

NATIONAL

Myanmar takes part in 2020 Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Media Online Summit

PAGE-3

NATIONAL

ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting, associated meetings held via videoconferencing

PAGE-4

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Wednesday, 25 November 2020

Prime Ministers of Malaysia, Commonwealth of Australia and Grand Duchy of Luxembourg send congratulatory messages to State Counsellor for successful General Election

The following are the congratulatory messages from Mr Tan Sri Muhyiddin Mohd Yassin, Prime Minister of Malaysia, The Hon Scott Morrison, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, and Mr Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg sent to State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi for the successful General Election held on 8 November 2020.

Mr Tan Sri Muhyiddin Mohd Yassin, Prime Minister of Malaysia sends congratulatory message to the State Counsellor

In the Prime Minister's congratulatory message he conveyed his felicitations and congratulated the State Counsellor and the National League for Democracy (NLD) on the victory in the recent General Elections of Myanmar.

The Prime Minister also expressed his belief that the people of Myanmar have indeed spoken, expressing their hope for democracy to deliver the future they envision and the renewed mandate is a

clear testament of their support for and trust in the State Counsellor's leadership.

He further expressed that the progress in Myanmar has achieved under the State Counsellor's leadership in the past five years is admirable. Moreover, he expressed his belief that the newly elected Government of Myanmar will continue to be dedicated to overcoming the challenges, fulfilling the will of the people, and achieving the vision of a peaceful and

prosperous Myanmar.

He also reaffirmed that as a close neighbour and partner in ASEAN, Malaysia will continue to work together with Myanmar to enhance cooperation. He also assured that Malaysia and Myanmar would be able to do much more together, to bring mutual benefit and prosperity to the two peoples.

SEE PAGE-2

Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun attends 2nd OECD Investment Policy Review Launch



Union Minister U Thaung Tun and his deputy ministers join the launching ceremony of Second Investment Policy Review on 24 November. PHOTO: MNA

THE Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun joined the Ambassador of the European Union Mr Ranieri Sabatucci and representatives of Norway, Switzerland, the OECD, and other international and domestic partners to launch a Second Investment Policy yesterday.

The Union Minister in his keynote address, reaffirmed:

“Responsible investment represents a cornerstone of this government’s vision – a vision of an economy and a society that works for everyone – that benefits the MSME on a street corner in Mandalay just as much as the big multinational up in the twin towers of Myanmar Plaza.”

He also drew attention to Myanmar’s progress and noted

that environmental protection standards, responsible business conduct, and corporate social responsibility, respect for human rights, responsible sourcing practices within supply chains, and decent work for fair wages were now embedded within Myanmar’s national reform agenda thanks to the IPR process.

Mr Ranieri Sabatucci, Ambassador of the European Union

to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar welcomed the launch of the Second Investment Policy Review and agreed that It showed Myanmar’s commitment to engage in meaningful structural reforms of the business regulatory environment and hence to attract quality investment.

Head of the OECD’s Investment and Sustainable Develop-

ment Unit, Mr Stephen Thomson made particular reference to the ‘almost unprecedented’ degree of statutory liberalization Myanmar has achieved in just five years as well as the rapid progress made toward simplifying the process of starting a business, rising from 170 to 70 on the World Bank’s Ease of Doing Business Index in just 4 years.

SEE PAGE-3

“People are the key”

The Hon Scott Morrison, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia sends congratulatory message to State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

FROM PAGE-1

I write to extend my warm congratulations on your party’s re-election on 8 November 2020. I commend the people of Myanmar on the peaceful conduct of the elections, and this important milestone in Myanmar’s

democratic transition.

I am pleased Australia was able to support Myanmar’s election process. Australia and Myanmar share a longstanding partnership and I thank you again for your kind words during Australia’s bushfire crisis.

I look forward to continuing to work with you and

your government on Myanmar’s reform agenda, human rights, and the region’s COVID-19 recovery, a key focus for Australia. As I announced at the ASEAN-Australia Summit, Australia will open a liaison office in Nay Pyi Taw, which will enhance our engagement with your government on all of these issues.

Mr Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg sends congratulatory message to the State Counsellor

In the name of the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and in my very personal name, I would like to congratulate you and the National League for Democracy (NLD) wholeheartedly on your success in the well-run and competitive elections in the Republic of the Union of

Myanmar.

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the European Union have been supportive of Myanmar’s democratic process with a full participation of all its inhabitants and their involvement to the socioeconomic development which needs to be pur-

sued.

I am confident that throughout the next years, the deepening of the friendly ties between our two countries will continue and that Luxembourg and Myanmar will further strengthen their political and economic relations.

Viet Nam Embassy, Vietnamese business community donate COVID-19 devices

VIETNAMESE Embassy in Myanmar and Myanmar-based Vietnamese businesspersons donated COVID-19 medical supplies to the Ministry of Health and Sports yesterday afternoon in Yangon.

At the donation ceremony, Vietnamese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Ly Quoc Tuan explained the donation and Director-General for the Department of Medical Research Dr

Zaw Than Tun expressed words of thanks.

