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Thursday, 1 October 2020

U Kyaw Tint Swe, Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor and Leader of Myanmar Delegation to the 75th Session of United Nations General Assembly delivers statement at high-level General Debate

THE leader of the Myanmar delegation and Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor, U Kyaw Tint Swe, delivered a statement via video link at high-level General Debate of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly held on 29 September 2020 at the United Nations Headquarters.

In his statement, the Union Minister stressed the importance of multilateralism to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic and to develop the United Nations into an organization that everyone wants.

He apprised the Assembly of the Myanmar Government's efforts in fighting against the pandemic adhering to the principle of "leaving no one behind", bringing sustainable peace and national reconciliation, genuine democracy, and inclusive development for all peoples in Myanmar and addressing the complex situation in Rakhine State including the issue of accountability in line with do-



Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe delivers the statement at high-level General Debate of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly held on 29 September 2020. PHOTO: MNA

We invite the Government of Bangladesh to show its genuine political will to cooperate, by strictly adhering to the terms of the signed agreements. Bilateral cooperation is the only way that can effectively resolve the repatriation issue between Myanmar and Bangladesh.

mestic judicial system.

The Myanmar delegation leader's full statement is as follows:

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by extending my warm congratulations to His Excellency Mr Volkan Boz- kir on his election as President

of the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

As we speak today, the entire world is waging war against our common enemy, the COVID-19 global pandemic. This global pandemic has forced all of us to reassess our way of life as individuals and as communities and to reconsider our standard modes of operation. This 75th General Assembly is

being held virtually. It is indeed humbling that an invisible virus has taken nearly one million lives, disrupted economies, livelihoods, and torn asunder the social fabric of peoples all over the world.

This global pandemic also lends itself as a test of the state of multilateralism.

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To overcome this pandemic an unprecedented scale of global cooperation is required. Therefore, it is only apt that this year's theme is "The Future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism -- Confronting COVID-19 through effective multilateral action".

Role of Multilateralism and the United Nations we want Mr President,

In a time of the greatest need for global cooperation, multilateralism has been placed itself under strain by the rise of unilateralism and protectionism. This has in some respects been worsened in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak by rising geopolitical rivalry and competition. This creates uncertainty.

It is now, more than ever, that we need to strengthen rules-based multilateralism, to collectively overcome the exceptional challenges we face, and to mitigate their impact on weaker nations and vulnerable peoples. Failure to do so would impact the social stability of countries and place added burdens on the United Nations.

Despite the worrisome trend of statements that undermine multilateralism, we fail to see an alternative to the United Nations. Indeed, we are not looking for one. The UN represents our joint efforts to improve the situation of hundreds of millions of human beings around the world through the promotion of peace and stability, sustainable development, a culture of justice, legality, and rule of law. Through effective multilateral actions, lives can be saved, health improved, and security experienced by many more.

This said, we need to work together to develop the United Nations into an organization that we all want. It must be an organization that nations can turn to in times of need. It must remain a true beacon of hope for developing countries.

In the area of human rights promotion and protection, the United Nations should ensure that its mandate holders adhere strictly to the principles of independence, impartiality and integrity in the exercise of their duties. It must avoid double standards scrupulously, in particular towards Member States that have to bear troublesome



Despite the worrisome trend of statements that undermine multilateralism, we fail to see an alternative to the United Nations. Indeed, we are not looking for one. The UN represents our joint efforts to improve the situation of hundreds of millions of human beings around the world through the promotion of peace and stability, sustainable development, a culture of justice, legality, and rule of law.

legacies, very often as a result of a colonial past. Equality of states must be respected, regardless of the extent of their material wealth and political influence.

Myanmar and COVID-19 Mr President,

The COVID-19 global pandemic has overwhelmed even resource-rich countries. It represents a formidable task for a developing country like Myanmar. Myanmar has taken a Whole-of-Nation approach in mobilizing the strength of its people through volunteerism and sharing spirit in the fight against the pandemic.

These measures proved successful in coping with the first wave of the virus but at present we are facing the challenge of a second wave. The Government has been making parallel efforts both in protecting public health and mitigating the economic impact by implementing its COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan (CERP). Despite the risk of virus import, we are bringing back all our cit-

izens and migrant workers who are facing difficulties in foreign countries where they have no access to social protection.

Pursuing the principle of "Leaving no one behind", Myanmar's response to the pandemic covers all vulnerable segments, especially IDPs, persons with disabilities, and low-income workers. To that end, the Government adopted an Action Plan for the control of COVID-19 at IDP camps that includes measures to raise awareness of the guidelines for pandemic prevention and to establish necessary measures to prevent and control the pandemic among internally displaced persons. To date those have been no serious outbreaks in any camp.

Pandemic and Conflict Mr President,

Terrorism remains a global and transnational threat. In the interest of sustainable peace and stability, we need to continue to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. This is an absolute need that must

not be allowed to be obfuscated by spurious issues. Conflict and insecurity negatively affect peace. Paving the road for sustainable development often requires a deep understanding of root causes and unconventional threats. We welcome the Secretary-General's global ceasefire appeal which will contribute to peace and stability in conflict areas and encourage solidarity to overcome our common enemy, COVID-19. In response to this appeal, Tatmadaw, Myanmar's Armed Forces declared a ceasefire from 10 May to 31 August 2020. It also announced that the ceasefire will be applied in all areas except where terrorist groups have taken position. This ceasefire has been extended to 30 September 2020.

The Government has also invited all ethnic armed organizations to work together for the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 in those areas which are not yet under total Government control. This kind of cooperation contributes to confidence-building between state institutions and the ethnic armed organizations. Despite the temporary disruption of commercial flights to Rakhine State, the Government continues to ensure health and humanitarian assistance to all affected communities without discrimination.

Mr President

It has been a little over four years since the peaceful transfer of State responsibilities to the first elected civilian Government. This has ended over five decades of absolute military rule but it is only the

beginning of our people's long journey towards a fully democratic Myanmar. We are treading carefully towards a different direction than known the past half a century. In just over a month from now, the people of Myanmar will go to the polls again. We have successfully put in place a political system that relies on ballots instead of bullets.

Every country undergoing democratic transition passes through difficult times. Myanmar is no exception. We are still struggling with numerous challenges including continued ethnic armed conflicts, old and new complex issues in Rakhine State, and, on top of it all, the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the past four years, our Government has made an all-out effort within the space permitted by the 2008 Constitution to fulfill our people's dream of their inherent right to live in peace and security, with fundamental freedoms, and assured fruits of development.

The people of Myanmar have started to enjoy the freedom of democratic rights but it is only when the existing 2008 Constitution can be revised, that we will be able to ensure the full democratic rights of our people. Although it is not possible to meet all the high expectations of all the people in such a short time, there are visible improvements in many areas including health, education, infrastructure, socio-economic development, and good governance.

Peace Process Mr President,

In a multi-ethnic country like Myanmar, making unity out of diversity is a great challenge. The Government is striving for sustainable peace, genuine national reconciliation and all-round development.

It is the aim of the NLD Government to hold political negotiations with all ethnic nationalities that we might bring the seven-decade history of internal strife to a conclusion and achieve durable peace. To that end, the Government has successfully convened four sessions of the Union Peace Conference, also known as the 21st Century Panlong Conference.

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2020 MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY GENERAL ELECTION



The General Election will be held on 8 November 2020.

- Union Election Commission has announced the first edition of eligible voter lists at local offices of the commission in respective wards/village-tracts, in the villages from 25 July 2020 to 7 November 2020.
- If the name of any eligible voter is not included in the list, voter registration can be requested by filling in Form 3.
- Objection can be filed against any ineligible voter in the list by using Form 4.
- Correction for voter list can be requested by using Form 4 (c).
- Voters can cast their votes only if their names are included in the voters list.
- Cooperation is requested for at least one member of each family to check their names without fail to ensure a complete and correct voters list.
- Check the voters lists not to lose voting rights by filling up discrepancies, deleting and making corrections.

2020

General Election
Sunday, 8 November 2020



U Kyaw Tint Swe, Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor ...

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As a result, the third part of the Union Accord, which includes basic guiding federal principles for the future of the Union, has been signed by the participating delegations. These principles will define the path that will be followed, regardless of which Government might be at the helm, towards the building of a Democratic Federal Union.

Rakhine State Mr President,

When the NLD civilian Government took office in March 2016, it identified key priorities to be addressed. These included the complex situation of Rakhine State. Colonial cross-border migration and cycles of inter-communal violence have sowed deep-rooted mutual mistrust and fear between the different communities in Rakhine State.

Acknowledging that a holistic and comprehensive approach was needed to ensure sustainable peace, in Rakhine State, the Central Committee for the Implementation of Peace, Stability, and Development in Rakhine State was established in May 2016. This effort was supplemented by the creation of the Advisory Commission under the late Dr Kofi Annan, one time Secretary-General of the UN, who has left us a legacy of 88 recommendations towards finding sustainable solutions to the demanding issues in Rakhine State.

Despite the multiple chal-

lenges, the Government is committed to lay down a sustainable foundation for peace, stability, and development for all persons in Rakhine State. A ministerial-level committee was set up to implement the recommendations of the Advisory Commission. This committee has selected five priority areas: issues of citizenship, freedom of movement, closure of IDP camps, education, and health care services. Its activities continue to the present day within the limitations

repatriation, resettlement, reconciliation, and development.

