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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VII, No. 40, 5th Waxing of Nayon 1382 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Tuesday, 26 May 2020

We need to continuously look at not only the long term health, economic, and social needs of the country but also the political goals: State Counsellor

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi wrote on her Facebook page yesterday that in formulating COVID related plans, they were not looking only for a short term solution and that there was a need to continuously look at not only the long term health, economic, and social needs of the country but also the political goals.

The State Counsellor said, "More than 2000 citizens came back to Myanmar from the Thai border yesterday and the day before. We had already anticipated that they would return in large numbers like this. Therefore we had made plans accordingly. Initially, we estimated that they would return in early May. The return of the returnees was delayed because of certain COVID related restrictions imposed in Thailand."

She wrote that arrangements for welcoming the returnees; cooperating with the Ministry of Health and Sports for health issues; making

... unity was not an event that had meaning only for a day or for a moment. This was an investment for the future.

arrangements for them to be transported back to their respective regions and states; all these duties fell mostly on the Kayin State government; she was

very much encouraged when she saw that not only the state government but the people were also working with enthusiasm.

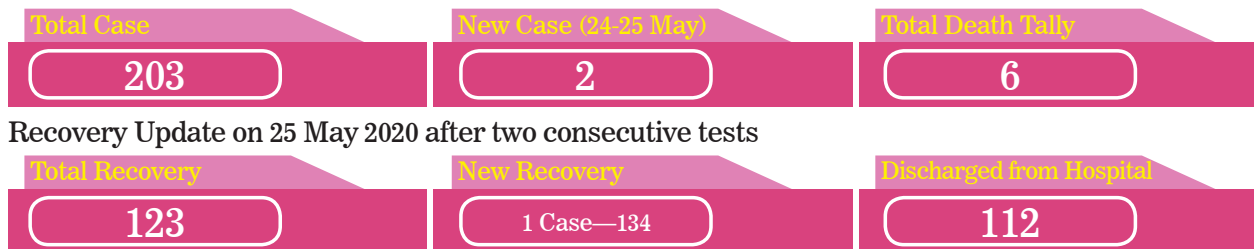
She added that in formulating COVID related plans, they were not looking only for a short term solution and that there was a need to continuously look at not only the long term health, economic, and social needs of the country but also the political goals.

In conclusion, she wrote that for union brothers and sisters to confront and overcome a particular challenge together in unity was not an event that had meaning only for a day or for a moment. This was an investment for the future. It was an investment for the dream of creating a peaceful and prosperous federal democratic union.

(Translated by Kyaw Myaing)

COVID-19 Situation in Myanmar

Updated at 8 pm, 25 May 2020



New Persons under Investigation from the past 24 hours to 12 noon of 25 May 2020

New PUI 32

New COVID-19 Cases Updated at 8 pm, 25 May 2020

Case No	Age	Gender	Address	Contact with positive patient	Overseas travel history	Hospital for medical treatment	Lab result	Remark
202	39	Male	Ahlon Township, Yangon	No	Yes, Italy	Waibargi Hospital	Positive	Held under quarantine in Hline Township
203	41	Female	Pyinmana Township, Nay Pyi Taw	No	Yes, India	Waibargi Hospital	Positive	Held under quarantine in North Dagon Township

Ministry of Health & Sports

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PYITHU HLUTTAW

Pyithu Hluttaw holds 4th-day meeting of 16th regular session

PYITHU Hluttaw convened its 4th-day meeting of the 16th regular session yesterday.

Speaker U T Khun Myat reported to the Hluttaw about extension of the Pyithu Hluttaw Judicial and Legal Affairs Committee from 19 May, 2020 to 31 January, 2021.

MP U Toe Win from Tamway constituency asked about security measures for customers and processes of state-owned banks and private banks.

Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar U Soe Min explained the scrutinizing process of CBM on the facts of business potentials, supports of the regional economy, security of banking infrastructures, safety of customers and functions.

The deputy governor detailed about installments of security equipment and their systems, rules and regulations of CBM and its review on the reports of respective banks.

MP Dr Kyi Moh Moh Lwin from Singaing constituency asked about the number and the processes of scrutinizing and supervising for the establishment of philanthropic organizations.

Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung explained close management of respective organiza-



Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi.



Deputy Minister U Soe Aung.



MP U Zone Teint.



MP Dr Khin Sithu. PHOTO: MNA

tions, regular inspection of local Social Affairs offices and detailed implementations in accordance with the rules of regulations of the ministry.

MP Dr Khin Sithu from Loikaw constituency asked about formation of a national committee to implement the International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Deputy Minister U Soe Aung replied that a focal ministry needs to be assigned together with the involvements of relevant organizations and organizations before forming the committee.

MP U Tin Nu (a) U Tin Nu Aung from Manaung constituency asked about constructions of cyclone shelters in lowland areas close to the sea in his constituency.

Deputy Minister U Soe Aung

replied that the shelters will be constructed for 11 residential areas of Manaung Township depending on conditions of routes and localities and in the prioritized order of the National Disaster Management Committee commencing the next financial year in coordination with the Rakhine State government.

MP U Sai Okka from Laikha constituency asked about reconstruction of Par Yin Bridge in his constituency.

Deputy Minister for Border Affairs Maj-Gen Than Htut replied that the ministry will allow construction of the bridge in nearest financial year, depending on the report of Shan State government on the size of project and the estimated cost.

MP U Khun Than Htoo from

Hsihseng constituency asked about completing domestic vocational training school in Saikhaung of Pa'O Self-Administered Zone in 2020-2021 FY.

Deputy Minister Maj-Gen Than Htut replied that project could not be completed in 2020-2021FY due to the cut of budget, and the ministry will try to finalize it in 2021-2022FY.

MP U Khin Maung Thi from Loilem constituency asked for upgrade of the 26,643-ft gravel road to a tarred road. Major Gen Than Htut answered the project has been included in the funds of Shan State government in 2020-2021FY.

MP U Zone Teint from Chipwe constituency asked about upgrade of the affiliated high school into the high school, MP U Sein

Bo from Myawady constituency asked about renovation of primary school, MP Dr Zaw Win Myint from Singu constituency asked about appointment of daily-wage staff to permanent employees under the Basic Education Department.

The questions were answered by Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi.

The Speaker also informed to the Hluttaw about receiving the fifth rules for amendments of by-laws on Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyotha Hluttaw and State/Region Hluttaws, put forward by the Amyotha Hluttaw without recommendation.

The 5th-day of Pyithu Hluttaw's 16th regular session will be held on 28 May.—Aye Aye Thant (Translated by Aung Khin)

AMYOTHA HLUTTAW

Amyotha Hluttaw approves committee member substitutions, raises queries to ministries

AMYOTHA Hluttaw held its 4th-day meeting yesterday, with substitution of members in respective committees and queries to the four ministries yesterday.

Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than announced the change of members in the International Relations, Parliamentary Friendships and Cooperation Committee, the Farmers' Affairs Committee, and the Committee on Immigration and Myanmar Internal and Migrant Workers.

MP Dr Sai Sai Kyauk Sam from Shan State constituency 6 asked about the release of unused lands confiscated for Kentung Township's bypass project.

Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung replied that the Myanmar Railways will hand over 99.579 acres of land to the Ministry of Construction,



Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung



Deputy Minister for Health and Sports Dr Mya Lay Sein



MP Daw Htu May



MP Dr Zaw Lin Htut. PHOTO: MNA

42.42 acre to the State and 5.406 acres to the land owner farmers.

MP U Maung Maung Ohn from the Ayeyawady Region constituency 5 asked about the return of land property to Myanmar Golf Federation.

Deputy Minister for Health and Sports Dr Mya Lay Sein replied the land property is still

under the management of the federation, and her ministry will continue conserving the property. MP Dr Zaw Lin Htut from Mon State constituency 9 asked about upgrade of diploma course to the master degree for the general practitioners to ensure effective public health cares.

Deputy Minister Dr

Mya Lay Sein explained that post-graduate courses for the family healthcare management will be conducted at University of Medicine 1 (Yangon) University of Medicine (Mandalay) and University of Medicine 2 (Yangon) under the Department of Human Resources for Health.

MP U Si Hu Dwe from Kachin State consti-

ty 2 asked about upgrade of Ayemyathaya-Kabudam road into a tarred road in Myitkyina Township.

Deputy Minister for Construction Dr Kyaw Lin replied that the project will be implemented by Union fund of 2020-2021FY if the budget is allocated for it.

SEE PAGE-4

“People are the key”

National Volunteer Steering Unit discusses support for volunteers in quarantine centres



National Volunteer Steering Unit holds the secretariat coordination meeting on providing necessary assistance to volunteer working in quarantine centres on 25 May. PHOTO: MNA

THE National Volunteer Steering Unit held their secretariat coordination meeting concerning supplying necessary support to volunteers working in quarantine centres across the nation yesterday.

At the meeting held at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye said as volunteers help out in quarantine centres across Myanmar, the ministry is organizing capacity-building training and distributing volunteer manuals.

He said they are arranging for volunteer medals and certificates of honour and have

formed township volunteer support units to assist volunteers.

He said the volunteers need to have access to temporary accommodation, food and travel and the national unit needs to know the actual situation in the field to offer effective support.