The Ambassador and the businessmen handed over the cash assistance of K30 million, US\$15,000 worth of 159,600 masks and 90 Thermometers and 486 bottles of hand sanitizers to the Director-General and received the certificates of honour.— Min Thit (MNA)

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

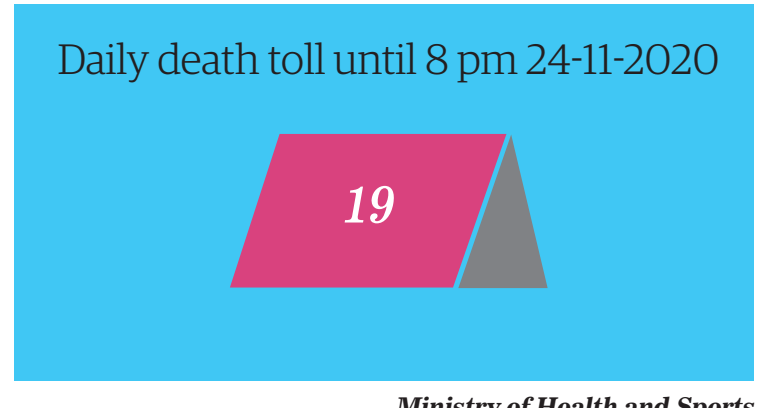
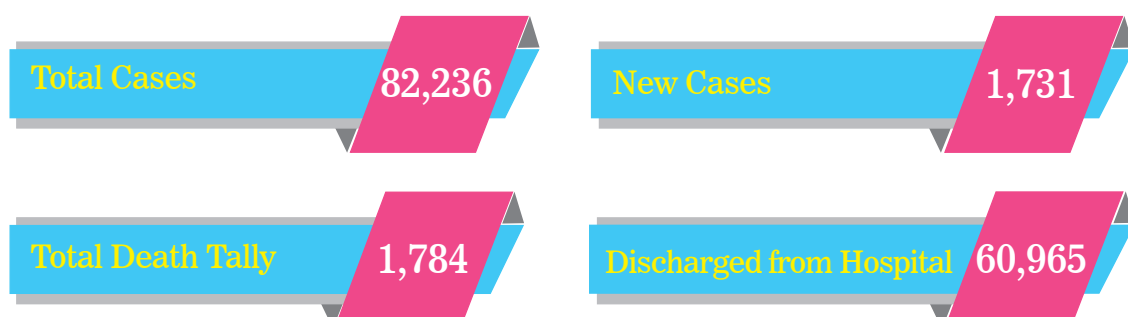


Vietnamese Ambassador Mr Ly Quoc Tuan (R) presents the donation to MoHS and it was accepted by DMR Director-General Dr Zaw Than Tun(L). **PHOTO: YEHTUT**

1,731 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 24 November, total figure rises to **82,236**

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rise to **82,236** after **1,731** new cases were reported on 24 November according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these **82,236** confirmed cases, **1,784** died, **60,965** have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 24 November 2020



Ministry of Health and Sports

Step by step plans on how we can prevent the crisis from harming our people economically



Since two months before the World Health Organization announced COVID-19 as a pandemic, we began discussions on how we can prevent the crisis from harming our people economically. We will implement those plans step by step as needed. So people should not worry too much. But people need to be aware of the risks. I want the citizens to take care of their health. If the citizens can take care of themselves and protect themselves from infection and take care not to spread infections, the burden on the Union Government will be reduced by more than half. Resolving economic and social impacts are responsibilities of the Union Government, so we will do our best.

In the video speeches that we deliver twice a week, we will let the citizens know what we will do and what our plans are. We will let the citizens know about our plans via TV or websites of relevant departments or state-run newspapers as soon as possible.

(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's report to people regarding COVID situation, on 17 November 2020)

Myanmar takes part in 2020 Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Media Online Summit

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint joined the 2020 Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Media Online Summit yesterday.

The summit was also taken part by media officials from China, Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and Viet Nam via videoconferencing.

Mr Huang Kunming, the Member of Secretariat and the Head of the Publicity Department of Communist Party of China delivered an opening remark.

Union Minister Dr Pe Myint discussed the basic pillars of Mekong-Lancang Cooperation as the first pillar is concerned with cooperation in politics and security, the second one with cooperation in economy and sustainable development, and the third one with social, cultural and people-to-people relations.

He also said the media cooperation among Mekong-Lan-



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint and Member of Secretariat and Head of Publicity Department of Communist Party of China Mr Huang Kunming deliver their opening speeches at 2020 Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Media Online Summit on 24 November. **PHOTO: MNA**

cang member countries could promote bilateral relations and could show off the advantages of the region to the world while the media sector is acting as a bridge among the member countries.

The Union Minister presented the media campaign for Mekong-Lancang cooperation,

arts and photo exhibition on 26 March in 2019 and the display of photos.

He added that the Mekong-Lancang cooperation played an essential role in the region and wished for lasting cooperation of the member countries like Mekong River.

Permanent Secretary of U Myo Myint Maung and senior media officials from member countries made discussions.

Awards for photo contest under the title of 'Colourful Lancang-Mekong' were presented at the event.

Director-General of MRTV

U Ye Naing and officials from the member countries discussed topics of the Regional and International Cooperation in Combating COVID-19 and the Boosting Economy Recovery: Focus, Patience and Mechanism.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations ...