Humanitarian Situation

Despite the challenges posed by the internal armed conflicts in Rakhine State, the Government has scaled up its efforts to grant humanitarian access to International Organizations including the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), to provide food and emergency items to affected persons in Rakhine

Bilateral Repatriation Process

Our commitment to receive verified returnees in a voluntary, safe, and dignified manner under the bilateral agreement reached with Bangladesh in November 2017, remains steadfast. We invite the Government of Bangladesh to show its genuine political will to cooperate, by strictly adhering to the terms of the signed agreements. Bilateral cooperation is the only way that can effectively resolve the re-

just of our two countries but the region as a whole. Both the terrorist group ARSA and the terrorist insurgent group AA have used Bangladeshi territory as a sanctuary. Efforts to prevent ARSA and its supporters in the camps of Cox's Bazar from hampering the bilateral repatriation process, through threats, violence or other illegal conduct also need to be strengthened as such activities pose a risk to both Bangladesh and Myanmar.

Although bilateral repatriation has not yet started, more than 350 displaced persons from Cox's Bazar camps have returned to Rakhine State on their own volition through unofficial channels.

Resettlement

Myanmar is engaging with different actors in its efforts to create a conducive environment in Rakhine State for the prospective returnees from Bangladesh. In this regard, we have extended our trilateral agreement with the UNDP and UNHCR till June 2021 to facilitate the implementation of our bilateral agreements with Bangladesh.

UNDP and UNHCR teams have worked independently to assess immediate needs in over 120 villages. The Government has approved 75 'Quick Impact Projects' (QIPs), as termed by the UN, relating to community infrastructure, skills training, and income-generation. With the advent of the pandemic, their efforts are now naturally focussed on raising awareness of COVID-19 prevention within the communities.

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Pursuing the principle of "Leaving no one behind", Myanmar's response to the pandemic covers all vulnerable segments, especially IDPs, persons with disabilities, and low-income workers. To that end, the Government adopted an Action Plan for the control of COVID-19 at IDP camps that includes measures to raise awareness of the guidelines for pandemic prevention and to establish necessary measures to prevent and control the pandemic among internally displaced persons. To date those have been no serious outbreaks in any camp.

of the COVID pandemic and the on-going internal armed conflict ignited by the Arakan Army(AA) in Rakhine State.

Developments in Rakhine State Mr President,

The Government shares the concern of the international community over the situation in Rakhine, in particular the suffering of all communities affected by armed conflicts. To resolve the issue, our Government focussed on the following areas: humanitarian situation,

and Chin States. The Government and the ICRC drew up an action plan to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 in Rakhine State, including in new and old Internally Displaced People's camps. The WFP has resumed regular distribution of food supplies and other activities such as nutrition interventions for vulnerable communities in Rakhine State. The people have benefitted from the generous support of the UN Country Team and other development partners in these efforts.

patriation issue between Myanmar and Bangladesh. May I say this - Should Bangladesh commit itself to the bilateral process it will find Myanmar a willing partner. Pressure tactics will be futile. Myanmar does not react well to pressure. Myanmar's policy is to maintain friendly relations with all its five neighbours. We want to be good neighbours with Bangladesh, bound in a zero tolerance policy towards terrorism, not merely in words but in deeds. By so doing we will be upholding the national interests not

U Kyaw Tint Swe, Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor ...

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The Government is also working with ASEAN's Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre). At the time of repatriation, the ASEAN assessment team will be in the field to assess the process. This should enhance the trust and confidence of the returnees. In July this year, Myanmar and ASEAN identified and endorsed four joint projects: 1) improving access to information to facilitate the repatriation process; 2) capacity-building for the verification process at the reception centres; 3) provision of agriculture equipment; and 4) livelihood-recovery programme.

Accountability and Reconciliation Mr President

We share the concern over the allegations of human rights violations in Rakhine State and take them seriously. During the public hearing before the International Court of Justice in December 2019, the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi reaffirmed that if war crimes or human rights violations have been committed, they will be investigated and prosecuted by Myanmar's criminal justice system. This is our right, our obligation and our commitment, and it is important for vital domestic processes linked to constitutional reform and peace in Myanmar.

In pursuit of accountability, the Government established the Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICoE) in July 2018, which submitted its final report to the President in January 2020. Based on these findings, the Union Attorney-General is conducting ongoing investigations of allegations against civilian perpetrators.

Furthermore, the Office of the Judge Advocate-General (JAG) announced on 15 September 2020 that a third court-martial concerning alleged human rights violations in Rakhine in 2017 will start before the end of 2020. It concerns the villages of Chut Pyin and Maung Nu. The State Counsellor mentioned in her statement before the International Court of Justice in December 2019 that events in these two villages were among the 12 most se-

rious incidents in Rakhine in 2016-2017. The ICoE final report identified them as the gravest on its list of 12-13 incidents. This is also alleged by United Nations and civil society reports. It is therefore significant that there will be a court-martial for these incidents as it confirms Myanmar has the will to ensure accountability for the most serious allegations.

Earlier, the two court-martials concerning Inn Din and Gutarpyin saw the conviction of 13 officers and soldiers, for crimes in two villages on the list of 12 serious incidents mentioned by the State Counsellor. Let me repeat her statement of regret at the early release of those convicted in the Inn Din case. I am confident that in subsequent cases there will be no such premature release of convicted persons. With a third court-martial, we could see within the next several months an increase in the total number

of officers and soldiers convicted for Rakhine 2017 crimes. In this century, there are very few countries that hold their own officers and soldiers accountable for international crimes even in conflict which has seen a much higher number of deaths than the internal armed conflict in Rakhine.

These possible patterns of conduct across northern Rakhine in 2016-2017 are now subject to the new, regional investigation, based on the three above-mentioned cases, the ICoE final report, and other information. This represents highly significant progress in the domestic accountability process.

A country should be given time, space and respect for its domestic accountability processes. Independent experts have pointed out to the risks of "demonization and one-sidedness" in the way some international actors swiftly reject any step Myanmar takes towards domestic accountability. One international lawyer politely asked whether such automatic rejection of domestic justice steps is "indicative of objectivity, lack of bias, and concern to nourish domestic justice efforts", or is it perhaps exactly the opposite? Demonization not only undermines our investiga-

any evidence of possible crimes relating to the above-mentioned criminal investigations. A third directive was issued to all Government officials to denounce and prevent all forms of hate speech and to participate in and support anti-hate speech activities. Anti-hate speech awareness campaigns are being implemented nationwide. In May this year, anti-hate speech activities led by civil society organizations, women and youth were carried out simultaneously in all townships in Rakhine State. More activities will take place in the coming months. The Election Commission and the Ministry of Information are working together with UNDP and UNESCO in an anti-hate speech programme.

Social Cohesion Mr President,

Myanmar has expended sustained efforts to foster social cohesion among the communi-

State.

Four youth camps have been held. Over 265 campaign activities to raise awareness of COVID-19 prevention measures have taken place in Rakhine State. Other activities in Rakhine include 17 anti-hate speech events, 3 gender-based violence awareness events, 5 community environmental campaigns, and 10 anti-drug campaigns. In addition, 28 training sessions on social cohesion, civic education, social mobilization, conflict analysis, managing rumours and hate messages, have been organized. Furthermore, 155 vocational training programmes have been conducted whereby the communities were involved in producing facemasks and hand sanitizers. These activities created jobs for more than 5,000 people in Rakhine State. It has been said, "Nothing brings people together more than a World Cup". In that spirit, we are pleased that 3 sports tournaments have taken place.

All communities in Rakhine State have participated in vocational training programmes offered by the UN such as tailoring, mechanics and livestock breeding. All communities also participated in "cash for work" infrastructure development projects, such as improvement of village roads, water ponds and school renovation.

Addressing sexual violence

Myanmar has signed a Joint Communiqué with the UN on the prevention and response to conflict-related sexual violence in December 2018. A National Committee was established and has developed an Action Plan to identify priority implementation areas such as the issuance of clear directives by the military, investigation of alleged violations, prosecution of perpetrators, capacity-building of law enforcement officers, legal reform measures, and strengthening of service delivery for survivors. Furthermore, the Government is drafting a law on the "Prevention and Protection of Violence against Women" to reinforce the protection of women from all forms of violence including domestic and sexual violence.

Demonization may be the oldest propaganda technique. It seeks to inspire ill-feeling towards the designated enemy, the 'other', to rally allies to impose an arbitrary agenda that is removed from basic norms of justice.. It is of the utmost importance that those entrusted with UN human rights mandates observe the highest standards of quality control and integrity, and that they do not cut corners to please any constituency.

of officers and soldiers convicted for Rakhine 2017 crimes. In this century, there are very few countries that hold their own officers and soldiers accountable for international crimes even in conflict which has seen a much higher number of deaths than the internal armed conflict in Rakhine.