Next, attendees discussed ongoing and future processes and field checks to be conducted. The meeting was attended by the Deputy Minister, directors-general, and secretariat members of the National Volunteer Steering Unit. —MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Electricity and Energy Public notification

4th Waxing of Nayon, 1382 ME
25th May 2020

- The National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) deems it necessary to continue containing the spread of COVID-19 and made an announcement on 13 May 2020 that all directives, notifications, requests to the public, and orders issued by Union-level institutions and ministries regarding the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 until 15-5-2020 (not including those that have been ordered to be eased) had been extended to 31 May 2020.
- An announcement was made on 6 May 2020 for the first exemption of 75 units from the electricity bill between the dates of 1 May to 15 May, as part of measures to contain the spread of COVID-19.
- Another exemption of 75 units will be deducted from the electricity bill between the dates of 16-5-2020 to 31-5-2020 as part of measures to prevent, control and treat COVID-19.
- Thus, a total of 150 units from domestic consumption between the dates of 1 May 2020 to 31 May 2020 for residential homes, religious buildings, and domestic humanitarian groups (excluding embassies, UN agencies and international organizations) will be deducted from the electricity bill for those dates.
- The following table illustrates the deduction to the electricity bill that will be implemented:

No.	Types of consumers	Electricity rate	
		Units	Kyat/unit
(a)	Domestic consumption	1-30	35
	• Residential houses	31-50	50
	• Household power	51-75	70
	• Lump sum (Household)	76-100	90
	• Non-business religious buildings	101-150	110
		151-200	120
		201 and above	125

(b)	Non-domestic consumption	Units	Kyat/unit
	• Industrial	1-500	125
	• Companies	501-5,000	135
	• Lump sum	5,001-10,000	145
	• Temporary	10,001-20,000	155
	• Street lights	20,001-50,000	165
	• Government departments	50,001-100,000	175
	• State-owned industries	100,001 and above	180
	• State-owned businesses		
	• Elevation of river water		
	• Municipal departments/ processes		
• Non-governmental organization			
• Foreign embassies			
• International organizations			

- The electric unit deduction applies to the domestic consumption consumers outlined in the (a) category of the table above and the domestic civil society organizations under non-governmental organizations mentioned in (b) category of the table above.
- The exemption only applies to electric consumption between the dates of 1 May 2020 to 31 May 2020. The consumption of 1 to 150 units will have the electricity rates and electric service fee exempted. Consumption of 151 units and above will have the cost for 150 units (K11,550) deducted from the electricity bill.
- Domestic consumption of 151 units and above will have to be paid at the designated rates as normal. With the exception of domestic civil society organizations under non-governmental organizations in the non-domestic consumption category, all other consumers in that category will have to pay the electricity rate at the normal designated price.
- The Ministry of Electricity and Energy’s metre clerks will read the electric metre at the designated monthly date and distribute the electricity bills on the usual dates. The exempted amount will be automatically deducted and the consumer has to keep the electricity bill document.

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Govt provides COVID-19 medical supplies to ethnic armed organizations

THE Peace Commission and the Committee for Coordination with Ethnic Armed Organizations in measures against COVID-19 of the government presented medical supplies to the ethnic armed organizations.

The ceremony to hand over the supplies was held at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre in Yangon yesterday.

Dr Tin Myo Win, the chairman of committee, said in his opening remark, that the first case of COVID-19 was found in Myanmar on 23 March, 2020, and he said his appreciation on the efforts of EAOs in measures against the disease in their respective areas.

The President formed the committee on 27 April, 2020 with order number 63/2020, comprising with the four members of Peace Commission for the seven working areas in accordance with the police of 'no one left behind'.

The committee contacted both the signatories in NCA and non-signatories as these groups are based in the border areas which are the gateways of overseas returnees.

The committee and the



Peace Commission Chairman Dr Tin Myo Win delivers the speech at ceremony to hand over the medical supplies to the ethnic armed organizations on 25 May. **PHOTO: PHOE HTAUNG**

Peace Commission held a video conference online with the Peace Process Working Team (PPWT) that represented the 10-EAOs on 8 May, and reached the five agreements on COVID-19 control measures. It was also informed to the non-signatories of NCA.

Based on these agreements, the committee held online discussions for COVID-19 operations with KNU on 11 May, NMSP on 12 May, PNLO on 14 May, CNF

on 15 May, ALP on 20 May and KNPP on 22 May respectively. More meetings will also be held with the remaining armed groups. The meetings agreed to share technology and relief supplies on COVID-19.

The committee used peace funds of the commission in purchasing 9 items of supply, including surgical masks, hand sanitizers, disinfectants and PPE sets.

The Health Department of Yangon Region also provided 13

items for the quarantine centres.

The committee will distribute 20 hand speakers with ethnic language audio files, donated by a private donor.

Discussions are underway to receive international donations for the COVID-19 measures.

Dr Tin Myo Win added not to see the COVID-19 as a 'threat', but to regard it as an 'opportunity' to proceed peace process.

After the handover of sup-

plies, Vice-Chairman of Committee retired Lt-Gen Khin Zaw Oo said, "We provided COVID-19 control items to the 10 signatories and 2 non-signatories of EAOs. This coordination could help in peace process. After we received more donations from international organizations, we will present more supplies. The Tatmadaw has also shared such supplies to the Wa, Mongla and KIA groups."

Vice Chairman (2) of SSPP Sao Khun Sai said, "We conducted educative campaigns to the returnees from Thailand and China although our members did not go abroad. We took body temperature of returnees and held them under quarantine in the farms or agricultural lands for 14 days before they were allowed to enter their villages. Neither positive cases nor deaths from this disease have been found. We want to continue the cooperation in post COVID-19 period. Trust can be built by cooperation. We will need more time for peace. Patience is needed to heal the impacts of over 70-years conflict."—Ye Khaung Nyunt

(Translated by Aung Khin)

COVID-19 cases reach 203 in Myanmar

TWO more positive cases of COVID-19 were found in Myanmar on 25 May, and the national tally has reached 203, according to the report of the Ministry of Health and Sports.

These two persons are

the returnees from the Italy and India.

They live in Ahlon Township, Yangon Region and Pyinmana Township, Nay Pyi Taw, and now they are held under the quarantine in Hline

township and Dagon Myothit (North).

Out of 203 positive cases in Myanmar, six died, 123 persons have recovered and 112 persons have been discharged from the hospital.—MNA

Amyotha Hluttaw approves committee member substitutions, raises queries to ministries

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MP U Myo Htap (a) Salai Myo Htike from Chin State constituency 12 asked about reconstruction of a new bridge that linked two villages in Paletwa Township of his constituency. Deputy Minister Dr Kyaw Lin replied that the bridge is under renovation and it could be substituted with the new one depending on availability of budget after 2020-2021FY. MP Daw Htu May from Rakhine State constituency 11 asked about upgrade of Thandwe (Ngapali-Mazin) airport to a custom aerodrome that can

land international flights, and it was replied by Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung.

MP U Larl Min Htan from Chin State constituency 10 asked about upgrade of the 50-bedded people's hospital to the 100-bedded facility in Matupi Township of his constituency in 2020-2021FY, and it was answered by the Deputy Minister for Health and Sports Dr Mya Lay Sein.

MP U Aung Thein from Bago Region constituency asked about auction sale of state-owned land under the management of Department of Urban and Housing Develop-

ment, and Deputy Minister Dr Kyaw Lin replied it.

MP U Soe Thein (a) U Maung Soe from Taninthayi Region constituency 10 discussed the bill for Microfinance Law.

Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry U Maung Maung Win tabled the bill on the government's procurement and selling of property, and Amyotha Hluttaw Bill Committee member Brig-Gen Tint Lwin read out the report of their committee on his bill.

The 5th day meeting of Amyotha Hluttaw will convene on 28 May.—Aung Ye Thwin
(Translated by Aung Khin)

SWRR ministry continues humanitarian support to IDP camps

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is cooperating with relevant government departments and organizations to provide humanitarian support regarding COVID-19 to IDP camps and conflict relief camps.

The ministry handed over a hand speaker, a memory stick containing COVID-19 information, a body thermometer, 3 wash basins, 10 bags of lime powder, 783 bars of soap, 354 bottles of hand sanitizers, and 1,566 face masks to the baptist IDP camp

in Mansi Township, Kachin State, yesterday.

Similarly, the ministry handed over 2,727 bars of soap, 5454 surgical masks, 210 bags of lime powder, and 21 wash basins to 11 conflict relief camps in Kyauktaw Township, Rakhine State.

The ministry will continue to supply humanitarian support and provide information and motivational support regarding COVID-19 throughout the nation.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



An official (right) provides the relief item to a local woman on 25 May. **PHOTO: MNA**

Govt COVID-19 coord committee holds second meeting with KNU

THE national coordination committee for negotiating COVID-19 measures with ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) held an online video conference with the Karen National Union (KNU) yesterday.

Firstly, National Committee Chairman Dr Tin Myo Win and KNU Vice-Chairman Pado Saw Kwe Htoo Win delivered separate opening speeches.

The meeting then commenced with discussions on screening points for COVID-19 and acquiring international aid.

U Hla Maung Shwe, advisory board member of the Peace Commission, said this is the second online meeting with the KNU and they talked about the misunderstandings that tran-

spired on both sides concerning the screening points.

He said the KNU said they will not wear uniforms or have firearms at the screening points and their medical staff and police-like force will wear shirts with "COVID-19" on them. He said the committee coordinated with them on that matter.

U Hla Maung Shwe said they discussed three options to acquire international support in the previous meeting and built trust from related facts. He said there will be additional coordination meetings for COVID-19 in the future if necessary. He said a lot of Myanmar migrant workers, especially from Thailand, will be returning at the end of this month and they will



COVID-19 coordination committee holds the video-meeting with ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) to negotiate COVID-19 measures yesterday. PHOTO: POE HTAUNG

continue discussing with EAOs at the border concerning this.

Present at this meeting on the government's side were National Committee Chairman

Dr Tin Myo Win and committee members, invited guests, and on the KNU's side were Vice-Chairman Pado Saw Kwe Htoo Win, Secretary-General

Pado Saw Tar Do Mu and other representatives.—Ye Khaung Nyunt

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Public donations made to COVID-19 central committee

AS the Union Government carries out response measures to the global Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic at the national-level, members of the public, private companies and organizations have made contributions and donations to the cause.