FROM PAGE-1

This Second Investment Policy Review provides the government with in-depth analysis together with a set of comprehensive policy recommendations designed to help lay the foundations for a new investment regime and quality labour standards, and with it, a new era of quality, responsible investment into Myanmar.

Coming six years following

the publication of the 1st Investment Policy Review the second Review takes stock of recent achievements and assesses remaining challenges in selected policy areas for nurturing an enabling responsible business environment and ensuring benefits are shared with society at large. The Review also places a strong emphasis on the impact and on how foreign investment can help Myanmar achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

and improve the lives of the people of Myanmar.

OECD Investment Policy Reviews present an overview of investment trends and policies in the countries reviewed. This can include investment policy, investment promotion, and facilitation, competition, trade, taxation, corporate governance, finance, infrastructure, developing human resources, policies to promote responsible business conduct, investment in support of green

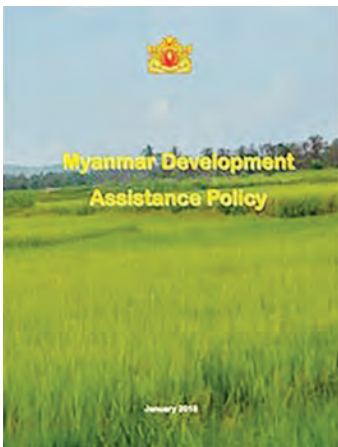
growth, and broader issues of public governance.

Participants agreed that Myanmar's reform momentum must be sustained and deepened for the benefits of recent investment climate reforms to be shared widely and for growth to be environmentally sustainable.

The event was attended by over 400 individuals, including Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry U Set Aung, Deputy Minister for In-

vestment and Foreign Economic Relations U Bharat Singh, members of Myanmar Investment Commission, U Aung Naing Oo, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, U Thant Sin Lwin, Director-General of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, departmental officials, representatives from the UMFCCI, international organizations and the media.—MNA

Revised edition of Myanmar Development Assistance Policy (DAP-2020) published



MINISTRY of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations launches a comprehensive update to the Myanmar Development Assistance Policy (DAP).

Originally launched during the 2018 Myanmar Development Effectiveness Roundtable, this 2020 update presents

an overarching policy framework used to guide the delivery of development assistance, together with clear procedures used to streamline the identification, design, negotiation, approval, implementation and evaluation of initiatives funded in part or whole by develop-

ment assistance.

Importantly, this latest iteration of the Development Assistance Policy has been designed to facilitate a much greater degree of alignment between development assistance provided to Myanmar and the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan 2018-2030. This 2020 update to the Development Assistance Policy has also been refined in ways which facilitate the further devolution of development assistance management functions to line ministries, allowing for the Development Assistance Coordination Unit to maintain a more strategic outlook.

Within the Foreword, U Thaug Tun, Union Minister of Investment and Foreign

Economic Relations and DACU Vice-Chair states:

“I believe well-managed and strategically targeted development assistance can and must play a critical role in facilitating a more investment-friendly environment in Myanmar. Indeed, development assistance can serve as a driver for greater private investment, helping to foster economic growth, creating employment opportunities, and facilitating technology transfer and knowledge sharing. Therefore, I am confident that this Development Assistance Policy will provide much needed strategic direction for both our Partners in Development and Government Entities alike.”

As with previous versions,

the Development Assistance Policy was drafted in a highly consultative manner, incorporating inputs from a wide range of development stakeholders, including but not limited to Government Entities, Partners in Development via the Cooperation Partners Group, Civil Society and the Private Sector.

This Development Assistance Policy, complemented by a revitalized set of Strategic Coordination Groups is expected to significantly strengthen foundations for multi-stakeholder dialogue and coordination that will serve Myanmar and our Partners in Development well, including in the delivery of our soon-to-be-launched Myanmar Economic Resilience and Reform Plan (MERRP).—MNA

ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting, associated meetings held via videoconferencing

UNION Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung participated in the 26th ASEAN Transport Ministers (ATM) Meeting, and associated meetings held on 24 and 25 November via videoconferencing.

On the first day, 24 November, 26th ASEAN Transport Ministers (ATM) Meeting, 19th ASEAN-China Transport Ministers Meeting, and ASEAN Transport Ministers and US-ASEAN Business Council (US-ABC) Meeting were held via videoconferencing.

The meetings were participated by Transport Ministers from 10 ASEAN countries and China, the Secretary-General of the ASEAN Secretariat and officials from member countries, and officials from the US-ASEAN Business Council.

The Myanmar delegation was led by Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung. The meetings were also participated by the Permanent Secretary, and senior officials from the Department of Civil Aviation, Department of Ma-



MoTC Minister U Thant Sin Maung and officials attend online ASEAN Transport Ministers Meeting and associated meetings on 24 November. PHOTO: MNA

rine Administration, Department of Road Transport Administration, Road Department, and Myanma Railways.

The 26th ASEAN Transport Ministers (ATM) Meeting was chaired by Brunei. During the meeting, participants discussed matters related to ASEAN's Kuala Lumpur Transport Strategic Plan (2016-2025), Singapore-Kunming Rail Link and ASEAN Highway Network, ASEAN's cooperation with China, Japan and the Republic of Korea on the transport

sector, COVID-19 response efforts and post-pandemic measures to be taken by the transport sector.