It is noteworthy that the Judge Advocate-General of Myanmar will not stop with the third case. In his announcement on 15 September 2020, he also stated that an investigation of possible wider patterns of violations in the region of northern Rakhine in 2016-2017 has started. Such alleged regional patterns of conduct could include, for example, "inadequate distinction between civilians and ARSA fighters, disproportionate use of force, failure to prevent plundering or property destruction, or acts of forcible displacement of civilians".

tors and prosecutors. As the State Counsellor observed before the International Court of Justice last December: "Feeding the flames of an extreme polarization in the context of Rakhine can harm the values of peace and harmony in Myanmar. Aggravating the wounds of conflict can undermine unity in Rakhine. Hate narratives are not simply confined to hate speech – language that contributes to extreme polarization also amounts to hate narratives".

Issuance of three Presidential Directives Mr President,

In April this year, the Presidential Office issued a directive to Government officials to act in compliance of its treaty obligations under the Genocide Convention. Another directive was also issued to prohibit officials from destroying or removing

ties residing in Rakhine State to bring about reconciliation. It is our sincere hope that these social cohesion activities will bring the communities together and rebuild trust and confidence. Despite persistent opposition to the Government's effort to achieve social harmony and reconciliation in Rakhine State from some actors both outside and inside the country, we are determined to persevere.

Together with our civil society partners, various activities have taken place to promote mutual understanding and respect among the communities. So far, 203 community dialogues have been conducted, while respecting social distancing rules and other necessary precautions linked to the COVID pandemic. The success of these community dialogues and activities augurs well for reconciliation and peace in Rakhine

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U Kyaw Tint Swe, Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor ...

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Prevention of Grave Violations against Children

The Government has established the National Committee on the Prevention of Grave Violations against Children in Armed Conflict and formulated the National Action Plan for protecting children in armed conflicts from injury, death, and sexual violence. This Action Plan was approved by the President's Office in August this year, and in line with the work plan, the military will issue necessary directives, and set up a complaints mechanism, and a monitoring and evaluation committee. Myanmar is cooperating with UNICEF to conduct awareness-raising activities. In June this year, the UN delisted Myanmar's army from the list of countries that

recruit child soldiers for combat purposes.

Development

To tackle poverty in Rakhine State, a Rakhine State Investment Fair was held in February 2019. This event is expected to generate job opportunities, income, and long-term development. Other development projects are being considered but these initiatives have been put on hold due to the armed conflicts and the pandemic.

Conclusion Mr President,

Myanmar reaffirms its commitment to continue to work constructively with the United Nations in line with our national priorities and needs, particularly in our endeavours to achieve the goals set out in

the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan.

In our democratic journey, we have achieved much progress but it is far from over. Our progress is due to the resilience of our people and their strong will to build prosperity and well-being for all in Myanmar. We are nurturing and building a new nation together. We would like to thank our friends far and near who have offered us their understanding and support during difficult times. We sincerely value their friendship.

This brings me to my conclusion. In May 2019, the UN released its strategy and plan of action against hate speech. This must be lauded as there is a dire need to address hate speech domestically. But we should also be aware of the international dimension, as

referred to earlier. Demonization may be the oldest propaganda technique. It seeks to inspire ill-feeling towards the designated enemy, the 'other', to rally allies to impose an arbitrary agenda that is removed from basic norms of justice. It is of the utmost importance that those entrusted with UN human rights mandates observe the highest standards of quality control and integrity, and that they do not cut corners to please any constituency. Grave accusations have been made against Myanmar. Such accusations have not been subjected to due process, including judicial probing of real evidence, yet the verdict of 'guilty' seems to have been passed by some in the international community. Demonizing fellow Member States of the United Nations, by using in-

adequately quality-controlled information, fosters ill-feeling between countries and peoples, which is the harbinger of hatred and conflict. This would weaken the principal objectives of peace on which the United Nations Charter is based.

We ask only for fair treatment from the international community. It is our appeal to the Member States to examine the negative narratives on Myanmar carefully and impartially, before drawing their independent conclusions. We would appreciate it if the international community continues to extend its support and understanding to our efforts towards the achievement of sustainable peace and national reconciliation, genuine democracy, and inclusive development for all peoples in Myanmar.

I thank you, Mr President.

Union Minister U Kyaw Tin participates in Virtual Meeting between ASEAN Foreign Ministers and Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom on COVID-19; UK to provide 4.8 mln pounds to strengthen national health systems in CLMV Countries

UNION Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin participated in the virtual Meeting between ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom on COVID-19 at 2:30 pm yesterday from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw.

The Meeting was chaired by Mr Pham Binh Minh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam in his capacity as the Chair of ASEAN 2020 and attended by Mr Dominic Raab, First Secretary of State, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the United Kingdom, ASEAN Foreign Ministers, the Secretary-General of ASEAN and high representatives of the ASEAN Member States.

At the Meeting, the Ministers underlined the need for closer collaboration and coordinated efforts to ensure a strong global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministers committed to strengthening cooperation between ASEAN Member States and the UK in research, development, manufacture and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines and treatments adhering to the objectives of efficiency, safety,



Union Minister U Kyaw Tin joins virtual meeting between ASEAN FMs and UK Foreign Secretary yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

equal accessibility and affordability. They agreed to enhance cooperation on public health emergencies and expressed their readiness to provide necessary assistance to nationals in each other's countries who are affected by the pandemic to enable their safe return. They also welcomed the UK's commitment to contribute 4.8 million Pounds towards strengthening national health systems

and preventing and tracking COVID-19 in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Viet Nam.

Union Minister U Kyaw Tin apprised the Meeting of national measures taken by the Government of Myanmar for the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 pandemic with "Whole-of-Nation" approach. He stressed the importance of people's participation in containing the pandemic,

mitigating its socio-economic impacts and ensuring early recovery. He assured that Myanmar Government's COVID-19 response and relief measures reach to the most vulnerable segments of the society including IDPs and low-income families. He also appreciated the UK for its support to Myanmar in the fight against COVID-19 and its intention to contribute 1 million pounds to the COVID-19

ASEAN Response Fund.

With regard to strengthening cooperation between ASEAN and the United Kingdom in response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Union Minister emphasized the need for stronger partnership and closer collaboration in addressing the health crisis and its socio-economic impacts. As defeating the virus has been utmost priority for all countries, the Union Minister underscored the importance of strengthening collaboration for early availability, equitable accessibility and affordability of vaccines. He also highlighted the need to maintain channels open for trade, communication and sharing of experience and best practices and promote collaboration on green recovery to ensure the sustainability and resilience of the post pandemic world.

The Chairman's Press Release of the Virtual Meeting between ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom on COVID-19 was issued at the end of the Meeting. Also present at the Meeting were senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Health and Sports.—MNA

“People are the key”

Modern public communication workshop held for Information Ministry



Modern public communication workshop in progress. PHOTO: MNA

INFORMATION Matrix and New York-based Sprinklr jointly organized a virtual demonstration workshop on modern mass communication technology yesterday afternoon via videoconferencing.

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint, Deputy

Minister U Aung Hla Tun, Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung, departmental heads, and officials from Information Matrix and Sprinklr participated in the workshop.

In his opening remark, Union Minister Dr Pe Myint said that the Ministry of Infor-

mation operates mainstream media such as print and broadcast channels for public communication.

He added that “new media” (new type of media) now achieves increasing popularity and the MoI staff members are making efforts to be familiar

with the “new media” by learning, making discussions and sharing of knowledge.

During the workshop, Sprinklr’s officials Mr Nicolas Cael and Mr Valentin Dura explained practical application of modern mass communication technology.

Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun and some participants raised queries, and Information Matrix CEO U Thaung Su Nyein, Mr Nicolas Cael and Mr Valentin Dura answered the questions.

Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun delivered a closing speech at the demonstration workshop.

The virtual workshop was attended by 33 staff members of officers under the Ministry of Information.

During the meeting, experts from Information Matrix and Sprinklr demonstrated how the ministry can use information technology and modern mass communication technology in providing news and information to the general public and educational entertainment.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

Union Minister U Ohn Win presents video-recorded statement to UN Summit on Diversity

THE Summit on Biodiversity, as part of the UN’s high-level week, was convened by the President of the General Assembly yesterday morning.

Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win made a video-recorded statement to the Summit.

He discussed the rapid degradation of ecosystems, biodiversities and related species, causing the loss of ecosystem services and experiencing climate changes and natural disasters.

The Union Minister talked

about adopting the post-2020 global biodiversity framework to put the nature on a path to recovery by 2030 to realize the Vision of ‘Living in Harmony with Nature’.

Myanmar is putting emphasis on nature-based solutions to stop extinction of biodiversity and to ensure sustainable development as these solutions are low-costs and support to socio-economic profits.

The Union Minister added that forest conservation and rehabilitation of ecosystem are included in the prioritized sectors of the country, with spending

US\$500 million for the 10-year reforestation project, while implementing the 10-year rehabilitation of wild-life habitats.

He continued to say the works on rehabilitation, conservation and management on biodiversities with the participation of local ethnic people.