The following list details donations made to the National-Level Central Committee for Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19 as of 4:30 pm on 25-5-2020:

No.	Name of donor	Kyats (in lakhs)
1.	Light House Enterprise Ltd	500.00
2.	Telecom International Co Ltd	224.00
3.	Public contribution from social networks	208.00
4.	One-day wage from staff of Myanma Agricultural Development Bank (Headquarters and state/regional, district, and township branches)	184.75
5.	Dr Myat Maw Tun, Vice-Chairman of Myanmar Club (Singapore) (Myanmar families in Singapore)	132.00
6.	U Tin Aung Win + Daw Kyi Kyi Myint (Shwe Mahar Bodh Gaya)	110.00
7.	Red Horse Dairy Industries Ltd (PEP milk powder)	100.00
8.	1963 batch of doctors of University of Medicine (1) Yangon (domestic and abroad)	100.00
9.	India apprentice for Myanmar Buddhist monks development group	100.00
10.	Myanmar Royal Descendants Association	100.00
11.	U Zhan Pyin Cheng + Daw Than Kyi and family (Shwe Li Hlaing BBQ)	100.00
12.	Teachers of various universities (2012) and other donors	81.70
13.	12/2003 alumni of University of Medicine (1) Yangon	65.00
14.	Sandar Yadanar Diamond Jewellery Store, Bogyoke Market	50.00
15.	Awthaka Charity Clinic, in honor of Ovadaciriya Sayadaw Badanta Wilatha (Ganthavacakapandita)	50.00
16.	Myanmar Embassy family of the Republic of Korea and Myanmar citizens in South Korea	42.00
17.	Pure White Group	27.78
18.	RIT 1986 Mechanical Engineer	27.00
19.	Alumni of Geology 1979 batch RASU	26.00
20.	Vithey Microfinance Myanmar	20.00
21.	Lotus Foundation's 11 th anniversary commemoration	20.00
22.	Alumni of 2012 (Senior) forestry science	15.50

23.	Daw Tin Mu Aung Kyaw (Canada)	15.00
24.	Funeral service (1/domestic/0342, Kyauktan), in honor of Ovadaciriya Sayadaw Badanta Wilatha (Ganthavacakapandita)	15.00
25.	Alumni of Advanced Government Official Management Course Batch (7/2016), Central Institute of Civil Service (Lower Myanmar)	11.00
26.	MC Easy Micro Finance	10.00
27.	Ba Thin + Aye Mya Foundation	10.00
28.	RIT Batch 84 (Mech) Singapore	10.00
29.	Life Plus Health & Beauty	10.00
30.	Myanmar families in Australia	9.25
31.	Staff of agriculture department	7.00
32.	Alumni of English Proficiency Course Batch (1/2018), Group (1)-Class(2), Union Civil Service Board	5.50
33.	Staff of Department of Rural Development, Management Course Batch 73	5.20
34.	U Kyaw Soe Htet + Daw Nilar Oo	5.00
35.	57 th birthday donation of Dr Thida San, Deputy Director-General, Union Attorney-General Office, Nay Pyi Taw	3.00
36.	61 st birthday donation of U Thein Zaw	3.00
37.	Daw Khin Lay Nyo and apprentices, minister's office, Ministry of Health and Sports	1.30
38.	Myawaddy Bank Ltd, Pyinmana branch families	1.20
39.	U Nay Lin + Daw Thi Thi Mar, sons Wira Bhone Khant, Waso Bhome Khant	1.00
40.	Department of Labour Relations families	0.63
Total		2,406.81

The remaining items of donation will be published soon.

National-Level Central Committee for Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Trade Mark Ads Call Thin Thin May, 09251022355

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.comPrinted 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.gnlmdaily@gmail.com
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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.

Shwegyin land officials charged with corruption

THE Anti-Corruption Commission received a report that local farmers had to pay an unregulated fee of K10,000 per acre when applying for a form-7 for their farmlands in Kawthazin Village, Padekaw Village-tract in Shwegyin Township, Bago Region.

The ACC investigated into the matter and discovered that the Shwegyin Township head of the Department of Agricultural Land Management and Statistics, U Ye Htut Aung (who is now the head of the Namhsan Township department

in southern Shan State), his deputy U Nwe Min Than, and Surveyor (4) U Than Zaw Min exploited a total of K9,200,000 from local residents.

The locals were asked to pay k10,000 for each acre of the 987.71-acre in field (4) of

Kawthazin Village.

The ACC has filed charges against the three suspects under Article 56 of The Anti-Corruption Law at Shwegyin police station on 22 May.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Grab Myanmar donates rice bags to 1,000 YBS drivers

GRAB MYANMAR has distributed rice bags to 1,000 YBS drivers, at high risk of coronavirus pandemic, on 21 and 22 May, Grab Myanmar stated.

Grab Myanmar made data of the number of buses running in the city amid pan worries at the respective YBS gates for Bus No 22, 23, 40, 57, 58, 59, 12, 13, 14, 25, 30, 38, 55, 24 and 28.

Grab Myanmar aimed to encourage the drivers of the city's buses running amid worries, said Cindy Toh, country manager for Grab Myanmar.

The YBS drivers have to follow the mandatory health guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports.

Grab Myanmar has also distributed rice, mask and other necessary supplies to those partners in Grab's platform, with a contribution of US\$40,000.

Grab, the leading ride-hailing platform in Myanmar and in Southeast Asia entered Myanmar in March 2017. —GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Grab Myanmar has distributed rice bags to 1,000 YBS drivers, during coronavirus pandemic. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

20,000 litres of neutral alcohol received for COVID-19 measures

A multinational company Diageo delivered 20,000 litres of neutral alcohol to support Myanmar in the fight against COVID-19 on May 22.

The government of Myanmar, like the rest of the world, is racing against time to stop the spread of COVID-19. Recent public health measures implemented by the Myanmar government and its National Committee for COVID-19 Prevention, Control, and Treatment are commendable and have prepared the country for its fight against COVID-19.

The donation of 20,000 litres of neutral spirit will be used in producing sanitizers and disinfecting agents.

The Diageo has announced



20,000 litres of neutral alcohol donated by Diageo is delivered to a factory in Yangon to support COVID-19 hygiene and sanitation efforts. **PHOTO: DIAGEO**

on 23 March 2020 to make donation of Grain Neutral Spirit to the UK, Ireland, Italy, the USA, Brazil, Kenya, India and Austral-

ia, to enable the creation of hand sanitisers for front-line medical workers in countries where Diageo has major distilling

operations.

The United Kingdom Department for International Trade Country Manager in Myanmar, Mr Warren Pain, said: "I am pleased that a responsible company such as Diageo is making this significant gesture in these challenging times."

Diageo Corporate Relations Director Jonathan Sanchez said: "Alcohol sanitizers and disinfecting agents have been identified as a key tool in the fight against COVID-19. During these challenging times we want to contribute to the government's efforts to help the people of Myanmar, a valuable member of the Southeast Asia community." —GNLM

Notification on overcoming anxiety during COVID-19

Anxiety is a natural process and emotion of life and can be acknowledged and resolved. Anxiety can become mental fatigue if it is left unchecked and become severe.

Anxiety symptoms include insomnia, excessive enthusiasm, fatigue, eating disorders, indigestion, headaches, joint pains, anger, fear, worry, sadness, guilt, memory issues, pessimism, hopelessness, loneliness, blaming others, and reduced productivity.

If these feelings are not resolved in a proper manner they can become mental fatigue and can lead to an inability to resolve challenges. This can lead to socioeconomic challenges and should seek motivational support before this stage is reached.

Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement & Myanmar Medical Association (Mental Health Unit)

Myanmar exports 1.8 mln tonnes of rice as of 8 May

THE volume of rice and broken rice exported between 1 October and 8 May in the current financial year was estimated at over 1.8 million metric tons, worth US\$527.86 million, according to an announcement from the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

Myanmar's maritime trade constituted 85.3 per cent of rice exports and generated an estimated income of \$456.27 million as of 15 November in the current financial year, as per data from the Commerce Ministry.

Earlier, border trade was relatively high compared to sea trade in terms of rice exports. Since the previous financial year, border trade has dropped, and currently, it accounts for just 14.4 per cent of the total rice exports. Rice exports through the border gates have generated an estimated \$71.59 million in the current financial year.

In the current financial year, Myanmar has shipped rice to 62 foreign markets. China is the main buyer of Myanmar



Export rice is seen loading onto a vessel at Yangon Port. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

rice. The country's broken rice has been sent to 53 foreign countries, mostly to Senegal.

Myanmar primarily exports rice to China through the borders. However, the trade in the agricultural products has been halted on account of China clamping down on illegal trade.

Ministry of Commerce

and Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) have planned to export 100,000 tonnes of rice through sea trade and 50,000 tonnes through border trade in May.

The Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar Inspection and Testing Service (MITS), the authorized organization of the State and MRF implemented rice

reserve scheme on 30 April. The state has purchased about 13,000 tonnes of rice so far, in line with the set rules and regulations, said Deputy Minister U Aung Htoo of the Ministry of Commerce.

The exporters must sell 10 per cent of total export volume (25 % broken, well-milled and sorted rice), stated in the export declaration as country's reserved rice.

The reserved rice must be sent to the state's warehouse. MITS, the authorized organization of the State, will inspect and verify the quality and quantity.

The Yangon Region government is receiving the reserved rice proportioned by sea trade, while some portion of the border export is being stored at the Consumer Affairs Department in Mandalay Region. The country has the rice reserve scheme for emergency case beyond self-sufficiency in the domestic market. Myanmar's rice export has returned to normal in May

and it intends to ship over 2 million tonnes of rice in the current financial year, according to the MRF.

It is the harvest time of summer paddy and the federation is making efforts for the growers to get a decent price. Additionally, MRF, its subsidiary organizations and the rice traders are coordinating to have a much fairer price of rice for the consumers during the coronavirus pandemic.

Local market constitutes over 70 per cent of production, whereas some portion of the remaining is sent to the foreign market and some of them are left for rice reserve.

Myanmar has shipped 3.6 million tonnes of rice in the 2017-2018 financial year, which was an all-time record in rice exports. The export volume plunged to 2.29 million metric tons, worth \$691 million, in the 2018-2019FY.

—GNLM
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Mung bean, pigeon peas prices slide in domestic market

By Nyein Nyein

THE prices of mung beans and pigeon peas are slightly declining in the domestic market, said Secretary U Min Ko Oo of Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association.

During the post-Thingyan period in April, mung bean was priced K995,000 to K1 million per tonne. It has now dropped to K960,000-965,000 per tonne.

Similarly, pigeon peas price has now plunged from K800,000 to K770,000 per tonne compared

with the prices in April.

The price is reflected by the changes in import policy by India, U Min Ko Oo continued.

India earlier set to import 400,000 tonnes of mung beans for 2021 financial year by March-end and made a further three-month extension on 22 May.