During the meeting, Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung discussed the approval of ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF), future plans in the transport sector, Myanmar's COVID-19 response efforts led by the National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19, the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP), and other issues

related to the transport sector in Myanmar. The participants discussed high priority plans to be implemented in 2021, mid-term implementation of the Kuala Lumpur Transport Strategic Plan, ASEAN Air Traffic Management Master Plan, ASEAN road safety and other relevant issues.

In 24 November afternoon, the 19th ASEAN-China Transport Ministers Meeting was held. The participants discussed cooperation between ASEAN countries and China in the transport sector

and future plans.

In the ASEAN Transport Ministers and US-ASEAN Business Council Meeting, the participants discussed ways to ensure that the supply chain in the ASEAN region is not disturbed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

On 25 November, 18th ASEAN-Japan Transport Ministers Meeting and 11th ASEAN-Korea Transport Ministers Meeting will be held.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

Korean Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs arrives in Yangon

THE delegation led by Mr Kim Gunn, Deputy Minister for Political Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, arrived in Yangon at 7:20 pm yesterday.

The delegation of ROK was welcomed by officials from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Korean Ambassador Mr Lee Sang-hwa and officials from Korean Embassy in Yangon at the Yangon International Airport.—MNA

ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs Deputy Minister Mr Kim Gunn arrives in Yangon on 24 November.

PHOTO: MNA



MoLIP, EuroCham Myanmar discuss sustainable development of garment industry

UNION Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe held an online meeting with the delegation of the EuroCham Myanmar Garment Advocacy Group, led by Ms Karina Ufert and Mr Serkan Tanka yesterday.

The meeting focused on the improvement of Myanmar sustainable development and skill buildings in the garment industry.

The Union Minister discussed cooperation with the EuroCham Myanmar in getting technical advice, skill development programme, supports in vocational training and plans for the development of skills.

He also talked about the requirement of assistance from the EuroCham Myanmar in these sectors, the cooperation of his ministry with other relevant ministries for intermediate level management skills, long-term policy for nurturing garment and textile engineers to develop FOB system from the present CMP system and further cooperation of EuroCham Myanmar.

The Union Minister also sought technical advice and cooperation of the EuroCham Myanmar to work with other countries, relevant state agencies and development partnered organizations.

He also discussed drafting



Union Minister U Thein Swe discusses with officials from EuroCham Myanmar Garment Advocacy Group about sustainable development in Myanmar garment industry on 24 November. **PHOTO: MNA**

labour laws with the participation of ILO experts and the parliament to meet international standards, holding regular meetings with the EuroCham Myanmar, adopting a concrete

plan in coordination with garment entrepreneur associations, UMFCCI and relevant ministries.

Ms Karina Ufert and Mr Serkan Tanka then made their

discussions about improvement in the sustainable development of Myanmar and skill development in the garment industry.

—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

7th Myanmar-India Trade Joint Committee meeting held virtually



Union Minister Dr Than Myint joins the 7th Myanmar-India Trade Joint Committee meeting on 24 November. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE 7th Myanmar-India Trade Joint Committee meeting was held virtually yesterday afternoon.

The meeting was co-chaired by Union Minister for Commerce

Dr Than Myint and Indian Minister Mr Piyush Goyal for the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Railways, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

The Union Minister Dr Than

Myint firstly discussed the improvement of bilateral trade, investment, agriculture, textile, transport and banking industries via Myanmar-India Trade Joint Committee meeting, cooperation to overcome the economic crisis during COVID-19 pandemic, good results of the meeting which will be the firm base to explore potential collaboration and to promote the bilateral trade and close cooperation with India to promote the trade volume and other sectors of each country.

Then, Indian Minister Mr Piyush Goyal highlighted further cooperation to promote the bilateral sea routes and border trade, close cooperation between MyanTrade and India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO), Indian investment in Myanmar, further aids in road/bridge projects for the development of infrastructure, technical assistance for sustainable development of Myanmar for being a good neigh-

bouring country and the bilateral trade growth by cooperating in investment and other sectors including trade sector.

Director-General U Min Min also briefed the matters discussed during the senior officials meeting held on 16 October such as to increase the bilateral trade volume including beans and pulses, smooth flow of goods, more Indian investment in Myanmar including power and energy sector, promotion of bilateral trade by holding trade expos and economic forums, the opening of markets at border areas after solving Myanmar-India border issues, greater cooperation with India to expand the market for Myanmar's textile sector, technical assistance of India in agriculture and livestock sectors, upgrade of road/bridge projects on Myanmar-India trade route for the speedy flow of goods with the help of India, close cooperation in the banking industry of two coun-

tries and further cooperation of India to review the ASEAN India Trade in Goods Agreement and to explore the potential sectors for bilateral trade growth.

Then, the two Ministers coordinated the meeting and called on the close cooperation between the two nations based on the strong friendship as neighbouring countries.