Heads of State and Government and other leaders also made their video-recorded statements to the Summit which was first held under the UN General Assembly.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

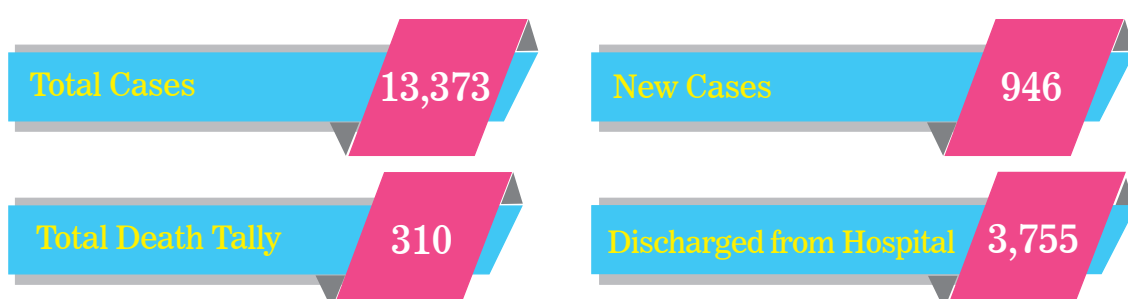


Union Minister U Ohn Win makes a video-recorded statement to UN Summit on Biodiversity. PHOTO: MNA

946 more new cases of COVID-19 reported on 30 September, total figure rises to 13,373

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rise to 13,373 after 946 new cases were reported on 30 September according to Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 13,373 confirmed cases, 310 died, 3,755 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 30 September 2020



Death toll until 8 pm 30-9-2020

26

Ministry of Health and Sports



We value each individual citizen

The problem with this COVID disease is because once you become infected, your family and friends could not be near you to provide support; not like other diseases. You need to be isolated. When you have to stay alone, you might lose heart or become depressed. This is natural. Therefore what I wish to say on behalf of the Union Government is that we value each individual citizen who has been infected. We never ask who has been infected. We only look at the number of infected patients. We place the same value for each person. We don't give preferential treatment on anyone because of wealth or power. That is why I want our people to fight back this COVID disease with this strength.

(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's reports to people about latest COVID-19 situation, on 29 September 2020)

MoC organizes seminar to promote quality, export of rubber

THE Ministry of Commerce held a seminar to improve the quality and export volume of rubber via Zoom application yesterday morning.

Union Minister Dr Than Myint said that the relevant departments, organizations, farmers, merchants, factory owners and those participating in supply chain processes must cooperate to find a solution to manufacture better quality rubber products.

The rubber industry is one of the prioritized sectors while the government is implementing a total of 18 sectors -11 prioritized

products, 2 services and 5 supportive sectors under National Export Strategy (NES) which includes actions to boost Myanmar's export sector and market penetration. Only the rubber products that meet the Myanmar's rubber criteria and international quality standards can be exported to foreign countries. It can overcome the difficulties and obstacles in exporting only with the active participation of those in supply chain processes and it can promote the export sector of the country, he said.

Deputy Minister U Aung

Htoo briefed rubber export volume in each financial year, overseas market status and the ministry's work programmes for the development of rubber industry.

The experts from relevant sector read papers at the seminar with the discussions of rubber farmers, factory owners and merchants.

In conclusion, the Union Minister coordinated short- and long-term plans for rubber industry.—MNA

(Translated by Khaine Thazin Han)



Union Minister Dr Than Myint stresses the importance of cooperation among stakeholders in rubber industry at the Zoom meeting yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

MoHS, UNOPS discuss signing agreement for TB, HIV/syphilis, malaria cares in Myanmar

THE Ministry of Health and Sports and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) yesterday afternoon organized a virtual meeting on matters related to signing an agreement (2021-2023) for TB, HIV/syphilis, and malaria cares in Myanmar and matters related to purchasing medicines and medical accessories for COVID-19 response efforts of the ministry, via videoconferencing.

The agreement for TB, HIV/

syphilis, and malaria cares will be funded through the Global Fund.

During the virtual meeting, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe expressed thanks to UNOPS for helping the ministry in purchasing medicines and medical supplies for COVID-19 response efforts by using the fund provided by UN and other international organizations. He said that the ministry is efficiently using the

fund, medicines and medical accessories. He continued that hospitals in Yangon Region now have 'medical supplies management dashboard' in order to fulfil the needs in the hospitals.

He urged medical supplies purchasing and distribution experts of UNOPS and the experts of the Ministry of Health and Sports to jointly review the ministry's current medical supplies purchasing and distribution system in order to improve it.

He highlighted the need to avoid lack of supportive care and lack of medicines for patients with TB, HIV/syphilis, and malaria, and other patients amidst COVID-19 pandemic. Otherwise, death rates of the three diseases may be higher, so the ministry has done necessary preparations, according to the Union Minister.

He said that the help of UNOPS in purchasing 87 medicines and medical accessories for COVID-19 response efforts is very useful. He requested the UNOPS officials to help the ministry quickly get 95 ICU Ventilators.

UNOPS Yangon Office Programme Director Dr Attila Molnar said that USD\$7.1 million, previously approved by the Global Fund, was allowed to be spent for COVID-19 response efforts of the ministry, and the Global Fund approved \$18 million as C19RM support. He also discussed UNOPS's preparation for Global Fund's support (2021-2023) and the plan to sign the Global Fund's Agreement in December this year.

He said that he feels glad to cooperate with the ministry in prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19. He called on Myanmar officials to allow the transport of medical supplies from one area to another across the nation despite COVID-19 related travel restrictions.

He said that using Antigen Test Kits in COVID-19 control efforts in Myanmar is appropriate, and if Myanmar wants to buy more Antigen Test Kits by spending the remaining fund, UNOPS will help Myanmar buy them. He also stressed that Myanmar has made impressive progress in the fight against

TB, HIV/syphilis, and malaria.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe said that COVID-19 response efforts need to be taken in real-time, so the ministry and UNOPS need to hold virtual meetings via video conferencing at least once a month. He pledged that his ministry will cooperate with other relevant ministries to facilitate efficient transport of medical supplies from one area to another in Myanmar. He said that the ministry had already increased the budget for the Department of Medical Services to buy medicines and accessories to K300 billion this year. Similarly, the ministry increased the budget for the Department of Public Health to buy medicines and medical accessories. He concluded that the Deputy Director-General (Disease Control) and other relevant officials will make detailed discussions and negotiations to prepare for signing the Global Fund Agreement in December this year.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe takes part in the online Myanmar healthcare discussion with UNOPS. **PHOTO: MNA**

Older persons' rights must be respected amidst COVID-19 pandemic

COVID-19 is extremely dangerous for older persons and others who have chronic diseases.

We begin this Decade of Healthy Ageing as COVID-19 continues to cause disproportionate morbidity and mortality among older people across the world and in our Region.

Globally, the case fatality rate is around 3.5% for all ages but is around 12% for those aged 65 and older. In addition to the risk provided by the virus itself, older people have in recent months experienced challenges in accessing the health care they rely on to stay healthy and well, according to the World Health Organization.

Society has a duty to exercise solidarity and better protect older persons who are bearing the lion's share of the COVID-19 pandemic, a UN human rights expert said.

Our Myanmar society has a long history of honoring and respecting older persons. Traditionally, three generations, father-son-grandson (mother-daughter-granddaughter), live and care for each other. But due to the changing social and economic situation, the tradition of grandparents, parents and children living and caring for each other is decreasing and disappearing. The traditional way of caring for older persons is no longer covering all older persons. In addition to the family caring for older persons, other community-based elderly care and day care of older persons

need to be widely practised.

The COVID-19 pandemic broke out at a time while we were scaling up our efforts for caring our older persons with a social pension program, a financial support system, starting from fiscal year 2017-2018 as they are facing insufficient income and health care problems. Health care for older persons is not only normal and traditional health care but also long-term care

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to recognize older persons' rights enacted in the Older Persons Law, we must ensure that essential support services for communities do not put older persons and their care providers at risk.

Besides, when a safe and effective vaccine is developed, older people and high-risk groups such as workers in health-care and other social care settings must be provided first access

Relevant ministries, communities and generations must come together to get through this crisis in solidarity.



IN HONOUR OF INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR OLDER PERSONS WHICH FALLS ON 1 OCTOBER

Healthy aging: stay young to beat aging

By Khin Maung Myint

THE life expectancy of the Myanmar have increased gradually during the past few decades. More and more are living beyond their seventieth birthdays and the number of those in their eighties and nineties are increasing and there are some centenarians, and their numbers are increasing too. However, it would be just meaningless to live a long life if one is not healthy. Thus healthy aging is of utmost importance. This fact emphasizes the importance of taking care of ourselves as we grow older and make sure we enjoy long and healthy lives.

I wrote an article in 2016 about the "International Day of Older Persons" and it was covered by GNL.M. I shared that article on the Facebook at the time and it resurfaced again as a memory a few days ago. I re-shared it again to commemorate that day, which will be coming up soon, as I have no intention of writing a new one. A friend of mine called me and suggested that I should write another article as a tribute to that day. He also suggested that I should write, how as an elderly person myself managed to live alone, without any helper or companion, doing the household chores myself and is still in good spirit and health.

I told him that I will give it a thought, as I had been taking a break from writing, I was not in the mood, but might write it if I can get some inspirations to do it. Early the next morning, while I was doing my routine daily walk, ideas about healthy aging suddenly rushed through my mind. I realized straight away that my mood is returning, because it was almost always during such walks that I got my ideas or the inspirations to write. I finished writing a sketch outline for this article in my mind, then and there, while walking.