"The world countries lay down policy depending on the perception of national interests. India normally harvests the beans in September. To protect the rights of its farmers, India allowed importing the beans by

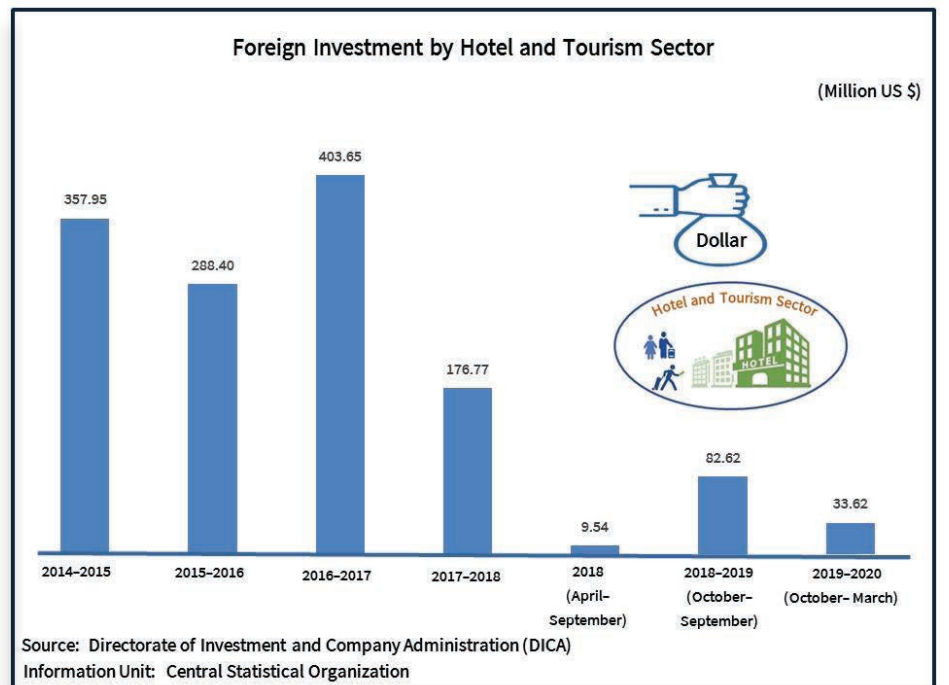
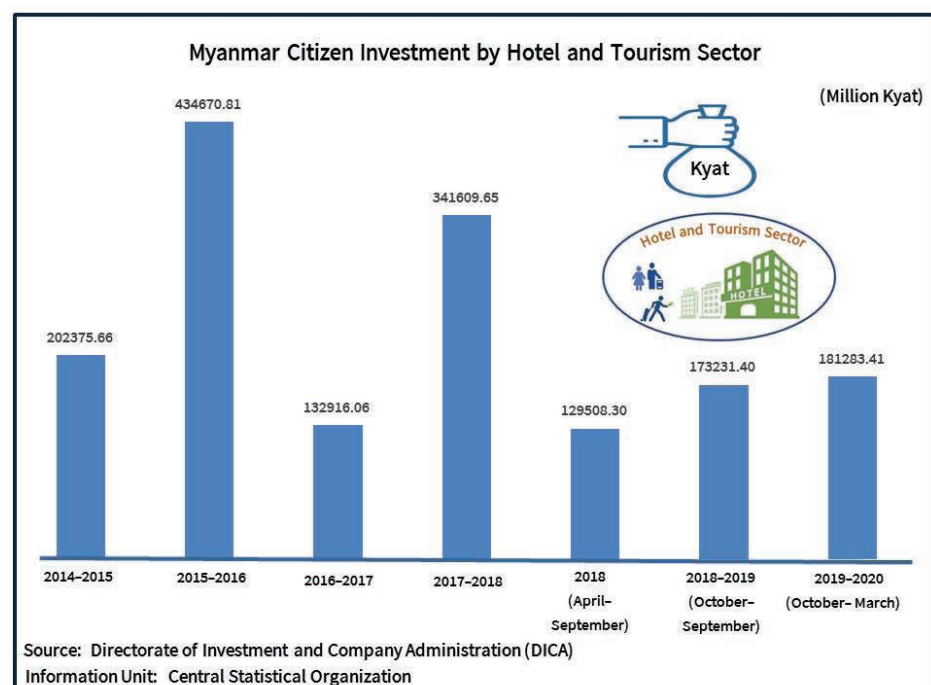
August-end. If India experiences a low-yield, they will surely make a further extension to import the beans. If they get high yield, the period for import quota will end by schedule," he said.

Myanmar is the main supplier of mung beans to India. Concerning other types of beans, Myanmar has to compete against Australian and African markets, according to Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Photo shows mung bean at a warehouse in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR



Supporting agricultural sector amidst COVID-19 to ensure increased production

WITH the pre-monsoon showers beginning, farmers across the country started to prepare their farmlands for growing crops, especially rice.

It is worth noting that the Agricultural Mechanization Department has offered ploughing with tractors at a reasonable price and helping farmers in their land preparation activities. The action is indeed a very satisfactory news for agriculture which is a major sector for our economy, and is crucial to reduce our food insecurity.

Mechanization is not a new concept. But, the question is why our farmers get worries for adequate preparation in some areas every year.

Not every farmer owns a tractor or power tiller. They have to hire the agricultural machine from private owners to prepare for their land. To get the agricultural machinery in a timely manner is not an easy job for farmers in areas which are far from towns.

The Agricultural Mechanization Department has opened frontline camps and provides ploughing services at reasonable prices, along with mechanic services for agricultural machinery owned by farmers.

Farming is a clear priority of the government as it aims to increase production, promote food security and boost exports, while raising the standard of living for households dependent on farming.

Limited land consolidation, lack of access to tilling tractors on both hilly and flat land, few investors in cooperatives are still hampering the progress in embracing agricultural mechanization.

We did not face shortage of food amidst COVID-19 thanks to our hardworking farmers though the emergence of the novel coronavirus has hurt the agricultural

sector from production through consumption. The supply chain would be at risk if the crisis persists.

We need to increase government support to protect front-line farmers by helping land preparation for cultivation and financing under the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP). This will ensure production does not decline during COVID-19.

While providing financial assistance, we need to closely monitor the impacts from both this pandemic and mechanization on the agricultural labour community, about their next or future employment.

Local authorities should be prepared to authorize additional support when necessary. We must think long term. The food security of the nation depends on our ability to think in the long term and make adequate preparations accordingly.

COVID-19 pandemic and loss of means of livelihood for workers

By Lokethar

THE International Labour Organization recently announced that over 1.6 billion persons are likely to lose their means of livelihood because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Such persons would include workers from the industries, small and medium enterprises and the self-employed.

The concern is that the COVID-19, in many cases may, manifest itself in humans without even showing symptoms of the disease. Not observing Social Distancing, even when not showing symptoms of the disease, may be conducive to the spreading of the disease. In the Industrial scene, factories employing large number

of workers where many workers work in close proximity to one another, may be prone to "person to person" transmission of the disease. "Overcrowding" in a workplace would certainly increase the possibility of the transmission of the virus. Regarding work in factories, the Factories Act of 1951 which is in force, has stipulations in Section 11, regarding avoidance of "Overcrowding".

The big labour intensive factories will have to "thin down" their work force to avoid overcrowding so as to facilitate "Social Distancing" in an effort to control spreading of the coronavirus. Thus they may "shed" many workers resulting in the workers

losing their means of livelihood.

Work places of micro, small and medium enterprises would probably fare better in terms of avoiding the spread of the coronavirus as the number of employees would be small, and hence Social Distancing would be more feasible. However this could only be possible if the "Micro" and "Small Industries" don't cramp their workers into small work rooms.

The "Self-employed" who would lose their means of livelihood would include mostly service workers who support the Industrial and Business Establishments as well as the Self-employed workers particularly

in the Tourism Industry. As for the Self-employed Professionals, the general affordability and demand for their services would be a factor affecting their means of livelihood.

"Workers" in the Agriculture, Fishery and Livestock Breeding Sector, would be less prone to transmitting the Covid-19 Virus. The "Workplace" in these Sectors are mostly "Wide Open Spaces" and Social Distancing will be less problematic and hence there will be less likelihood of spreading the coronavirus. For Myanmar which is primarily an agricultural country, it is perhaps better at this juncture to further promote and expand the Agri-

culture Sector. The workers now being "shed" from the Industrial Sector would probably return to their "villages" and be absorbed, to an extent, in Agriculture and it's allied occupations.

Industries around the World, particularly in mass manufacturing, would scale down their production resulting in reduction of consumer goods including food products. This situation would increase demand for agricultural "food items" including cereals, pulses and beans, fruits and vegetables, fish and shrimp, poultry and meat and so on. Such a situation could be "favourable" to Myanmar as its economy is still largely Agro-based and it could

be a "food supplier" in the region. In fact, recently the newspapers carried a news item which said that an Asian country had asked Myanmar to supply around ten items of "basic foods" of agriculture origin.

Hence Myanmar as of now, perhaps should encourage more investment in the Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock Breeding Sectors to meet its food needs as well as export, in the future, food items to other countries. Also the workers in these sectors would be less likely to lose their means of livelihood because of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

With Charity to all and Malice to none.

Hospitals in evolving health challenges

By Dr. Phone Myint (Health Planning)

ADDRESSING key health challenges such as changes in disease burden and population dynamics, in governance and funding mechanisms, and in technology and clinical management practice required a high performing health system. While primary care providers hold the responsibility for the health of a defined population and act as the primary entry point to the health system hospitals form part of health care networks to fill the availability gap of complementary referral care. Significant investment has been made by many countries in strengthening the primary care level including the development of home-based care programmes and yet hospitals remain essential for the delivery of complex acute specialized care. Hospitals form an important part of health spending and play an important role in shaping public perception of the performance of countries' health systems, and, thus, their political visibility.

The long-term nature of many chronic diseases, and in particular multiple conditions, calls for a comprehensive health system response that brings together a trained workforce with appropriate skills, affordable technologies, reliable supply of medicines, referral systems, and active engagement of people with chronic health problems to manage their own care, all acting over a sustained period of time. It is important to note that to effectively address the multiple challenges arising from a change in the disease burden along with resource constraints requires short-term action as it relates to resource use and long-term, transformative change to reform the delivery system. Achieving the long-term, transformative change requires an overall vision,

Providing care at different levels in the context of challenges

Due attention must be given to all levels of care as well as the integration and coordination of functions and care mechanisms to meet the challenges. Pressure for change emerges from changing

demographics and the burden of disease, supply issues linked to technology and workforce against financial pressures, increasing expectations of service quality and safety. These pressures need to be balanced against enabling people to live longer and healthier lives and participate in society, ensuring fair and equitable access to treatment and technologies, involvement in health care decision-making, being treated with respect and dignity, and enjoying the benefits of effective and efficient services.

The long-term nature of many chronic diseases, and in particular multiple conditions, calls for a comprehensive health system response that brings together a trained workforce with appropriate skills, affordable technologies, reliable supply of medicines, referral systems, and active engagement of people with chronic health problems to manage their own care, all acting over a sustained period of time. It is important to note that to effectively address the multiple challenges arising from a change in the disease burden along with resource constraints requires short-term action as it relates to resource use and long-term, transformative change to reform the delivery system. Achieving the long-term, transformative change requires an overall vision,

or systems perspective on population health management along the continuum of care, balancing public health and health service interventions.

