapwet and Mann creeks flow from the west to the east.

Minbu (Saku) Township is 164 feet higher than the sea level. It had 48.54 inches of rainfall in 2017.

Total population in the township reached 192,295 in September 2018, 180,497 of whom were Bamar ethnic, accounting for 99



First Three-storey Monastery

per cent.

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Home Affairs, there are 210 pagodas and stupas and 229 monasteries in Minbu (Saku) Township, 144 of those pagodas were located around Saku. Htegyi Pagoda in Saku is an eminent religious edifice in addition to Mann Shwesettaw, Shinpin Setkeinte and Dattawkon pagodas.

The Pitakat chamber of U Obhasa takes a position in Ward 1 of Minbu and Hmankin Yokesone monastery and Pitakat chamber in Ward 1 of Saku.

Works of some researchers showed some evidences of Pyu culture in Saku region. So, some researchers assumed Saku had been in Pyu era. At present, not only old stakes of buildings and ancient structures built of bricks with finger lines but also wooden monasteries decorated with Myanmar crafts can be seen in Saku.

Ancient monasteries

Kings and royal families and wealthy persons built monasteries built of bricks and wood in various regions such as Mandalay, Inwa, Sagaing, Salay, Salin and Myaing townships.

Konbaughset Maha History mentioned King Alaungphaya, King Naungdawgyi, King Myedu, King Badon, King Sagaing, King Thayawady, King Bagan, King Mindon and King Thibaw fund-

ed construction of monasteries, most of which were built with Myanmar architectural works. However, some monasteries such as Thakawun and Yaw Atwinwun were decorated with European and Myanmar styles.

Wooden monasteries in Saku

Pahtama Three-storey Monastery and Hmankin Yokesone Monastery are the most significant in Saku. Yokesone Monastery in Lekaing takes a position in Pwintbyu Township but travellers from Saku have easy access to such monastery.

Pahtama Three-storey Monastery in Saku was built by U Thaik and son in late-1920. The monastery was renovated in 1970. A record mentions that a stake driving ceremony took place for the monastery on the morning of 6th waning of Nayon, 1266 Myanmar era and the construction of the monastery started in the afternoon the same day.

The monastery with 111.5 feet in length and 52.49 feet in width was built of 115 teak posts for the tier-roofed building, Sanu building and main building. Posts in the east, west and south wards were curved with plots of sculptures from Vidhura Jataka. The rail of northern corridor was created with lifestyle of locals such as playing Ozi and sweeping works.



Ruined Lekaing Yokesone Monastery



Pagodas in Saku.

Hmankin Yokesone Monastery in Saku was built of 136 teak posts based on concrete boards. The monastery was 131 feet long and 65.5 feet wide formed with the tier-roofed building, Sanu building and main building. Saku building was flanked by an annex hall each.

A brick ladder each was built on the northern and southern wings leading to the monastery. The main building was installed with doors decorated with sculptures of mythical birds. The rails of the monastery were curved as sculptural works depicting Buddhological works as well as lifestyle of locals in Konbaung era.

The northwest wing of the monastery was created with works of Cula Paduma Jataka, the southeast corner with that of Utena Jataka and the northern wing with that of Ma Mei U. Likewise, statues of dragon, ogre, minister, general and hermit were curved on the walls.

Lekaing Yokesone Monastery near Saku was built by U Anthony, son of the head of Kuni Village in 1891. U Anthony and his son built five monasteries around the area.

U Anthony spent 17.5 baskets of coins on construction of Lekaing Yokesone Monastery. He took responsibilities for food and accommodation of workers for the construction. Head of Kani Village, a relative of donor,

contributed labour of elephants to transport of teak lots to the construction site free of charge.

Lekaing monastery was built with 214 teak posts. The donor recruited 20 sculptors led by Saya Hman Gyi from Mandalay to carve sculptural works to be decorated at the monastery. The monastery installed with eight ladders was formed with the tier-roofed building, Sanu building, main building and Bawga building. Now, the main building and Bawga building can be seen in good conditions while the tier-roofed building and Sanu building collapsed.

The walls of the monastery from the south to the north were decorated with sculptural works in plots of Buddhology. A lacquerware Buddha image is kept in the monastery till today. Tombs of donor U Anthony and relatives take positions in the west of the monastery.

Among Myanmar cultural heritages in townships of Magway Region, wooden monasteries decorated with Myanmar arts and crafts in Minbu (Saku) Township are damaged in weak maintenance. Only when these monasteries decorated with reliefs and sculptural works in Myanmar architectural style can be maintained for long run, will these art works be showed to travellers from home and abroad.



Sculptural works of First Three-storey Monastery

Walls of Saku

The walls of Saku built in 661 Myanmar era was excavated on 4 September 2019. The 500 metres long eastern wall, the 290 metres long western wall, the 640 metres long southern wall and the 240 metres long northern wall were excavated but the northwest corner of the wall was eroded by Mann Creek.

The Department of Archaeology and National Museum excavated the five metres wide and seven metres long SGU TP 1 assumed at the place of eastern wall of Saku and found six feet

wide 26 brick layers. Four earthen urns were found near the brick layers. Bricks of the wall were 13 inches to 15 inches in length, seven to nine inches in width and two to three inches in thickness.

Researchers U Zaw Myo Oo, U Kyaw Sein Win and U Wint Thu Thu Maung read the research papers on some findings of Pyu era at home and abroad so as to improve the history of ancient Saku city.