I had written a few articles related to healthy living based on my own experiences and some hasty researches. One of them was: "Walk away from your early grave", where the benefits of walking were outlined. Another one was: "Healthy aging", in which I discussed how to lead a healthy life. In this present one I may have to borrow some opinions expressed in those articles and even some from the article mentioned at the beginning.

The benefits of walking.

The benefits of walking are many fold. Here, I will mention only the most important ones. Health experts say that your legs are your second heart. They assist your heart in its work. By walking you are helping your heart to pump blood more efficiently with little effort on its part. Thus walking can be said to help the blood circulation, which is very important for the healths of most human organs, especially the heart and the brain. Walking may help deter or reduce the risks of heart attacks, strokes, diabetes, blood clotting and some other ailments, to list a few.

Healthy aging

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that being healthy means healthy in mind and body or in other words healthy mentally and physically. If one is not healthy mentally or physically, they will age prematurely. Of the two, mental health can have more impact on the overall health. Most physical ailments can be cured with medicines, however, mental illness is more complicated and medicines only will not be able to cure you. To be mentally healthy depends much on the individual. In most cases, it is the individual who is the cause of the deterioration of their mental health. As this is not my field of expertise, I will not be discussing it too technically, but share my experience simply.



I had realized early on in life that worries and anxieties are the main causes of mental stress and strain. When you worry a lot, anxiety sets in leading to stress and strain. Mentally stressed and strained persons are quite visible by their forlorn and dejected looks. Such persons aged prematurely. When those mental stress and strain are very intense, the physical health too can be greatly affected. Sometime, they can cause a person to temporarily stop functioning. Thus my secret of being active and alert mentally and physically is: I had learned to keep the worries and anxieties away as much as possible. It was quite difficult at first, but later I succeeded. These days, I never do anything that will cause me to worry later. Thus without worries there is no chance of anxiety setting in. Here, I would like to add that greed and too much expectations can also contribute to anxiety. If one's desires are not fulfilled as expected, chances are that the anxiety will set in.

Tips for healthy aging

Here are some tips for healthy aging. I found that they are very useful for me and hope it will be for you too. As they are self-explanatory they will not need further explanation.

1. Stay active
2. Watch your diet.
3. Train your brain.
4. Be connected
5. Get enough sleep
6. Manage stress
7. Take precautions
8. Look after yourself
9. Quit smoking
10. Refrain from over-indulgence

Stay young to beat aging

If a person is young at heart they can easily beat aging. Let me remind you that to stay young at heart doesn't mean doing naughty things such as going to KTV, night clubs or massage parlors. Such places are no place for the elderly persons.

Here also, I would like to share my idea of staying young. A colleague of mine used to post on the Facebook, on his birthdays that

he is now one year older. When I came upon one such status, I wrote a comment advising him to forget his age, stop counting the years and to stay young at heart. That was what I did after my 70th birthday. I got that idea from a senior citizen who was always jolly and joking around. He was very active, alert physically and mentally, also healthy and strong. I guessed him to be in his eighties, not by his physical features, which looked much younger, but by other factors such as who were his contemporaries, some of whom I happened to know. At that time I was only 58 years old. When I became well acquainted with him I asked how old he was and he replied laughing that he was 70 plus years old and added, he had stopped counting his age after 70. I liked his idea so much that I too stopped counting my age after I reached 70 and I don't mention my birthday when registering for a Facebook account. I had never celebrated my birthday in my life either. Thus I rarely wish others on their birthdays, lest it would

be like reminding them they are getting older.

Take a Stand against ageism

Every October 1st is designated the "International Day for Older Persons". The theme chosen for the 2016 commemoration of that day was: "Take a Stand against Ageism". Ageism is discrimination or prejudice against aged persons. Not long ago, there was an absurd statement that people in their seventies shouldn't be given responsible jobs as they are prone to senility. I totally disagree with that. That was a gross commitment of ageism. As for me the older I get the more knowledgeable, the more foresighted and the more rational I become. My memory today is much better than when I was 50 or 60. In those days as I had worries and anxieties due to the tensions and pressures at work, my brains were not as sharp or alert and I had no time nor knowledge to train myself. Today after retirement, I had all the time and knowledge to train and had mentally become more healthy.

Conclusion

As conclusion, I would like to say that one can lead a long and healthy life if they have the will and determination. However, it must be made clear that if it weren't for a terminal disease like the cancer or the pandemics like the one we are facing today, it is possible to live a healthy, long and active life, but that may solely depend on the individual.

The theme for the 2020 International day of Older Persons is: "Pandemics: Do They Change How We Address Age and Ageing?" It was well chosen, because we are hearing of some countries, where priority for medical care were given to the younger persons over the older ones who were infected by the Coronavirus. Such things are very inhumane, unfair and amounts to ageism.

U Sein Oo appointed as Ambassador of Myanmar to Nepal

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Sein Oo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Malaysia, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Nepal.—MNA

U Aung Soe Win appointed as Ambassador of Myanmar to Malaysia

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Aung Soe Win, Director-General of Planning and Administrative Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Malaysia.—MNA

Appointment of Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Myanmar agreed on

THE Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the proposed appointment of Mr Sherif Salah EldinElleithy as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in succession to Mr Khaled Mohamed Abdelrahman Abdelsalam.

Mr Sherif Salah EldinElleithy joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1986 and has served at various capacities at home and abroad. In 2010, he was promoted to the position of Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs of Communication Department. In 2011, he was Deputy Assistant Minister at the Asian, American and New Zealand Affairs Department, and in 2012, he served as Deputy Assistant Minister at the Gulf countries States and Yemen Department. From 2013 to 2017, he was the Egyptian Ambassador to the Republic of Cameroon. Since 2017, he has been serving as the Ambassador/ Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Conference Department.

He is fluent in English, French and Spanish.—MNA

AN EFFECTIVE AND SAFE COVID-19 VACCINE

World Bank wants \$12 bn for virus vaccine in poor nations

THE World Bank on Tuesday said it has asked its board of directors to approve \$12 billion to help poor countries purchase and distribute eventual vaccines against Covid-19.

The bank has already implemented emergency response programmes in 111 countries and the extra money, if approved, would be aimed at low- and middle-income countries. "An effective and safe Covid-19 vaccine is the most

promising path forward for the world to reopen safely," a World Bank spokesman said.

"The global economy will not recover fully until people feel they can live, socialize, work and travel with confidence." The funds would

be dispersed over 12-18 months.

Covid-19 vaccines aren't commercially available yet but World Bank President David Malpass told French newspaper Le Figaro "the process of distributing a vaccine is complex" and it was

important to anticipate the needs associated with it. "We want the poorest countries to have access to it (a vaccine), and in these countries, we want the most vulnerable people and medical personnel to be vaccinated," he said. Malpass

said the Washington-based development lender has experience with immunization programmes like those directed at polio and measles, as well as in managing crises like the Ebola outbreaks.

SOURCE: AFP

Flood Bulletin

(Issued at 11:00 hrs MST on 30-9-2020)

Flood condition of Ayeyawady River

According to the (12:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Ayeyarwady River at Shwegu has exceeded by about (2) inches above its danger level. It may fall below its danger level during the next 1 day.

The Party for People presents its policy, stance and work programmes

Party for People Chairman U Myo Min Tun (aka) Percy Pyi Hein presented party's policy, stance and work programmes through radio and TV on 30 September.



Greetings esteemed voters and citizens

I am Chairman U Myo Min Tun (aka) Percy Pyi Hein of the Party for People. We established our party on 23 July 2015. We have formed our party intending to improve socio-economic livelihoods, human rights, resolve issues in society, and maintain solidarity among all ethnic groups in the nation.

Our party's flag and logo are the same. The flag has a red and green background with a blue circle in the middle. There are 14 white stars of equal size circling the Independence Monument inside the blue circle. There is also an image of people shaking hands in the circle.

1. The red background represents bravely working hard to improve the socio-economy and prosperity of the people;
2. The colour green in the background represents prosperity and social development for the people;
3. The blue circle stands for national peace;
4. The 14 white stars represent equality for the 14 states and regions.
5. The Independence Monument is a milestone of the nation and the stars circling it expresses our solidarity;
6. The image of shaking hands represents finding solutions to conflicts, differing views and national issues.

Esteemed voters and citizens

Politics is a wide-ranging issue relevant to all citizens. It is also difficult and complicated. But we cannot ignore it because of that, and our party must help people understand the essence of politics. Our party strives for the interest of the nation and people based on the responsibility and accountability principle. Humanity has searched for better ways to fulfil their basic needs, resolve social issues, manage, govern and administer.

Esteemed voters and citizens

Our party believes any matter can be resolved through discussion and negotiation as the correct path of democracy. Negotiations must be equal and cannot favour either side of the equation. We will establish a government that the entire population can put their trust in. The government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar will develop the basic needs, education and economy for the people.

We will invite experts and investments from abroad and encourage ethnic entrepreneurs to drive up the national economy. Ethnic groups must have equal access to natural resources and fully participate in agriculture and industrial businesses. All citizens

must be included in communal peace and the rule of law, both essential for national development.

The Party for People will attempt to resolve the differing views, conflicts and disagreements between ethnic groups, and the people and the government through discussion and negotiations to instil peace and stability.