Health workforce

Human resources represent a substantial proportion of expenditure in the health sector. There is a need to invest in people and the environment to enable them to do their job. Consideration needs to be made as to where should the health workforce work, what are the right numbers, what are right skills and skill mixes, how can improvement be made in the validity of workforce data and how can health workers be successfully retained. The question on skill mix concerns but not limited to the professions, patients and their care givers in relation to preventive, diagnostic, therapeutic, psychological, psycho-social, administrative, communicative, and managerial skills.

Data for health workforce planning, and horizon scanning (forecasting future health workforce needs) are necessary so that quantity of health care workers is complemented by a simultaneous focus on quality. Thus, there is a need to rethink the type of professional needed for the future whose skills would be more suited

to meeting the needs for this with multiple chronic health problems.

Quality of services

With rising customers' expectations, patient care becoming more complex, and because of continuing shrinkage of resources, hospitals are finding that traditional approaches to defining, organizing, and staffing quality assurance functions are no longer adequate. It is becoming more convinced that improving quality requires a broad, whole-hospital consensus about what quality means, who is responsible for it, and how key actors should communicate with one another about quality issues. A common philosophy of quality management is that it aims to help organizations of all kinds improve performance through eliminating poor quality during production or delivery of the product or service rather than through trying to fix the results after the product has been made or the service given. In brief, it amounts to a call for top management commitment to constant organizational self evaluation and innovation. Central to the approach are such techniques as setting specifications for a process, monitoring performance against specifications, determining the causes of inappropriate variation, eliminating

that variation, and starting over at a higher level of expectation. Emphasis is placed on the role of top management in developing specifications and achieving continuous improvement against them. Management is responsible if quality is not good or employees are not productive—not "poor job performance" or "poor morale". Management needs to establish a total organizational climate that builds a team approach and breaks down barriers to quality and productivity improvement.

Quality has two main components—content and delivery. Content quality is concerned with the medical outcome that is achieved. Although patients and payers are playing an increasingly active role in evaluating medical content quality, it has traditionally been the domain of physicians and other health care professionals. Delivery quality reflects an individual customer's interaction with the health care system. For a patient his/her concern will center around cleanliness of the hospital attitude-caring and informative-of the nurses, timely delivery of services, and understanding of the patient's individual needs and preferences.

Myanmar health system is still to be well equipped for providing this comprehensive response, transforming from a tradition of

an acute, episodic model of care. Experiences from various countries and regions of the world can be used to initiate a review of the place, role and function of hospitals within changing health systems, in the challenging process to remodel the hospitals appropriately and to build capacity to support health care delivery reform. The country needs to review the current situation in relation to hospital and health system reforms including the patient choice perspective and identify priority areas for future work. This is to be undertaken in the backdrop of key challenges the country health system is facing like:

- Ageing and the rising burden of (multiple) chronic conditions
- Unequal distribution of health across the country
- Financial burden raising concerns of affordability and sustainability
- Access to technological advances and medicines

Reference: <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/Health-systems/public-health-services/publications/2012/modern-health-care-delivery-systems-care-coordination-and-the-role-of-hospitals> accessed 5 March 2017

President's Office continues announcement of illegal drug arrests, seizures action on tip-offs

THE Office of the President has issued Press Release No 20/2020 yesterday, publicly announcing the Ministry of Home Affairs' arrests and seizures in the fight against illicit drug trafficking up till 23 May.

The ministry made the arrests, acting on information, sent to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department of the Office of the President as of 23 May.

The full text of the press release will be reported in the 27 May issue of The Global New Light of Myanmar: — GNLM



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 25th May, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is weak to moderate over the Andaman Sea and Southeast Bay and weather is a few cloud to partly cloudy elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 26th May, 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region and Kachin state, scattered in Upper Sagaing Region, Mon State and isolated in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, (Northern and Eastern) Shan and Kayin States. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in the Deltaic areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26th May, 2020: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26th May, 2020: Partly cloudy.

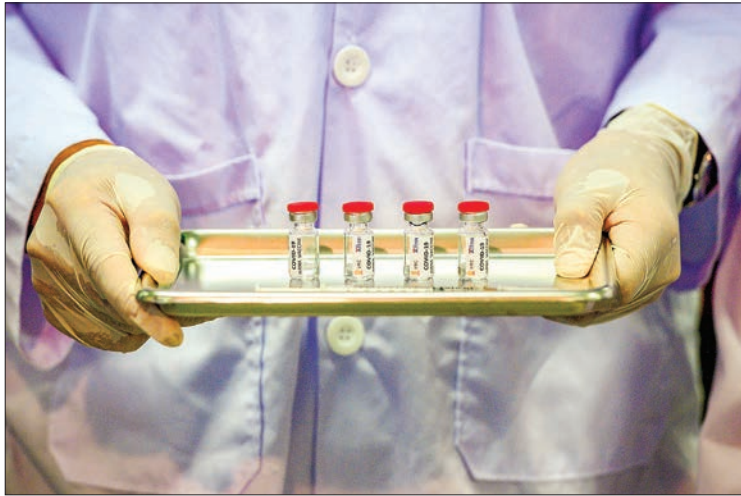
FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26th May, 2020: Partly cloudy.

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Asia virus latest: Japan lifts emergency, India domestic flights resume



This picture taken on 23 May 2020 shows a laboratory technician holding a tray with doses of a COVID-19 novel coronavirus vaccine candidate ready for trial on monkeys at the National Primate Research Centre of Thailand at Chulalongkorn University in Saraburi. **PHOTO: AFP**

PARIS (France) — Here are the latest developments in Asia related to the coronavirus pandemic:

Japan lifts virus emergency

Japan lifted a nationwide state of emergency over the coronavirus, gradually reopening the

world's third-largest economy as government officials warned caution was still necessary to prevent another wave.

"We had very stringent criteria for lifting the state of emergency. We have judged that we have met this," Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told a nationally tel-

evised news conference.

Jitters as Indian domestic flights resume

Domestic flights resumed in India even as coronavirus cases surge, while confusion about quarantine rules prompted jitters among passengers and the cancellation of dozens of planes.

India halted almost all commercial air travel in late March as it sought to stop the spread of the coronavirus with the world's largest lockdown.

But desperate to get the economy moving again, the government announced last week that around 1,050 daily flights -- a third of usual capacity -- would restart on Monday.

Thailand enters global race for vaccine

Thailand is conducting tests on macaque monkeys as it races to produce a cheaper, alternative coronavirus vaccine it hopes will

be ready by 2021, a top researcher has said.

More than 100 candidate vaccines are currently in various stages of development around the world, at least eight of which are in clinical trials with humans, according to the World Health Organization.

Fiji Airways halves workforce

Pandemic-hit Fiji Airways fired more than half its workforce as travel restrictions put the islands' vital tourism sector in deep freeze and reduced the national carrier's revenue to "virtually zero".

Chief executive Andre Viljoen said that after "exhausting all other options" the airline had decided to let 758 staff go — some 51 per cent of the workforce — while those remaining would face a permanent pay cut of 20 per cent.

Japan premium fruit prices plunge

A pair of premium Japanese melons sold for just a slice of the five million yen (\$46,000) reached at auction last year, as the coronavirus bites hard, keeping away rich corporate clients.

The melons from Yubari, on the northern island of Hokkaido, sold for a snip at 120,000 yen at the season's first auction -- 40 times less than last year's record price tag.

Pro tennis bounces back with NZ tournament

New Zealand Tennis said it was set to host the southern hemisphere's first professional tournament since the COVID-19 shutdown.

The men's Premier League tournament in Auckland next month will feature 24 players competing in three teams at spectator-free arenas over three weeks. —AFP

Top Egypt medical union warns of health system 'collapse'

CAIRO (Egypt) — Egypt's top medical union on Monday warned of a "complete collapse" of the country's health system, accusing the health ministry of negligence in failing to protect healthcare workers from coronavirus.

"The syndicate is warning that the health system could completely collapse, leading to a catastrophe affecting the entire country if the health ministry's negligence and lack of action towards medical staff is not rectified," the Egyptian Medical Syndicate said in a statement.

COVID-19 has killed 19 doctors and infected more than 350, according to the EMS, a body representing thousands of Egyptian doctors.

"The EMS holds the health ministry entirely responsible for the mounting deaths and infections among doctors due to its negligence... that is tantamount to death through a dereliction of duty," it added.

Egypt, the most populous Arab country, has recorded more than 16,000 COVID-19 cases and over 700 deaths.

The EMS called on the

"executive, judicial and legislative" branches of government to force the health ministry to comply with its demands.

These included providing all doctors with personal protective equipment (PPE), training for dealing with coronavirus cases and testing for those with symptoms or who have come into contact with infected people.

Hospitals have been hit by a flight of doctors abroad in recent years while the frontline staff left behind face shortages of medical supplies and protective gear that heightens the risk of infection.

The EMS statement came after 32-year-old doctor Walid Yehia died on Saturday after being unable to secure a bed in an isolation hospital.

The country's 17 isolation hospitals reserved for novel coronavirus patients reached their maximum capacity at the start of the month, deputy health minister Ahmed al-Sobki told local press last week.

A colleague resigned in protest from the same Cairo hospital where Yehia worked. —AFP

Mongolia to maintain strict virus regulations 'until vaccine found'



Staff members and police officers wear hazmat suits as they take part in a drill to prepare for the COVID-19 coronavirus in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia on May 7, 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

ULAANBAATAR (Mongolia) — Mongolia will maintain strict coronavirus regulations until a vaccine is found, the prime minister said Monday, raising the prospect of the country being locked down for months to come.

Wedge between Russia and China, landlocked Mongolia on March 12 become one of the first countries to close its borders in the face of the growing global epidemic.

Universities, schools and

kindergartens are closed until September, conferences and public protests are banned, children under 12 are not allowed in malls or restaurants, and face-masks are mandatory.

"The country will keep the quarantine rules until a vaccine becomes available," Prime Minister Khurelsukh Ukhnaa told reporters in the country's parliament.

He did not provide more details about what measures would

remain in place, but said he did not know when borders would reopen.

Despite the announcement, he said parliamentary elections will be held as scheduled on June 24.

Scientists around the world are rushing to find a vaccine for the virus that has killed more than 340,000 people and infected over five million in 196 countries and territories. —AFP

UK PM defiant as political scandal rages over aide

LONDON (United Kingdom) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Monday failed to draw a line under a scandal over his top aide Dominic Cummings allegedly breaching coronavirus rules as pressure mounted on the Brexit mastermind to go.