The 8th Myanmar-India Trade Joint Committee meeting will be held in New Delhi of India in the coming year.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister for Commerce U Aung Htoo, Myanmar Ambassador to India U Moe Kyaw Aung, the Permanent Secretary, the Directors-General and India Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Saurabh Kumar and other representatives of relevant ministries of two countries.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

3rd China-ASEAN Health Cooperation Forum held online

The 3rd China-ASEAN Health Cooperation Forum was held

in Nanning city of Guangxi region, China, yesterday.



Permanent Secretary Dr Thet Khaing Win makes discussions in the 3rd China-ASEAN Health Cooperation Forum on 24 November. **PHOTO: MNA**

Dr Thet Khaing Win, the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Health and Sports, joined the meeting via videoconferencing from his office in Nay Pyi Taw.

The forum was also attended by Chinese senior health officials and the health ministers from ASEAN countries.

At the meeting, Dr Thet Khaing Win discussed cooperation between ASEAN member countries and China, exchange of technologies and experiences, fight against COVID-19 and

the crucial role of health security.

He also expressed thanks to China for its donations to ASEAN countries and briefed on the works of COVID-19 national committee led by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Speeches were delivered by Health Department Secretary Dr Francisco Duque III from the Philippines, Health Minister Mr Gan Kim Yong from Singapore, Dr Yu Xuejun, Vice Minister from the Nation-

al Health Commission of China, Secretary-General of the ASEAN Mr Lim Jock Hoi and Director Dr Takeshi Kasai from WHO's West Pacific Region.

The two-day forum was held to discuss the topics of the Disease Prevention and Control, the Dentistry, the Traditional Medicine, the Hospital Management Cooperation, the Health Emergency Cooperation and the Food Safety and Nutrition Health.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

MoHS discusses implementation, evaluation of National Health Plan (2017-2021)

THE Ministry of Health and Sports held a meeting on implementation and evaluation of the National Health Plan (2017-2021) via videoconferencing yesterday.

During the meeting, Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe discussed the activities of low and middle-income countries to access Universal Health Coverage, efforts of the ministry by cooperating with other relevant ministries, UN organizations and NGOs, drafting of National Health Plan (2017-2021) in 2016 based on the public health infrastructure, human resources, budgets for health sectors, the health status of public, the ability of healthcare service system and economic status of the country, implementation of three five-year NHP to meet the goals of Universal Health Coverage to some extent in 2030, acceleration of public health services for the people to achieve Healthy Lifestyle by doing exercises in line with the saying like Exercises



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe presides over the meeting on implementation and evaluation of National Health Plan (2017-2021) on 24 November. **PHOTO: MNA**

is Medicine and Basic Essential Package of Health Services.

He also highlighted the current processes of NHP (2017-2021), ability to overcome the difficulties, opinions depending on sector-wise impacts, review of indicator/parameter, completion of 80 per cent for drafting new National Health Policy, drafting of NHP (2021-2025) based on

that policy, more than 40 health programmes of ministry, the participation of NGOs, civil society organizations, Ethnic Health Organizations and the public, 76 per cent of out of pocket expenditure between 2016 and 2018, the emergence of National Health Insurance system for financial protection as part of Universal Health Coverage while the government

boosts health budget and some impacts on health sector during COVID-19 pandemic and further efforts of the ministry not to occur medical neglects in more than 40 health projects of the ministry.

Then, Assistant Secretary for National Health Plan Implementation Monitoring Unit Dr Thant Sin Htoo briefed the healthcare services under NHP (2017-2021),

the double increase of healthcare services in 2020 compared with 2000 according to the initial survey, supply-side readiness for UHC, Inclusive township health plan, National Health Account (2016-2018), strategic purchasing for healthcare services and details of further plans including initial surveys. Then, the other health officials coordinated the meeting while Deputy Minister Dr Mya Lay Sein discussed the cooperation for the emergence of firm National Health Insurance Law and the Permanent Secretary Prof Dr Thet Khaing Win about the curriculums of UHC at undergraduate and postgraduate courses of the universities.

The Union Minister appreciated participants for the meeting and called on further People Health Assembly, suggestions of INGOs and NGOs in conducting measures for non-communicable diseases and concluded the meeting.—MNA

MoSWRR discusses effective implementation of Union Accord

MINISTRY of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement held a coordination meeting at his headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The meeting discussed the effective implementation of sectors related to the ministry in the parts of the Union Accord.

At the meeting, Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye said the peace process is being carried out with the holding of four meetings of Union Peace Conference—the 21st Century Panglong. He continued parts of the Union Accord were signed in the recent conferences, with 37 points of agreement in the 2nd conference, 14 points of agreement in the 3rd conference

and 20 points of agreement in the 4th conference, totally 71 points of agreements were reached and all staff members, including the ethnic nationalities in border areas, need to know the relevant sectors to their ministry extensively.

The Union Minister added some fundamental facts included in the political and social sectors related to the ministry are involved in the current activities, while additional efforts are still needed to ensure equal rights for all, including the ethnic nationalities. He said it is required for implementing the next steps effectively in order to support the ethnic affairs and internal peace,



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye chairs meeting on implementation of the Union Accord by his ministry on 24 November. **PHOTO: MNA**

the emergence of a constitution that will lead to a genuine Democratic Federal Union and the sustainable security development processes.