Esteemed voters and citizens

Our country had suffered from what we were under the colonialists for many years. Even after achieving independence, the differing views of our leaders stopped national development and lowered the standards of the nation and its people. We must not differentiate between the states and regions and consider the country as a whole. Democracy is the most suitable system for this.

We need to take lessons from our political history, political thoughts, ideologies and theories to resolve the existing political issues by making the right decisions. Our party's political route is democratic, and our belief is for peaceful coexistence and respecting the rule of law.

Esteemed voters and citizens

Our party will protect the unique culture, education, society, languages and literature and religion of all ethnic groups. We will improve their education, healthcare and social standards. We will preserve their integrity, cultural heritage, religions, languages, arts and customs from disappearing.

Esteemed voters and citizens

The strength of the economy is the mark of a nation's development. Our country has plenty of free and wildland that will allow us to advance to industrial farming and improve the agricultural sector. We will acquire foreign expertise and investments to manufacture our raw materials and resources into high-quality products suitable for exporting to other nations. We must make our natural and historical locations attractive for tourism as well.

We must pave the way for ethnic entrepreneurs and private businesses and enact laws to resolve the rising land values that are an obstacle for foreign investment.

Esteemed voters and citizens

Education is the foundation for national development. We must heavily invest in education for a world-class education. We must cultivate the skills of our teachers and regularly review the education system of developed nations with our own.

We must ensure all children and illiterate people in the nation become educated. All school-aged children must attend school and bring children compelled to work back into the classrooms. Our party will ensure children are not subject to mental, physical or sexual abuse.

Esteemed voters and citizens

The State and private businesses must cooperate on healthcare to provide affordable services. We must encourage physical exercise on a national scale and prevent abuse of cigarettes and alcohol. We must

conduct health education nationwide.

Esteemed voters and citizens

Farmers play an essential part of our agro-based nation, so will ensure the right to work on farmlands is secured for farmers and their successors. The State must support them in this regard as well. Food is important, and thus urban expansion onto farmlands should be prevented by law.

We must provide farmers with the necessary machinery and financial assistance. We must fully transition to industrial farming with rice as the main export while promoting other crops as well. We will ensure workplace safety and sufficient wages for labourers and their basic needs are fulfilled.

Esteemed voters and citizens

The sovereignty and stability of our borders is the responsibility of the Defence Services. The nation is as strong as its military. Thus, the army must be modernized and armed with the latest weaponry. Military personnel must be sent abroad to accumulate international experience.

We must have joint military exercises with other nations as seen fit. All citizens must enrol in the military and be called to arms when needed. The military is the main strength for national security and the second source of power in that regard is the Myanmar Police Force, which must be expanded to five times its current size.

Esteemed voters and citizens

A single individual cannot do anything in our current political landscape alone. All political forces, organizations and the public must work together. If discussions and negotiations do not produce identical results, then the peace process will not be sustainable.

Our nation is still on a bumpy political road with differing opinions, views and power struggle between armed groups, ethnic groups, internal forces and political parties continuing to this day. Our nation is unable to move forward. We must begin all-inclusive activities that benefit society and end the grudges and hatred between all groups.

All stakeholders must set aside their differences and cooperate on the same path in the upcoming exciting 2020 General Elections. Regardless of who wins and who loses, we must all work to improve the nation with a smile.

Esteemed voters and citizens

May your vote bring forth capable representatives.
May your vote create a good government.
May your vote place the nation in the middle of the world.
May your vote develop the national economy.
May your vote help the nation perpetuate.
May your vote bring peace to the nation.
That is why do not refrain from voting as you have a duty to the nation. I will end our party's speech here.
Thank you.



Elections are the root for development of democracy.

Union Farmer-Labour Force Party (UFLF) presents its policy, stance and work programmes

Union Farmer-Labour Force Party Chairman U Min Thu presented party's policy, stance and work programmes through radio and TV on 30 September.



Greetings to all esteemed farmers and working people of the nation

May you have peace and prosperity for years to come.

I am Chairman U Min Thu of the Union Farmer-Labour Force Party.

I would first like to extend my gratitude to the farmers who cultivated the rice I consume as I become Chairman, to the Union Election Commission Chairman and the Union President for youth participation in politics, to the Ministry of Information and MRTV staff for allowing us to communicate our party's information, and to the people for listening to us.

Our party petitioned to register on 29-4-2015 and was registered on 4-8-2015 with party registration number 99.

Esteemed voters and people

The name of our party is the Union Farmer-Labour Force Party (UFLF).

Our party shall cooperate with the farmers in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. They have worked together with successive governments for peace and establish a multiparty democratic nation to elevate farmers of Myanmar onto the world stage.

Our flag and logo have a red background, 14 identical white stars and cogwheel with a smiling farmer holding a sickle in a green circle within the cogwheel.

1. The red background represents the courage of the farmers and loyalty to the nation.
2. The 14 white stars represent the 14 states and regions and equality among all ethnic groups.
3. The cogwheel represents the workforce of Myanmar.
4. The green circle represents the peace and de-

velopment driven by the farmers and labourers of the nation.

5. The smiling farmer image represents the paternal spirit of continuing work for one's family, no matter what calamity or poverty exists.
6. The pose with reaping the crops with a sickle represents the farmers working hard to feed the nation.
7. The hands of the farmers with their sickles and the hands of the workers represent the conviction to protect the nation from external dangers with the military.

Our party's flag and logo are the same

Our policies

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has 135 ethnic groups living in the 14 states and regions. Thus, all ethnic groups equally possess the nation and should have equality, freedom, fairness and solidarity. We need to improve the lives of farmers and workers in rural areas to establish a peaceful and developed nation and to achieve that we must promote industrial farming, develop industrial businesses, and improve the lives of working-class people in cities. Our party was formed for that reason.

Our party name reflects the agricultural nature of Myanmar and its farmers. We will gather the strength of all farmers and labourers to cooperate with successive government administrations to ensure equality for all citizens in line with Article 21-(a), Chapter I of the 2008 Constitution, the original rights of citizens in Chapter VIII, and equality before the law for all citizens outlined in Article 347.

Political policies

1. Farmers will join hands with the military to go into battle if the sovereignty of Myanmar is under threat.
2. We will emphasize sovereignty into the hands of the people as the nation is based on a transparent society built on democracy free of authoritarianism.
3. We will conduct peaceful discussions to resolve internal conflicts for national reconciliation and protect the national economy together with farmers of the nation.
4. We will stand for fulfilling the needs of the people in a country composed of self-determined states with equality among the citizens.

Legal policies

Enacting laws is vital for national stability. There will be no one above the law, and the government and the people must accept and practise it together for the rule of law. The right for farmers to work on their lands and confiscating farmlands must be done in line with the law.

We will ensure that workers receive sufficient pay and compensation and assistance for injuries in the workplace. We will strive for labour affairs ministers who will take responsibility and accountability for workers, under the law.

All citizens will accept the rule of law in line with the 2008 Constitution and receive full protection in line with the law.

We will cooperate with the next government administration to assist rural areas lagging in healthcare, economy and education development. The chances of success depend on the capabilities of the next government administration and their compassion towards the people.

Esteemed voters and people

I will contest for the Pyithu Hluttaw seat for Kawthoung Township, Taninthayi Region, in the upcoming election on 8 November 2020. We will also be competing for four seats for Amyotha Hluttaw regional constituency 1 and 2, 2 seats for Pyithu Hluttaw in Yangon Region's Thanlyin and provincial Hluttaw constituency 1, a seat for Bago Region's Kawa township regional Hluttaw constituency 2.

Our nation comprises honest and hardworking farmers and labourers. They are the same as the stars in the sky that shine like the sun in the night sky. The President, government members and the Speakers of the three Hluttaws must support the development of the farmers and workers so that they will render the light and strength to the nation.

That is why we have the image of the farmer reaping the crop and the cogwheel on our flag. The people need to vote for the farmer and worker image to ensure the emergence of Hluttaw representatives who will bring about change and equality.

Voting for our party will enable us to bring forth a government that will ensure equality for all ethnic groups, citizens and farmers. I conclude wishing the peace of mind and physical wellbeing on all.



Campaign speeches of political parties for 2020 General Election on 1-2 October

CAMPAIGN speeches of Myanmar People's Democratic Party and Arakan League for Democracy Party for 2020 General Election will be broadcast on MRTV, Hluttaw Channel, Myanma Radio and MRTV Facebook page at 7 pm on 1 October, and will be published in the state-owned newspapers—the Myanma Alinn, the Mirror and the Global New Light of Myanmar—on 2 October. — MNA

Section 58 (d) in Hluttaw Election Law

IN accordance with section 58 (d) of the Hluttaw Election Law, no one is allowed to give speeches at meetings, instigation, writing, distribution of using posters or attempting by other means to disturb the voting or election. Anyone who is found guilty of or abet this act shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year, or with fine not exceeding K100,000 (one hundred thousand Kyats), or with both.



Work plan for civics, decent citizens discussed under youth policy strategic plan



MSWRR Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye joins the online discussion on promotion of 'civics and decent citizens' work plan yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement organized a videoconference yesterday to adopt a work plan for promoting 'civics and decent citizens' which is a priority of the National Strategic Plan for Youth Policy (2020-2024).

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye in his capacity as the Chairman of Myanmar Youth Affairs Committee, Deputy Minister U Soe Aung, the Permanent Secretary, the directors-general, officials from Social Welfare Department and representatives from UNFPA Myanmar joined the online discussion.