Johnson faces the threat of his government's authority being undermined in the heat of a health crisis that has claimed nearly 37,000 lives in Britain and thrown one of the world's top 10 economies into its biggest downturn of modern times.

Cummings was already a lightning rod for many Britons over his role in orchestrating the 2016 Brexit campaign that eventually saw Britain pull out of the European Union after nearly 50 years on January 31.

But he is also Johnson's trusted adviser, helping him become prime minister a year ago and then choreographing Britain's delayed exit from the European bloc.

Politicians of all stripes have been joined by scientific advisers and even some members of the clergy in condemning Cummings for driving across the country with his wife — while she was suffering from the virus — when the official advice was to stay at home.

"If you give the impression there's one rule for them and one rule for us, you fatally undermine



British Prime Minister Boris Johnson pictured with his top adviser Dominic Cummings, who allegedly broke lockdown rules. PHOTO: AFP

that sense of 'we're all in this together'," scientific adviser Stephen Reicher told ITV.

'Not a great sign'

Johnson told the nation on Sunday that Cummings — who like the British leader also developed COVID-19 — was following his paternal instincts by dropping off his baby son at his grandparents' house while he and his wife were sick.

"I think he followed the instincts of every father and every parent," Johnson said.

But the ConservativeHome website published a rolling list of members of Johnson's Conservative party who have publicly called for Cummings to be dismissed.

It had 16 names on Monday — still too few to challenge

Johnson's 80-seat majority in parliament.

Yet the Politico website noted that the list's publication "in itself is not a great sign for the prime minister".

Education Secretary Gavin Williams did a round of morning TV and radio interviews on Monday saying that Cummings "did not break the rules or the law".

The newspapers seemed unconvinced.

The popular Daily Mirror website said the UK lockdown "was dead in the water" because Cummings was flouting its rules.

The right-wing Daily Telegraph said Johnson's defence of Cummings has "led to questions about whether people should now follow their instincts rather than the rules". — AFP

Russian prosecutors seek 18-year sentence for ex-US marine in spy trial

MOSCOW (Russia)—Russian prosecutors on Monday called for an 18-year sentence against a former US Marine charged with spying, after a closed-door trial denounced by Washington and his family.

Paul Whelan, 50, was detained in Moscow in December 2018 for allegedly receiving state secrets but insists he was framed when he took a USB drive from an acquaintance thinking it contained holiday photos.

His trial, which has caused tensions between Moscow and Washington and sparked speculation of a prisoner swap, concluded with closing arguments on Monday.

Whelan's lawyer told reporters after the session that prosecutors had requested 18 years for his client in a penal colony, just short of the maximum 20-year sentence he was facing.

"To be honest, we are in shock," Vladimir Zherebenkov said outside the court.

Whelan reacted calmly to the prosecutor's "very harsh" demand, the lawyer said. "He is behaving with dignity," he added.

Zherebenkov said that the

prosecutor believed Whelan to be an officer — "at least a colonel" — at the US Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA).

Whelan told the court "he did not do any spying and was not collecting any secret information," his lawyer said.

He added that the sentence would be delivered on June 15.

The trial, which began in March, has continued behind closed doors in a Moscow courtroom despite the coronavirus pandemic and diplomatic protests.

Whelan, who was head of global security at a US auto-parts supplier, said he was visiting Russia to attend a wedding at the time of his arrest.

He claimed that evidence he provided was ignored and the court was biased in favour of the prosecution and security services.

Whelan used earlier court hearings to appeal to journalists and US President Donald Trump, claimed he was being mistreated, not given full translations of documents and rarely granted access to his lawyer.

Whelan also holds Irish, Canadian and British citizenship. —AFP



A prisoner swap for Paul Whelan (C) could involve Russian pilot Konstantin Yaroshenko, jailed in the United States on drug smuggling charges. PHOTO: AFP

Bushfire-hit Australians still in tents as virus slows recovery

COBARGO (Australia) — Victims of Australia's catastrophic bushfires are still living in tents, garages and makeshift shelters months after the blazes ended,

with efforts to rebuild their lives hampered by the coronavirus pandemic.

Inside a small tin shed on Australia's south-east coast, a

family of six takes refuge from the cold as the southern hemisphere winter begins to bite.

The structure — chock-full of toys and beds — has been home to 51-year-old Anita Lawrence and five of her children since February.

She had been in Tasmania when fires ripped through the area, torching materials ready to build a new home and new life for her family. "Every single little thing disappeared," she told AFP near trees still blackened from the blazes. Australia's unprecedented bushfire crisis that scorched an area larger than most nations and displaced thousands put a rare spotlight on climate change in a rich, developed country. —AFP



Wayne Keft, whose home was destroyed by the fires, says recovery has been 'slow and difficult' for many. PHOTO: AFP

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Coronavirus: latest global developments

PARIS (France) —Here are the latest developments in the coronavirus crisis.

Lockdowns ease in Europe

Lockdown measures are finally eased in Spain's two biggest cities Madrid and Barcelona, where people can now meet in groups of up to 10 people in their homes or on the terraces of bars and restaurants. Beaches also reopen in parts of the country after months-long closures.

Italy reopens swimming pools and sports centres, Greece does the same with restaurants and cafes, while Ukrainians can again take the metro in capital Kiev for the first time in 10 weeks.

Brazil's President rallies

Brazil's far-right President Jair Bolsonaro rallies with his supporters on Sunday, ditching his face mask and breaking social distancing measures even as Brazil emerges as the country with the second-highest number of cases in the world, after the United States, with more than



People wearing masks sit at a terrace bar at in Las Ramblas in Barcelona on 25 May 2020. Coronavirus lockdown measures will finally be eased for people in Madrid and Barcelona, while elsewhere in Spain the first beaches are due to reopen. **PHOTO: AFP**

360,000 reported cases.

In response to the surge, Washington suspends entry into the US of non-Americans who have been in the South American nation in the previous 14 days.

Outrage over British aide

British newspaper headlines are hostile after Prime Minister Boris Johnson backed Dominic

Cummings, a top advisor in the British government, who was seen visiting his parents 250 miles (400 kilometres) away from his London home during the country's lockdown, despite suffering from virus symptoms. "What planet are they on?" the right-wing tabloid Daily Mail asks.

Nearly 345,000 deaths

The pandemic has killed at least 344,964 people worldwide since it surfaced in China late last year, according to an AFP tally at 1100 GMT on Monday, based on official sources.

The United States has recorded the most deaths with 97,722 fatalities. It is followed by Britain with 36,793, Italy with

32,785, Spain with 28,752, France with 28,367 and Brazil 22,666.

Belgium has the highest per capita death rate with 803 fatalities per million inhabitants.

Japan lifts state of emergency

Japan, which has been spared the worst of the pandemic, lifts a nationwide state of emergency, with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe saying "very stringent criteria" have been met. But government officials warn caution is still necessary to prevent another wave.

Iran reopens shrines

Iran reopens major Shiite shrines, more than two months after they were closed because of the Middle East's deadliest coronavirus outbreak.

Berlin to Lufthansa's rescue

Coronavirus-stricken German airline group Lufthansa strikes in principle a nine-billion-euro (\$9.8 billion) rescue deal with the German government, that would see Berlin become a shareholder, sources familiar with the talks tell AFP.—AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC MERGUI VOY. NO. (021W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MCC MERGUI VOY. NO. (021W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-5-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/MIP where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V BCC CAPE

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V BCC CAPE VOY. NO. (1264012) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 27-5-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AIPT-3 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES
(SINGAPORE) PTE, LTD

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V IRENE

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V IRENE VOY. NO. (132063) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-5-2020 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 BEN LINE AGENCIES
(SINGAPORE) PTE, LTD

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V JOSCO YANGZHOU

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V JOSCO YANGZHOU VOY. NO. (20055) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-5-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-3 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S GLOBAL MARS SHIPPING

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V JOIE N

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V JOIE N VOY. NO. (2004) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 24-5-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-4 where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S ELDER TRIUMPHANT
SHIPPING LINES PTE LTD

Phone No: 2301928

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V OCEAN DIAMOND

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V OCEAN DIAMOND VOY. NO. (202001) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25-5-2020 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

Japan releases phased road map to fully reopen economy by August



Large screens in Tokyo show Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announcing the end of a state of emergency on 25 May 2020. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

TOKYO — Japan on Monday released a phased road map for reopening the economy as the government fully lifted the state of emergency the same day, with plans to relax by August restrictions imposed following the novel coronavirus outbreak.

Restrictions on domestic travel and large-scale events, as well as the use of facilities prone to cluster infections, will be gradually eased every three weeks after assessing the situation at the time. The government will also request organizers to put off holding

festivals until August when they can be held as long as attendees maintain a reasonable distance from one another.

Professional sports events behind closed doors will be permitted from June 19, with organizers able to allow entry of spectators to the venue and increase their number in phases.

But restrictions limiting the number of attendees to less than half the venue capacity will remain in place even after August.

Although prefectural governors can refer to the policy when deciding on what actions business operators and organizers should take after emergency measures are relaxed, the requests are not legally binding. The central government sees the period through the end of July as a transitional period before fully reopening the economy as it encourages new lifestyles without lowering the guard against the virus. — Kyodo News

Melon-Paires not required as Japan premium fruit prices plunge

TOKYO (Japan)— A pair of premium Japanese melons sold Monday for just a slice of the five million yen (\$46,000) reached at auction last year, as the coronavirus bites hard.

The melons from Yubari on the northern island of Hokkaido sold for a snip at 120,000 yen at the season's first auction — 40 times less than last year's record price tag. An official at the wholesale market blamed the coronavirus for keeping away rich corporate clients who compete to outbid each other for the most expensive fruit.

The virus meant the auction was smaller than usual and mostly made up of lower net worth individuals. The successful bidder wanted to show gratitude and support for local farmers, according to local news agency Kyodo.

The wholesale market

has been closed since April 20 as part of actions to stem the spread of the coronavirus, but held a one-off auction to drum up support for local products.

Hokkaido, the country's northernmost main island and a popular tourist

destination, has seen a relatively high number of virus infection cases along with Tokyo, Osaka and other urban areas. The government is expected to lift a state of emergency for Hokkaido and the Tokyo area later on Monday.— AFP



A pair of premium Japanese melons have sold for just a slice of the five million yen (\$46,000) reached at auction last year. PHOTO: AFP

China-Europe postal trains transport over 2,000 tonnes of mail to Europe

HANGZHOU — As of Monday, a total of 2,118.93 tonnes of mail have been transported by China-Europe postal trains from China to 36 European countries, including to Spain, Denmark, Switzerland and France, according to Hangzhou Customs.