He continued it is necessary to adhere to the COVID-19 rules in every implementation without

delay, although the processes to be implemented are long-term and facing the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis.

Afterwards, the Deputy Minister, the Permanent Secretary, the Directors-General and the Deputy Directors-General dis-

cussed the matters in detail to be coordinated with the relevant ministries, departments and ethnic people in accordance with the parts of the Union Accord.—MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Myanmar, Thailand discuss drug control measures

THE 22nd Myanmar-Thailand Bilateral Meeting on Drug Control Cooperation was held via videoconferencing yesterday morning.

Myanmar delegation led by Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control Secretary Chief of Myanmar Police Force Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo and Thailand's Office of Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) Secretary-General Mr Wichai Chaimongkhon and party attended the meeting.

The meeting discussed the increase of illegal drug production and trade especially sea route while each of the countries im-

poses travel restriction during COVID-19 pandemic, the moves of drug smugglers by taking advance of the global change process and various situation, efforts of Myanmar to show off good results on the Target of Political Declaration and Plan of Action released during 62nd CND meeting, the seizures of P2P that does not contain precursor chemicals under joint operation of Myanmar-Thailand, further cooperation in the study of chemistry and chemical reactions which can be used in producing drugs, information to provide the sectors in

fight drug abuses, the readiness of Myanmar to cooperate with the world countries, regional organizations and international organizations for anti-drug measures and suggestions for further cooperation and programmes in addition to joint drug control operations.

Then, Mr Wichai Chaimongkhon made a greeting speech and briefed anti-drug activities, Operation 1511, reviews of 21st meeting, further cooperation, preventive measures for illegal precursor chemicals, drug gangs, information exchange regarding



The 22nd Myanmar-Thailand Bilateral Meeting on Drug Control Cooperation in progress via videoconferencing on 24 November. **PHOTO: MNA**

fugitive on drugs, safe Mekong operation project, cooperation work for sustainable development and the date and designated place to

hold the 23rd meeting.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Press Release 41/2020

9th Waxing of Tazaungmon 1382 ME
(23 November 2020)

Additional statistical bulletin on drug seizures, acting on information

- In order to prevent and eradicate the dangers of narcotic drugs and psychotropic drugs, the Office of the President has formed the **Drug Activity Special Complaint Department** on 26 June 2018 to systematically accept and respond to reports on drug abuses and other related cases from the general public.
- With orders from the Office of the President, the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department relayed information on reports on drug-related offences up to 21 November 2020 to the Ministry of Home Affairs to take action, as displayed below:

Sr	Nature of report	Detail on seizure and legal action taken
1.	Information received of people in Myothit Kalay Village, Hopin Township in Kachin State, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 16 November 2020, police searched the house of Aung Naing Oo (a) Aung Gyi, 37, son of U Than Aung, who lives in Myothit Kalay Village, Hopin Township and arrested him together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Hopin) MaYa (Pa) 74/2020 under the Section 19 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
2	Information received of people in Myothitgyi Kwatthit, Myitkyina Township in Kachin State, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 18 November 2020, police stopped the motorbike ridden by Sai Lot, 24, son of U Sanan Naw Aung on the Myothitgyi Kwatthit road and arrested him together with heroin. A case has been opened against him together with NaMaSa (Myitkyina) MaYa (Pa) 176/2020 under the Section 19 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
3	Information received of Htein Lin who lives in Taung Kone Village, Mawlaik Township in Sagaing Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 19 November 2020, police arrested Htein Lin, 32, son of U Paw Htay, who lives in Taung Kone Village, Mawlaik Township, on Taung Kone Village road together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Mawlaik) MaYa (Pa) 83/2020 under the Section 16 (c) and 20 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
4	Information received of U Ba Ngwe who lives in Taungkonethar Village in Phaungpyin Township in Sagaing Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 20 November, 2020, police searched the house of U Ba Ngwe, 47, son of U Aung Lone, who lives in Taungkonethar Village in Phaungpyin Township and arrested him together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Phaungpyin) MaYa (Pa) 200/2020 under the Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
5	Information received of people in Shwe Myaing Thiri ward in Mawlamyine Township, Mon State, selling, distributing and using illegal drugs.	On 18 November 2020, on Bogyoke road, Shwe Myaing Thiri ward in Mawlamyine Township, police stopped the Hilux car driven by Minn Oo, 36, son of U Than Oo, who lives in the same ward and arrested him together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him MaMaSa (Zeyathiri) MaYa (Pa) 31/2020 under the Section 19 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
6	Information received of Abai (a) Eesmine who lives in (4) ward, South Okkalapa Township in Yangon Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 16 November 2020, police searched the house of Abai (a) Eesmine (a) Zaw Min Tun, 40, son of U Hla Win (a) Mamot Kyaing, who lives in (4) ward, South Okkalapa Township and arrested him together with WY stimulant tablets and marijuana. A case has been opened against him together with MaMaSa (South Okkalapa) MaYa (Pa) 41/2020 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
7	Information received of Tun Linn Aung and Lwin Moe who live in ward (8) of Thakayta Township in Yangon Region, selling, using and distributing illegal drugs.	On 17 November 2020, police searched the house of Lwin Moe (a) Tint Lwin Moe, 31, son of U Aung Naing, who lives in ward (8) of Thakayta Township but didn't find and arrested his brother Myo Min Htike (a) Bite Pu, 40, son of U Aung Naing, and his brother-in-law Tun Linn Aung, 25, son of U Zaw Zaw together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Thakayta) MaYa (Pa) 42/2020 of the Section 16 (c) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