The Union Minister said that Myanmar has developed the National Strategic Plan for Youth Policy on 20 August, and the plan includes pri-

oritizing the sector for civics and decent citizens to promote human rights values, democratic norms and federalism among the young people; to implement training programmes for nurturing decent citizens, to encourage volunteer spirit; to provide the youth with some incentives such as certain amount of salary and capacity building courses; to develop the mindset of responsibility and accountability; to carry out anti-corruption works.

He also encouraged development of volunteering spirit among the young persons including civil service personnel, and advised to perform the duties of ministries in measures against COVID-19 in coordination with the relevant minis-

tries, civil society organizations, UN agencies and INGOs.

The Director-General of Social Welfare Department presented work plans for civics and decent citizens, the work plans with the ministries and the estimate budgets.

The Deputy Minister gave advice on drawing the plan; followed by the discussions of senior officers, UNFPA Myanmar's youth committee members to coordinate with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and Sports and other relevant ministries, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission, the Union Civil Service Board, the Anti-Corruption Commission and UN agencies.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

173 Myanmar nationals fly back home from Malaysia

A total of 173 Myanmar citizens landed in Yangon yesterday by a relief flight of Myanmar Airways International.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Yangon Region gov-

ernment arranged 14-day quarantine at specific places or designated hotels, followed by the 7-day home quarantine.

The Myanmar embassy in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia is collaborating with relevant organizations to bring the citizens back

home after scrutinizing national verifications of undocumented nationals and those who were held at the detention centres.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has organized 17 relief flights from Malaysia until now.—MNA (Translated by Aung Khin)

မြန်မာ့အလင်း
Myanma Alinn Daily

မော်ရီယာ
The Mirror Daily

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

နေ့စဉ်ထုတ်ရောင်စုံသတင်းစာများအားလူကြီးမင်းတို့၏ အမြို့မြို့အနယ်နယ်ရှိသတင်းစာကိုယ်စားလှယ်ကြီးများထံသို့ တစ်စောင်လျှင် (၁၀၀/-) ကျပ်နှုန်းဖြင့် အရောက်ပို့ဆောင်ပေးလျက်ရှိပါသည်။

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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.
Phone No: 2301185

**Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority**

Agent For:

M/S ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES

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No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
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**Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority**

Agent For:

M/S CONTINENTAL SHIPPING LINE PTE LTD

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Germany mulls law to fight labour abuses abroad



Backers of the 'supply chain law' want to make sure items like cobalt for electric car batteries respect human rights and environmental standards. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

BERLIN — When German carmakers seek cobalt from Congolese mines or when a chocolatier sources cocoa beans from Ghana, they may soon no longer be able to hide behind their suppliers if it turns out that the producers are using child labour or flouting environmental standards.

Under a new law proposed by the labour and development ministries, companies above a certain size will have to meet social and environmental rules all along their production chains.

The mooted law was spurred on by a deadly fire in a textile factory in Pakistan and a devastating dam collapse at a Brazilian

iron ore mine that killed more than 250 people -- both of which had links to German companies.

Three in four Germans back the proposals, and even major employers like car giants BMW and Daimler and coffee chain Tchibo are on board.

But industry is divided over the plan, with opponents arguing that it is unworkable and could burden firms with more unwieldy bureaucracy and a mountain of legal cases. Even some government members are sceptics, with Economy Minister Peter Altmaier concerned that the law would put German exporters on the back foot in international competition. —AFP ■

US Treasury says loan deal reached with seven airlines amid crisis

WASHINGTON — The US Treasury on Tuesday announced it had reached a deal with seven major US airlines including American and United to offer

them loans in a bid to stave off job cuts amid the coronavirus crisis.

But the Treasury statement does not say if these agreements are go-

ing to be enough to allow those two airlines to cancel recently announced plans to proceed with job cuts.

Since March, airlines have been grounding

planes and delaying jet deliveries to try to limit the cash-burn as the worldwide coronavirus pandemic effectively paralyzed travel for months.—AFP ■

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YRTA grants 202 buses import slips

THE bus owners have applied to Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA) for issuing the car import permit slips for their old buses manufactured from 1999 to 2003. A total of 202 buses are now granted the car import permit slips, said U Hla Aung, the joint secretary of YRTA.

"This is part of the Yangon regional government project that brings benefits to the bus line owners, who are running their buses in YBS. The Union Government will only accept buses of over 20 years of age. Only the Yangon Region has granted the import permit slip

in exchange for the old buses. After we have negotiated, we have had to go step by step. First, the owners have to submit the applications to the bus lines which forwarded the applications to YRTA. After scrutinizing, YRTA submitted the applications to Yangon regional government. After the Yangon Region government decided at the cabinet meeting, they negotiated with the Union department concerned. Now, 202 buses are granted the car import permit slips," he added.

YRTA scrutinized a total of 205 applications which

were submitted to issue the car import permit slips. Then, YRTA forwarded the application forms to Yangon regional government.

The Ministry of Transport and Communications granted the import slips in exchange for YBS buses manufactured between 1999 and 2003. As the old buses are not in good condition and not suitable for the city's features, Yangon regional government has reported this matter to the Ministry.

The information has been already sent to the bus lines. At present, there are more than

700 YBS buses manufactured between 1999 and 2003. Those who are granted the car import slips in exchange for buses need to give back CNG from their buses. Although the Union government has allowed deregistering the old vehicles since 2011, there remain the old model vehicles. The government has been issuing the bus import slips for buses. Truck import slips for trucks and home use car import slips for home use cars, most of which are more than 20 years old.

—Nyein Nyein

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Meiktila truck drivers, conductors to get COVID-free certificates after test



The Health Department is taking a nasopharyngeal swab and oropharyngeal swab from the drivers and conductors to issue the health certificates. **PHOTO: THEIN MYINT KYAW**

TO enable convenient running of the trucks in Meiktila Township, the Public Health Department is detecting COVID-19 tests to truck drivers and conductors beginning from 30 September in Aung Mingalar Hall, Meiktila.

"With the high rate of spreading of the pandemic, the trucks are being investigated at the entrance gates of some states and regions. The checking can affect the flow of the trade because some trucks are stopped for a long time to un-

dergo the investigation at the entrance gates. Issuing health certificates can prevent the delay in the trade flow. So, the Health Department is conducting COVID-19 tests to issue the health certificates to the truck drivers and conductors. More

than 80 persons of drivers and conductors from 15 truck gates in Meiktila township have registered to receive COVID-19 tests to get the health certificates," said U Khin Maung Myint from Vehicle Supervision Committee.

The Health Department is taking a nasopharyngeal swab and oropharyngeal swab from the drivers and conductors to issue the health certificates. Then, the department will send these swabs to the public health laboratory at Mandalay General Hospital. The department is also taking personal information such as an address, employment, phone number, photo and health histories from them.

When the laboratory gives the testing result, the department will issue the health certificates, said Dr Thandar Lin from the District Public Health Department.—Thein Myint Kyaw

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Persons with disabilities receive cash assistance in Maungtaw

UNDER the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP), the Social Welfare Department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement provided the cash assistance to 484 persons with disabilities in Maungtaw township in Ra-

khine State.

The cash assistance presentation ceremony was held in the Township General Administration Department meeting hall at 11 am on 28 September.

At the ceremony, U Phyu Hla, deputy township admin-

istrator, Dr Khin Hla Nwe, Head of Maungtaw Social Welfare Department and the officials handed over the cash assistance for 448 persons with disabilities. Then, the village administrators gave cash assistance to the recipients in their

villages. Each person received K30,000. The department provided K14,640,000 for 97 persons with disabilities from the wards and 392 persons with disabilities from the villages. —Thet Lwin Soe (District-IPRD)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Huawei's ICT programme hones skills of 38 students

THIRTY-EIGHT students concluded Huawei's five-day ICT technology on-line programme on 28th September, and 10 were awarded the special prizes.

According to the learning

session, all participated students had studied four basic subjects - 5G, AI, Huawei HMS Call, and Cloud Computing, and one major from three selective advanced subjects - 5G, AI, Clouding. As an extra-cur-

riculum, the programme introduced Cyber Security, Digital Trade, Digital Economy, Strategic Leadership, and others.

Seeds for the Future, one of the biggest educational CSR

programmes in Myanmar, has delivered 38 candidates who will be leading Myanmar's ICT sector in the future, said the statement released by Huawei after the closing and awarding ceremony.—GNLM

KBZ, Shwe Than Lwin (Skynet) jointly establish K1 bln fund for Inya Lake COVID Centre

KBZ Bank and Shwe Than Lwin Skynet have announced recently that they have jointly contributed fund for turning the Yangon Convention Centre-YCC to Inya Lake COVID Centre which will receive and give treatment to patients.

The two companies established K1 billion fund for building the Inya Lake COVID Centre which will have 559-beds capacity including a high-dependency unit with 16 beds for emergency patients.

The move came under the directives of the Yangon Region Government and the Ministry of Health and Sports.

KBZ Bank contributed K700 million while Shwe Than Lwin (Skynet) K300 million to

the initial fund while Yangon Convention Centre Company has allowed the YCC building as a COVID Centre in the fight against the global pandemic.