On Sunday, a train carrying 100 TEUs and loaded with 343.15 tonnes of international mail from four Chinese cities and provinces including Shanghai and Zhejiang, left the eastern Chinese city of Yiwu in Zhejiang Province and headed for Vilnius, capital of Lithuania. It is the sixth international postal train since the service was launched. After its arrival in Lithuania, the mail will be distributed across Europe.

Affected by the COVID-19 epidemic, a large number of international flights to and from China have been suspended or re-

duced, which has caused a huge impact on international mail delivery and a serious backlog of mail.

In response, Hangzhou Customs launched the China-Europe postal train service to help transport the mail.

“The China-Europe

freight train service has obvious logistical advantages in terms of relatively stable logistical costs and transportation time amid the epidemic,” said Shang Chunyan, a staff member with Yiwu Customs under Hangzhou Customs.— Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V PRESIDIO VOY. NO. (038W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PRESIDIO VOY. NO. (038W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 26-5-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIP/MITT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA
SHIPPING PTE., LTD

Phone No: 2301185

Trade Mark Ads Call Thin Thin May, 09251022355,09974424848

PESTICIDE TRADE NAME CHANGE ADVERTISING

The following pesticide is distributed by OUR FARM CO.,LTD and here we would like to pesticide trade name change advertising. Anyone who would like to object or inquiry about new trade name contact within 14 days to Joint-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon. OUR FARM CO.,LTD 09-798097385.

Sr.	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number
1	AM-Grand 5 WDG	OVER 5 WDG	Emamectin Benzoate 5% WDG	P2019-4624

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTER CHANGING

The manufacture of SHANDONG UNITED PESTICIDE INDUSTRY CO.,LTD (China) has registered the following products in Pesticide Registration Board of Myanmar to distribute in Myanmar. Now, we have to change from old distributor name “HUYNH ZAW 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. Y AGRO SOLUTION CO.,LTD. Ph- Ph-09969007222

Sr.	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration No.
1.	Hexon	Hexaconazole 250g/l SC	P2018-4151
2.	Thib	Thiodicarb 800g/kg WDG	P2018-4336

PESTICIDE TRADE NAME CHANGE ADVERTISING

The following two pesticides are distributed by AGRO POWER CO.,LTD and here we would like to pesticide trade name change advertising. Anyone who would like to object or inquiry about new trade name contact within 14 days to Joint-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon. AGRO POWER CO.,LTD 09-5012662.

Sr.	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number
1	Daung Bayin 11 EW	AP Shal 11 EW	Fenoxaprop-P-ethyl 11 % EW	2016-3250

US bans Brazil travel over virus surge as Europe keeps easing

WASHINGTON (United States) —The United States suspended travel from Brazil over an explosion of coronavirus infections in the South American nation, but across the Atlantic, many parts of Europe were set to further ease lockdowns on Monday after slowing their COVID-19 outbreaks.

The pandemic's rampage across Latin America has pushed the worldwide caseload to nearly 5.4 million, with deaths approaching 350,000, but with the global economy battered, governments are scrambling to provide relief however they can to businesses and citizens wearying of mass confinement.

Brazil — the world's sixth-largest country — has been declared the latest hotspot with more than 360,000 reported cases, second only to the United States, even as its leader, the far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, plays down the threat from the virus.

In a sign of global concern about the outbreak in Brazil, where more than 22,000 have died of COVID-19, the White House said Sunday it would bar entry into the US of non-Ameri-



Brazil -- the world's sixth-largest country -- has been declared the latest hotspot with more than 360,000 reported cases. **PHOTO: AFP**

cans who have been in the South American nation in the 14 days before.

Despite the crisis engulfing Brazil, Bolsonaro — an ally of US President Donald Trump — has repeatedly argued that lockdown measures are unnecessary and

harmful to the economy.

He flouted social distancing rules again on Sunday, attending a rally outside the presidential palace in Brasilia to greet a cheering rally, ditching his face mask, shaking hands and embracing supporters — even hoisting a

young boy onto his shoulders at one point.

The leader grinned as flag-waving supporters shouted “Legend!” and “The people support you, Bolsonaro!”

But despite the strong support from his political base, he

has faced scathing criticism for his handling of the outbreak as experts warn Brazil's healthcare system is overwhelmed.

And while his government has imposed a Brazil travel ban over the virus, President Trump remains frustrated with lockdown measures, and — with 40 million jobs lost this year — is aggressively pushing a US reopening despite the national death toll approaching 100,000.

Again trying to project confidence, Trump played golf for a second straight day on Sunday, after avoiding the fairways since March 8.

The polarized opinion on lockdowns in America was on display after video footage emerged of a jam-packed swimming pool in Missouri over the weekend, despite orders mandating social distancing measures.

“Scenes such as this one... are inconceivable during the pandemic. Do they all have death wishes?” one woman tweeted.

Another countered: “Just Americans being free and making their own decisions and enjoying life.” — AFP

Top German court to rule on VW ‘Dieselgate’ compensation

KARLSRUHE (Germany)—Almost five years after Volkswagen's admission to cheating on emissions tests involving millions of diesel engines, a top German court will on Monday finally rule in a battle over compensation for tens of thousands of affected owners.

In a preliminary finding in May, judges at the Federal Court of Justice (BGH) said there was a chance of at least partial compensation for some VW buyers, saying they had indeed been harmed by purchasing a manipulated vehicle.

If the ruling is confirmed at 0900 GMT Monday, tens of thousands of cases for compensation could be brought to a close in the coming months.

Such a ruling would be the first major legal setback for VW in its home country, although the scandal has helped drag the entire car sector — one of Germany's most vital industries — into a historic crisis.

In recent weeks, an out-of-court settlement covering hundreds of thousands of cases and the closure of criminal proceedings have drawn a line under the

biggest domestic risks for the sprawling car group from the “Dieselgate” scandal.

Monday's hearing specifically concerns a case brought by 65-year-old Herbert Gilbert who bought a diesel-powered Volkswagen Sharan minivan in 2014 — just one of the 11 million cars worldwide fitted with emissions cheating software by the carmaker.

“We expect that we will prevail at the BGH,” said Claus Goldstein, whose legal firm represents Gilbert.

- The depreciation factor - An appeals court has already found in favour of the pensioner, ordering VW to pay 25,616 euros (\$27,930) and accept his return of the car.

That payout, however, is almost 6,000 euros below the original purchase price, as the judges took into account depreciation of the vehicle's value.

Both VW and Gilbert appealed, with the company disputing the grounds for reimbursing the pensioner while the plaintiff said he should be paid the full purchase price.—AFP



An out-of-court settlement covering hundreds of thousands of cases and the closure of criminal proceedings already drew a line under the biggest domestic risks from “Dieselgate”. **PHOTO: AFP**

Suriname votes with convicted-killer president's future at stake



Suriname's President Desi Bouterse remains confident his party will hold onto power in upcoming parliamentary elections. **PHOTO: AFP**

PARAMARIBO (Suriname)—Suriname's convicted-murderer president Desi Bouterse says he is confident of holding onto power despite polls suggesting his NDP party will lose its majority in Monday's legislative elections.

With a partial lockdown in effect due to the coronavirus pandemic, Suriname's 380,000 eligible voters will head to the polls to elect the 51 members of the National Assembly.

The Assembly, in turn, elects the president in this Dutch-speaking country of 600,000 people on the northeast shoulder of South America.

It's an election crucial to Bouterse's hopes of winning a third successive term as presi-

dent. But an opinion poll by research institute IDOS suggests Bouterse's National Democratic Party is about to lose its legislative majority.

IDOS predicted the NDP “will suffer a substantial loss in Paramaribo,” the capital, with its overall share falling from 26 seats to 14-17.

“The decline in Paramaribo already ensures that the NDP will be referred to the opposition banks,” said IDOS.

‘Self-confidence’

Bouterse last year was sentenced to 20 years in prison by a military court for carrying out executions during a previous military dictatorship.

He first took power in a 1980 coup and in 1982 allegedly rounded up and executed 15 political opponents, including lawyers, journalists and businessmen. The incident, known as the “December killings,” was investigated by his main rival in the current ballot, Chandrikapersad Santokhi.

In a separate case, a Dutch court in 1999 sentenced Bouterse to 11 years in prison in absentia for cocaine smuggling, a charge he denies.—AFP

China space programme targets July launch for Mars mission

BEIJING (China) — China is targeting a July launch for its ambitious plans for a Mars mission which will include landing a remote-controlled robot on the surface of the red planet, the company in charge of the project has said.

Beijing has invested billions of dollars in its space programme in an effort to catch up with its rival the United States and affirm

its status as a major world power.

The Mars mission is among a number of new space projects China is pursuing, including putting Chinese astronauts on the moon and having a space station by 2022.

Beijing had been planning the Mars mission for sometime this year, but China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC) has confirmed it

could come as early as July.

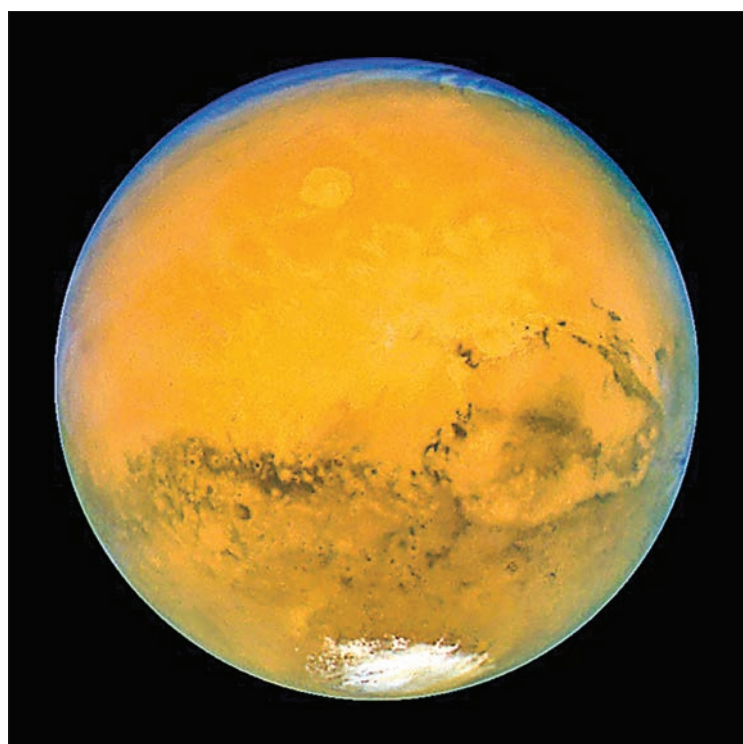
“This big project is progressing as planned and we are targeting a launch in July,” CASC said in a statement issued on Sunday.