8	Information received of Ko Samote who lives in Number (Na/15) ward in Shwepyitha township, Yangon Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 17 November 2020, police arrested Phyto Lay (a) Phyto Ko Ko, 28, son of U Win Tin and Tun Tun (a) Aung San, 41, son of U Kyin Sein, together with WY stimulant tablets on Number (Na/14) ward road in Shwepyitha Township. According to further investigation, they bought the drugs from Zaw Tun Aung (a) Saamote, 40, son of U Tin Mya, who lives in Number (Na/15) ward in Shwepyitha Township. Police also arrested him. A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Hlawgar) MaYa (Pa) 20/2020 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
9	Information received of Ngwe Soe (a) Ye Baw Gyi who lives in number (Ta/15) ward, Shwepyitha Township in Yangon Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 18 November 2020, on Chintwin-Shwe Pyi road, police stopped the motor cycle driven by Ngwe Soe (a) Ye Baw Gyi, 50, son of U Kyi Nyo, who lives in number (Ta/15) ward, Shwepyitha Township and arrested him together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Hlawgar) MaYa (Pa) 21/2020 under the Section 19 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. On 19 November 2020, police searched the house of Ngwe Soe (a) Ye Baw Gyi and arrested his wife Daw Moe War (a) Gyanpone, 41, daughter of U Esot together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against her with NaMaSa (Hlawgar) MaYa (Pa) 22/2020 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
10	Information received of people in Panhike (8) ward, Namtu Township in Shan State, using, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	In recent weeks, 14 cases have been identified and 13 male suspects and 3 female suspects have been charged with possession of illegal drugs. On 15 November 2020, according to a series of previous arrests, police arrested Aeik Naung, 40, son of U Aeik Ye, Khun Sai, 24, son of U Gan Kyan and Bywar Lay, 35, son of U Bywar Thar, together with 88/1 stimulant tablets and heroin in Namtu Township. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Namtu) MaYa (Pa) 9/2020 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
11	Information received of Tun Naing Oo who lives in Utadar ward, Yaksawk Township in Southern Shan State, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 19 November 2020, police searched the house of Tun Naing Oo, 46, son of U Tin Tun (a) Tun Pyant, who lives in Utadar Ward in Yaksawk Township and arrested him together with MaMaSa (Yaksawk) MaYa (Pa) 62/2020 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

- Out of the information sent to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department, so far a total of 1,419 cases have been opened files as of 21 November 2020. A total of 2,169 people, including 1,808 men and 361 women had been arrested with 10,913.7904 g of heroin, 1,489.42 g of ICE, 47,934.17886 g of opium, 1,407.96 g of low-quality opium, 54,901.74 g of speciosa powder, 54,597.32 g of speciosa, 2.5 litres of liquid speciosa, 690,901 stimulant tablets, 14883.20 g of marijuana, 0.1 litres of opium tincture, 640.28 g of opium blocks, 60 g of poppy seeds, 60.15 g of crushed stimulant tablet powder, 0.001 g of crushed ecstasy powder, 28 firearms, different kinds of 669 cartridges and one grenade. Efforts for fighting the drug trafficking has been stepped up and the department will report on further exposed cases.
- To seize further drugs and to arrest drugs dealers, people are urged to inform the Ministry of Home Affairs, region and state governments and to inform huge cases of drug trafficking and other suspicious cases directly to the **Drug Activity Special Complaint Department** of the Office of the President via following contact numbers:

Contacts

Landline No. — 067-590200
Fax Phone No. — 067-590233
Email Address — antinarcotics@presidentoffice.gov.mm

Reducing healthcare burden with national healthcare insurance system

MYANMAR aspires to achieve, as part of its vision 2030, a healthier and productive population by implementing the Universal Health Coverage. However, for the aspiration to be fulfilled, there is much work that needs to be done, both in terms of Health System Strengthening (HSS) and in changing peoples' behaviors, such as regularly exercising, including walking.

The Union government is committed to achieving the goals of the Universal Health Coverage to a certain extent by 2030 by implementing three five-year plans.

Achieving that goal requires strong leadership and commitment of the Union government and all stake holders, support from partners, and the dedication and commitment of healthcare workers and communities in our country.

We are confident that a national health insurance system would relieve the healthcare burden on the people and provide them with access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines for NCDs.

The review of the Myanmar National Health Plan (2017-2021) which is being implemented to provide a basic essential package of health-care services to everyone at a low cost in any area by the 2020-2021 financial year has shown that our country has not yet achieved the goal due to challenges and obstacles. However, assessment and reviews are showing that the plan is on the right track to the goal.

The Ministry of Health and Sports has consistently focused on addressing NCDs. Non-communicable diseases have been recognized as a public health priority in the National Health Plan (2017-2021).

The Package of Essential NCD interventions (PEN) has been implemented nationwide, including screenings for Hypertension, Diabetes, CVD and treatment of uncomplicated

cases, along with the early detection and referral of oral, breast and cervical cancers by BHS, which mainly target people living in rural areas.