(Translated by Than Tun Aung)
References:
Thunaparanta Pyu region
(Kyaw Sein Win)

Pyus in the plain of Mann Creek (Zaw Myo Oo)
Panoramic view of Saku region (Shin Lay Nyin)
Looking at the evidences of Pyu and Bagan periods of the Mann river valley (Zaw Myo Oo)
Myanmar handicraft ornaments and monasteries (Maung Yin Hline, Pyinma Myaing)
Splendour in Wood (Sylvia Fraser Lu)

Futsal players, women footballers get assistance from MFF

FOR the ease of nutrition and accommodation of players during the outbreak of coronavirus disease, Myanmar Football Federation provided necessary foodstuffs to the Myanmar Futsal players from respective futsal clubs and footballers from the Myanmar National Women's League at the headquarters of the Myanmar Football Federation yesterday, according to the statement with the MFF.

The foodstuffs were donated by Executive Officer of MFF Dr Ye Mon Htut and members of the Ayeyawady Foundation, MFF

stated. MFF counsellor U Bunny Tin Aung, MFF Executive Officer and Chairman of the Futsal Committee U Ye Mon Htut, Executive Member of Coaches Committee U Tin Myint Aung and Executive Member of Women Football Committee Daw Myat Myat Oo and MFF General Secretary U Ko Ko Thein and futsal players and women footballers attended the necessary foodstuffs provision ceremony. The officials offered rice bags, oil bottles and canned fishes for each of 280 men's futsal players and 225 women footballers. —Lynn Thit (Tgi)

MFF arranges accommodations for Myanmar returnees

IN collaboration with the Ayeyawady Foundation, Myanmar Football Federation is currently arranging accommodations for 86 Myanmar returnees from the Republic of Korea who will stay in Yangon as quarantined persons, according to the statement with the football federation.

MFF will use Myanmar National Football Academy (Yangon) and apartments and bedrooms of the Myanmar Na-

tional Football Teams as the quarantined sites.

The MFF and Ayeyawady Foundation are also striving to assist in the coronavirus pandemic combatting measures under the supervision of the Ministry of Health and Sports.

Infrastructures of the MFF and AYA Bank including training schools of AYA Bank are currently alive with pandemic controlling process: having arranged accommodation for

healthcare providers including nurses and physicians who are working in the frontline to combat the pandemic.

Currently, a total of 53 returnees from Thailand are being quarantined at the Myanmar National Team's apartments and four local people are also being kept as the quarantined persons at Myanmar National Football Academy, according to the MFF. —Lynn Thit (Tgi)

S. Korean football kicks off with new audience, safety measures

SEOUL — South Korean football will reach new international TV audiences as it leads the way by restarting after the coronavirus on Friday, but there will be no crowds or wild goal celebrations — and even talking is discouraged.

With most leagues worldwide sidelined by the pandemic, the K-League is the first competition of any standing to come back to life, watched by sport-starved fans in a swathe of foreign countries.

It will provide the first glimpse of post-virus football, with teams under orders to stick to stringent safety guidelines to prevent any contagion.

Players have been told to avoid excessive goal celebra-

tions, handshakes, close talking and blowing their noses, while the stadiums will be devoid of spectators.

But with fans around the world long deprived of live sport, the K-League has signed rights deals with broadcasters in nearly 20 countries including Germany, Switzerland and Australia who will be showing games live.

The K-League, whose start was delayed two months by the pandemic, will also be livestreamed on YouTube and Twitter with English graphics and commentary.

Last year rights were sold to only six countries, all of them in Asia. "Because we had limited exposure to international fans, it is true that the K-League was

largely unknown globally despite its competitiveness," said league spokesman Lee Jong-kwoun.

"2020 will be the first year the league will be recognized and assessed on a global level."

Defending champions Jeonbuk Motors — managed by Jose Mourinho's former assistant Jose Morais — face Cup-holders Suwon Bluewings in the season-opener in Jeonju, a host city for the 2002 World Cup.

Bows, not handshakes

The K-League's progress will be watched closely by other leagues including the giants of Europe, where Germany's Bundesliga is the only competition so far to set a date to return, on May 16.—AFP



Players have been told to avoid excessive goal celebrations. PHOTO: AFP

World Cup record-holder Klose joins Bayern as assistant coach



Retired striker Miroslav Klose, 41, who scored a record 16 goals at World Cup finals, has joined Bayern Munich as assistant coach. PHOTO: AFP

BERLIN — Miroslav Klose, who holds the record for the most goals scored at men's World Cups, has joined Bayern Munich as assistant coach, it was announced on Thursday (May 7).

"It feels very good, I'm really looking forward to the task," said the 41-year-old, who scored 16 goals at four World Cups and won the 2014 title with Germany.

Bayern bench

Klose will be on the Bayern bench when the Bundesliga restarts in nine days after having been suspended since mid-March due to the coronavirus, with Bayern travelling to Union Berlin on May 17.

The former Bayern striker says joining his old club is "the next step" in his coaching career after having worked with their Under-17 team for the last two seasons.

Klose signed a deal until June 2021 which reunites him

with Bayern head coach Hansi Flick, Germany's assistant coach at the 2014 World Cup.

"We trust each other both professionally and personally," Klose said of Flick.

Klose's record on the pitch speaks for itself with 71 goals in 137 internationals for Germany.

"With his experience as a former professional at the highest international level, 'Miro' is the perfect addition to our team of coaches," said Flick.

Klose also scored 53 goals in 150 appearances for Bayern, who he left for Lazio in 2011 before retiring after five years in Italy.

Successful German striker

"He is the most successful German striker in the last 15 to 20 years," said Bayern chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, who described Klose as the 'dream candidate'. "Our strikers in particular will benefit from him as their coach".—AFP