CASC is the main contractor for China’s space programme. Called “Tianwen”, the Chinese mission will put a probe into orbit around Mars and land the robotic rover to explore and analyse the surface. It will take several months to cover the roughly 55 million kilometres (31 million miles) distance between Earth and Mars, which is ever-changing due to their planetary orbits.

China has already carried out a similar mission to the Moon, and in January 2019 landed a small rover on the dark side of the lunar surface, becoming the first nation to do so.

The US, which has already sent four exploratory vehicles to Mars, intends to launch a fifth this summer. It should arrive around February 2021.

The United Arab Emirates plans to launch the first Arab probe to the Red Planet on July 15 from Japan. —AFP



For P 15 01 Called ‘Tianwen’, the Chinese mission will put a probe into orbit around Mars and land a rover to explore and analyse the planet’s surface. PHOTO: AFP

Abe declares coronavirus emergency over in Japan

TOKYO — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced Monday that the state of emergency declared over the novel coronavirus crisis is over in Japan, ending curbs on economic activity in Tokyo and four other prefectures as experts judged the spread of infections is now under control.

Speaking at a press conference, Abe said the state of emergency that has been in place since April for the Tokyo metropolitan area including Chiba, Kanagawa and Saitama prefectures, along with Hokkaido in northern Japan, is ending ahead of schedule.

With the removal of the restrictions imposed under the state of emergency, the recession-hit Japanese economy is expected to regain vigor, albeit at a gradual pace. The five prefectures account for about a third of the country’s gross domestic product.

“I have decided to end the state of emergency across the nation,” Abe told a press conference. “In just over a month and a half, we almost brought (the infection) situation under control.”

An advisory panel gave the go-ahead to the government plan to end the emergency earlier in the day after examining the number of newly reported cases over



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meets the press in Tokyo on May 25, 2020, to announce the lifting of a coronavirus state of emergency in five prefectures — Hokkaido, Saitama, Chiba, Kanagawa and Tokyo. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

the past week, the availability of medical resources, and the capacity to provide virus tests and monitor the spread of the virus.

Abe has been weighing the need to keep new infections firmly under control against the urgent need to rejuvenate the economy.

Abe is calling for Japanese people to alter their lifestyles by wearing face masks, maintaining social distancing and working from home as medical experts warn against relaxing vigilance too soon amid the risk of another wave of infections. — Kyodo News

NEWS In BRIEF

Japan restaurant hit by biggest sales fall in April due to virus

TOKYO — Restaurant sales in Japan plunged 39.6 per cent in April from a year earlier, the sharpest slide since comparable data became available in 1994, due to the spread of the new coronavirus, an industry body said Monday.

While sales dropped in all kinds of places serving food, Japanese-style “izakaya” pubs and other types of taverns especially took an economic hit from the virus outbreak, seeing a 91.4 per cent tumble, according to the Japan Foodservice Association. —Kyodo News

Viet Nam’s COVID-19 cases increase to 326

HANOI—Viet Nam reported one new case of COVID-19 infection on Monday, bringing its total confirmed cases to 326 with zero deaths so far, according to its Ministry of Health.

The latest case is a 20-year-old Vietnamese student who has recently returned to the country from France, said the ministry, noting that she is being treated in southern Ho Chi Minh City.

The country has recorded no local transmission in 39 straight days, according to the ministry. —Xinhua

Sri Lanka likely to slow repatriation of citizens after rise in COVID-19 cases

COLOMBO— Sri Lanka is likely to slow repatriation of its citizens from overseas after several of those who returned from foreign countries in recent days tested positive for the COVID-19, local media reports quoting the Health Ministry said here Monday.

Director-General of Health Services at the Health Ministry Dr. Anil Jasinghe said that Sri Lanka is still dealing with one active COVID-19 cluster and the government might make a decision to slow the repatriation process after the numbers rise significantly in recent days due to the returning passengers. —Xinhua

Qatar virus tracing app stirs rare privacy backlash

DOHA (Qatar)— Privacy concerns over Qatar’s coronavirus contact tracing app, a tool that is mandatory on pain of prison, have prompted a rare backlash and forced officials to offer reassurance and concessions.

Like other governments around the world, Qatar has turned to mobile phones to trace people’s movements and track who they come into contact with, allowing officials to monitor coronavirus infections and alert people at risk of contagion.

The apps use Bluetooth radio signals to “ping” nearby devices, which can be contacted subsequently if a user they have been near develops symptoms or tests positive, but the resultant unprecedented access to users’ location data has prompted fears about state surveillance.

Qatar’s version goes considerably further — it forces Android users to permit access to their picture and video galleries,

while also allowing the app to make unprompted calls.

“I can’t understand why it needs all these permissions,” wrote Ala’a on a Facebook group popular with Doha’s large expat community — one of several such forums peppered with concerns over the app.

Justin Martin, a journalism professor based in Qatar, warned authorities in a tweet not to “erode” trust by enforcing “an app with such alarming permissions”.

The government launched the “Ehteraz” app, meaning “precaution”, in April and on Friday it became mandatory for all citizens and legal residents to install it on their phones.

Non-compliance is punishable by up to three years in jail — the same term as for failing to wear a mask in public — in a state battling one of the world’s highest per capita infection rates. — AFP

Myanmar women's national football team appoints head coach

THE Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) Technical Committee appointed U Tin Myint Aung as the head coach of the Myanmar women's national football team, according to the committee's meeting yesterday.

As the head coach position of the Myanmar women's national football team was vacant, U Tin Myint Aung has served as a temporary coach for the team since the third round of the 2020 AFC Women's Olympic Qualifying Tournament in February.

Now, the MFF technical team decided to appoint him as the women's team's head coach as he knows well about the players and the team.

The women's national team will compete this year only in ASEAN-level competitions, and participate in Viet Nam's SEA Games and other international matches next year. — Shine Htet Zaw

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)



Newly-appointed head coach of Myanmar women's national football team U Tin Myint Aung. PHOTO: SOE NYUNT

From 'dust' to glory, Liverpool's 'miracle' of Istanbul

PARIS (France)—Steven Gerrard said Liverpool did not “believe in miracles” and Jamie Carragher thought his “dreams had turned to dust”, but 15 years ago Rafael Benitez's side pulled off one of football's greatest heists to beat AC Milan in the Champions League final.

The English side were underdogs before kick-off in Istanbul despite edging out Chelsea in the semi-finals and a strong Juventus outfit in the last eight, but were completely written off when 3-0

down at half-time in their bid for a fifth European Cup.

But, roared on by 40,000 travelling supporters in the club's first final in the competition since the Heysel disaster of 1985, Liverpool fought back in a crazy six-minute spell before eventually triumphing on penalties.

The much-fancied Milan, who had won the title in 2003 at Old Trafford, took the lead inside 50 seconds through captain Paolo Maldini's volley — the first time Liverpool had conceded first in a

Champions League game since their famous group-stage win over Olympiakos.

It was to get worse for Liverpool as, with defensive midfielder Dietmar Hamann sitting on the bench despite a brilliant performance against Chelsea, winger Harry Kewell hobbled off injured midway through the first half.

“The 2007 (Milan) team was technically inferior to the 2005 team, who remain the best team with the best performance in a final,” then-Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti later said when asked about the teams he took to three Champions League finals, winning the other two, including against Liverpool in 2007.

“The 2005 team were better than the one in 2003.”

That class shone in a blistering first-half display by the Italian giants, as Hernan Crespo tapped in after a rapid 39th-minute counter-attack which started with Liverpool appealing for a penalty after an apparent handball by Maldini. “The quality of (Andrea) Pirlo, Clarence Seedorf and Kaka cut us to shreds,” Gerrard later wrote in his autobiography. —AFP



Liverpool fought back from 3-0 down to win their fifth European Cup. PHOTO: AFP

China's football team 'more united' under coronavirus

SHANGHAI (China) — Coronavirus has indefinitely postponed the Chinese Super League (CSL) season but it has given the national team time to bond under coach Li Tie, the side's goalkeeper Yan Junling said on Monday.

China are approaching the end of a two-week training camp in Shanghai and on Tuesday will face CSL side Shanghai Shenhua behind closed doors, having defeated former champions Shanghai SIPG 4-1 in another warm-up match.

The CSL is on hold because of the coronavirus pandemic but the national side have been together on and off for several weeks this year, both at home and abroad.

“I think actually for our team, because of the epidemic, we've had a longer time to train together and become more familiar with each other,” said Shanghai SIPG stopper Yan.

“We can also get to fully un-

derstand what the coach wants and in fact the team has become more united.”

China's World Cup hopes hang in the balance.

They are second in their qualifying group, with only the top team guaranteed to reach the next stage on the road to Qatar 2022.

China's next qualifier, against the Maldives, has been postponed because of the pandemic but could now take place this autumn.

The players emerged from their team bus wearing face masks on Monday before former Everton midfielder Li put them through their paces in humid conditions — minus masks.

Yan said that Li, who took over from Marcello Lippi when the Italian World Cup-winning coach quit following defeat to Syria in November, has made clear that the friendlies against SIPG and Shenhua are essential to their preparations. —AFP



China coach Li Tie has named three naturalized players in his squad. PHOTO: AFP

Former NBA star Bogut leaves Sydney Kings during virus shutdown

SYDNEY (Australia)— NBA championship-winning centre Andrew Bogut announced Monday that he would not be renewing his contract with the Sydney Kings in Australia's National Basketball League.

But the 35-year-old Australian insisted in a social media post that he was “by no means” retiring yet, just taking time to consider his options given the uncertainty created by the coronavirus pandemic.

“I have decided not to sign with the Sydney Kings, or any professional sporting team for that matter for the time being,” Bogut wrote on Twitter.

“With everything going on in

the world, the future does not look too clear, most notably in regards to sporting leagues worldwide,” he said.

“This by no means is a retirement note, but simply saying any concrete decisions are too hard to be made at this point in time.”

Bogut signed a two-year contract with the Kings in 2018 following a 13-year NBA career capped when he won the championship with the Golden State Warriors in 2015.

He was the NBL's MVP for the 2018/19 season and the Kings made it to the league's grand final this year before the season was ended prematurely by the coronavirus shutdown. —AFP