Under the arrangements of medical experts, the medical centre is expected to complete in 10 days.

If necessary, the centre's capacity can be expanded to 1,000-beds capacity, according to the announcement.

Arrangements would be made for making necessary medicines which would be required at the centre available and food at the centre. Besides, separate facilities for medical experts, doctors and volunteers would be affiliated with the hospital. — Ko Kyaw



Yangon Convention Centre-YCC. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Taninthayi offshore fishing vessels relying only on Ranong market



Ninety-five per cent of fish caught in the Taninthayi coast are delivered to Ranong market.

PHOTO: KHAING HTOO (MYEIK IPRD)

AS all the fishing vessels off the Taninthayi coast depend solely on Ranong market, the businesses is expected to come to a halt due to the declining price and weakening demand and marine workers may experience hardships, according to Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF).

“The whole fishing business will grind to a halt if the Ranong market is closed. Consequently, it will threaten the livings of marine workers. At present, over 30,000 marine labourers are working in the fishing vessels, and about 100,000 families depend on that business. We are hoping to keep

Ranong market open”, said U Thet Soe, secretary of MFF (Taninthayi Region).

Majority of the fish caught are currently being sold at Ranong fish market, and low-value fish are sent to fish powder processing factories in Myeik. The fish are still demanded at Ranong market, for now, fish entrepreneurs said.

“If traders from Ranong market stop buying the fish, fishing vessels will suspend. There are over 1,000 fishing vessels in Myeik District. Suppose we have a good transport infrastructure and cold storage plants for val-

ue-added production in Myeik town. In that case, the country will receive more revenues, create more job opportunities and bring Myanmar workers working in Thailand back home,” secretary of MFF added.

Ninety-five per cent of fish caught in the Taninthayi coast are delivered to Ranong market. MFF called on the government to invite the investors for cold-storage plants and bridge construction project in Myeik town. As a result, it can contribute a lot to the country's fishery production sector.—Khaing Htoo (Myeik IPRD)
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

MoC reports slight decrease in rubber export value during Oct-July

MYANMAR has exported over 196,000 tonnes of rubber worth over US\$230 million as of July-end in the current financial year since 1 October 2019, which shows a decrease of over \$10 million compared with the corresponding period of the previous FY, the Ministry of Commerce's data showed.

During a year-ago period, over \$240 million worth 190,000

tonnes were shipped to the external markets. The COVID-19 pandemic caused rubber price to drastically plunge to K350-500 per pound in early May, incurring financial hardships to the growers.

The sharp drop in rubber price this year hurt the growers. Some cannot even afford to cover the cost of land preparation during the monsoon season.

Some rubber producers

working on a manageable scale are exporting rubber to a small extent, so the export data is still witnessed during the closing season. Rubber price is usually on the high side when the rubber tapping season starts. In 2017, rubber fetched above K900 per pound in the opening season. However, it fell to a low of K500 per pound then, forcing some rubber farm owners to shut down their businesses without tapping latex as they cannot cover labour wages, said Daw Lin Lin Tun, rubber producer of Hlaingbwe Township.

Myanmar's rubber price hit the highest record in 2011 with K1,800 per pound and \$6,000 per tonne.

At present, RSS3 rubber fetched around K680 per pound, as per data of the Myeik District Agricultural Department.

An improvement in Myanmar rubber exports will be directly related to the price offered, according to the Myanmar

Rubber Planters and Producers Association (MRPPA).

The volatile rubber price is related to global climate change, and government subsidy will be required for growers to produce quality rubber, said an official of the MRPPA.

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

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

At present, Myanmar is exporting only raw rubber sheets owing to lack of machinery and

technology. Export rubber varieties include synthetic rubber, ribbed smoked sheet RSS 1,3,5, Myanmar Standard Rubber MSR-20, Technically Specified Rubber TSR-20, and Crepe Rubber.

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

About 150,000 tonnes of rubber worth \$186 million was exported in the FY2017-2018. Myanmar shipped over 200,000 tonnes of rubber, with an estimated value of \$250 million, to external markets in the FY2018-2019, an increase of 50,000 tonnes which helped boost earnings by over \$60 million compared to the year-ago period, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce.—Ko Htet
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Myanmar's rubber price hit the highest record in 2011 with K1,800 per pound and \$6,000 per tonne. PHOTO: KHON (WIN PA)

Yangon United trounces ISPE 6-1 in MNL Week-20

YANGON United made a big win over local youth players based ISPE FC 6-1 in a match of Week-20 or the last week of the Myanmar National League yesterday at Yangon United Sports Complex.

Head coach U Min Tun Lin's Yangon United lined up with key players including Maung Maung Lwin, Kyi Lin, captain Yan Aung Kyaw, Aee Soe, keeper San Sat Naing, Thurein Soe and Yan Naing Oo.

Next, head coach U Aung Nay Win's ISPE FC used team's youth players Ban Htoug Kyae O, captain Zin Ye Naung, keeper Zin Nyi Nyi Aung, Min Myat Soe, Wai Lwin Phyo and Lin Htet Soe.

As Yangon United is a big team in MNL, ISPE started with massive defence.

Yangon made frequent attacks even at the start, and the team gained a penalty foul ball at 12-minute mark as opponents cleared the ball roughly in the penalty area of Yangon.

The penalty was successfully finished by Yangon United's key player Yan Naing Oo at 13



Yangon United's winger Maung Maung Lwin (green) poises to shoot the ball in yesterday's match against ISPE FC at Yangon United Sports Complex. **PHOTO: MNL**

minutes to earn the first goal of his team.

Yangon still dominated the game with one-touch play after 1-0.

Winger Maung Maung Lwin and striker Aee Soe frequently created goal chances for Yangon amidst savvy ISPE defenders.

At 29 minute, striker Aee Soe scored the second goal for Yangon over an assist of his team-

mate Maung Maung Lwin.

But one minute later, ISPE made a consolation goal, and Ban Htoug Kyae Oo scored the goal over a long ball assist of his teammate.

At 42 minutes, Yangon achieved a foul ball, and it was finished by Kyi Lin who directly kicked the ball into the net via the free-kick to earn the third goal.

Next, Yangon's Barfo scored

the fourth goal at 45 minutes, and the result was 4-1 at the break.

Yangon United showed their best form in the other half.

Striker Barfo made the fifth goal for Yangon at 58 minutes, and Soe Min Naing scored the final or sixth goal at 84 minutes.

No further goals were scored later, and it made a big win for Yangon.

ISPE has been in good form

in its first season and is expected to look even better in the coming seasons of Myanmar National League, said football authorities.

Yan Aung Kyaw played as the captain of Yangon team for 77 minutes in yesterday's match as part of his farewell.

He has been playing for Yangon United since 2009 when Myanmar National League was born in Myanmar.

Final matches for the MNL 2020 season will be held today to decide which team will be a champion. Champion dreamer defending champion Shan United will play against Yadanarbon FC today 3:30 pm at Yangon United Sports Complex, and the match will be broadcast live on MRTV and streamed live on MyCujoo application.

Next, another two champion dreamers Ayeyarwady United vs Hantharwady match will be held at the same time at Thuwunna Stadium, and the game will be shown live on MyCujoo application and streamed live on MWD channel, according to the MNL.

—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Bayern and rivals await Champions League draw as pandemic riddle remains

PARIS — Less than six weeks Bayern Munich won last season's delayed final behind closed doors, the draw for the group stage of the next Champions League takes place on Thursday with the threat of the coronavirus pandemic again hanging over the competition.

Bayern were crowned European champions for the sixth time after beating Paris Saint-Germain beating Paris

Saint-Germain at an empty Estadio da Luz in Lisbon in August. The surreal occasion represented a triumph of sorts for UEFA.

European football's governing body succeeded in playing its flagship competition to a conclusion despite the long shutdown caused by the health crisis, but the final rounds were not the same. — AFP ■



Kingsley Coman (R) scored the winner when Bayern Munich beat PSG in last season's Champions League final less than six weeks ago. **PHOTO: POOL/AFP/FILE**

Golf's Hong Kong Open postponed until new year because of virus

HONG KONG — The Hong Kong Open was postponed Wednesday because of the coronavirus, with Asia's oldest professional golf tournament pushed back from November until 2021.

It is the second consecutive year the flagship event -- co-sanctioned by the European and Asian Tours -- has been disrupted.

Last November's 61st edition was moved to January this year because of pro-democracy protests across the city.

"In view of the continuing restrictions in force due to Covid-19, organizers of the 2020 Hong Kong Open have made the decision to postpone the tournament until the new year," said a statement released by organisers.

Originally pencilled in for November 26-29, no new dates were given, but organisers said they were "reviewing suitable options" and remained "fully committed to staging the 62nd edition of Hong Kong's longest running professional



Illustrious winner: Rory McIlroy celebrates his 2011 Hong Kong Open victory. This year's 62nd edition has been postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic. **PHOTO: AFP**

sporting event."

Golf in Asia has been almost wiped out in 2020 because of the pandemic.

The Asian Tour has been idle since the Malaysia Open ended on March 7 and some

players in the worst-affected countries such as India, haven't been able even to practise.

The LPGA Tour has cancelled all seven of its events on the elite women's circuit scheduled for this year.— AFP ■