Meanwhile, our people need to live a healthy lifestyle and do physical exercises by changing their behaviours and to practice the habits and behaviours for prevention of non-communicable diseases. It is found that out of pocket expenditure on health during period 2016 - 2018 is about 76 per cent, which is putting a burden on the people and leading a misunderstanding among the people. To reduce that burden, we need to establish the National Health Insurance system which guarantees financial protection for the people.

The situation demands a national health insurance system to reduce the burden on the country and the people.

It is worth noting that the Ministry of Health and Sports is working on drafting a national health insurance bill.

We are confident that a national health insurance system would relieve the healthcare burden on the people and provide them with access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines for NCDs.

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ACTIVITIES, FROM 25 NOVEMBER TO 10 DECEMBER

Say "NO" to Violence and Leave No One Behind

By the Representatives of UNFPA and UN Women in Myanmar, co-chairs of the United Nations Country Team Gender Theme Group, to mark the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

OVER the past year, with the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, the world has become accustomed to a word seldom used before: "pandemic". The adjective pandemic is used to describe an event, usually a disease, occurring over a wide geographic area (such as multiple countries or continents) and typically affecting a significant proportion of the population.

As we prepare to mark the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, in a year during which the COVID19 crisis changed the world as we knew it, it is high time that we recognize that COVID19 is not the only pandemic that the world is currently facing and that away from the limelight of the media, away from the public eye, there is another, much older pandemic ongoing, a shadow pandemic, the pandemic of violence against women.

Violence against women and girls is indeed the most common human rights violation in the world and one which affects the largest proportion of the population. Globally, one in three women continues to be subjected to violence, physical violence, sexual violence, economic violence, emotional violence, at the hands of a man or several men, physically or virtually, at some point in her lifetime. To put it in black and

white numbers, this means that an estimated 1.3 billion women will be victims of violence in their lifetime. Not a single country to date, no matter its development status, has managed to eradicate it, not even the countries which are the point of progress in terms of gender equality.

This simply has to stop. Just like the world is coming together to prevent and respond to the spread of the COVID19 crisis, so do we need an all of society effort to say no to violence and prevent and respond to the shadow pandemic of gender based violence. Together, we must act against gender inequality, which is the real root cause of violence against women and end the cycle of cultural tolerance, including false notions of masculinity, which sustain this scourge through generations.

Myanmar is not immune to the shadow pandemic of gender-based violence.

While available data is limited, the Myanmar Demographic and Health Survey (2015-2016) showed that 21 per cent of ever-married women have experienced any form of intimate partner violence in their lifetime. The Demographic and Health Survey also revealed that only 7.8 per cent of the 15-19 years old who experienced physical or sexual violence had sought help.

These numbers, while very

real, do not reflect the larger picture as we know. Due to social stigma and barriers in access to services, most survivors of gender based violence do not come forward and speak out openly, thus leaving the vast majority of cases unreported.

And the situation has wors-

The promise of the Sustainable Development Goals and the MSDP—to leave no one behind—cannot be fulfilled without ending violence against women and girls.

ened for women and girls over the past few months with the outbreak of the COVID19 crisis.

The restrictions in movement, loss of livelihoods, accompanied with the fear, tension and stress within the walls of one's own home have led to additional emotional and physical violence and many women have found themselves trapped with their abusers with no one and nowhere to turn to. This very day, at this very moment, many women in Myanmar, living in townships under stay-at-home order are too afraid to go out, to ask for help or to even call helplines, suffering silently.

The COVID19 crisis has also exacerbated existing vulnerabil-

ities, affecting particularly disadvantaged and marginalized groups of women, including women migrant women, women living in conflict affected areas, internally displaced women, sex workers, LGBTIQI women, women living with HIV, homeless women and women with disabilities, and ex-

posed them to increased risks of exploitation and abuse. The increase in gender-based violence has further been compounded by the socio-economic effect of the COVID19 crisis which has disproportionately affected women as increasing evidence is demonstrating.

Together, we face an unprecedented crisis. As we look to a future Myanmar free of COVID19, so must we look to a future Myanmar free of violence against women and girls. By ensuring that the COVID-19 response and recovery efforts fully take into account the needs of women and girls and to be agents of change and development, Myanmar has

a unique opportunity to build back better.

The Myanmar government recent efforts to engender the implementation of the Country Economic Relief Plan and to ensure that the future Myanmar Economic Recovery and Response Plan is fully engendered from the get-go are very encouraging steps in this direction. As the programmatic response is being finalized and implemented, we must ensure that it includes specific measures for the protection of women and girls and to increase the accessibility and availability of services for survivors in all parts of Myanmar, irrespective of the political or security context.

The programmatic response must further be supported by a solid policy framework. It is essential therefore that the new government which will be coming into office early next year prioritizes passing the Prevention of Violence against Women law which has been under development for many years already. Myanmar is one of only two ASEAN country that has not yet passed legislation criminalizing domestic violence. Adopting a version of the Prevention of Violence against Women law which meets international standards and is CEDAW compliant would be the most significant way to tackle the shadow pandemic of violence against women in

Myanmar and to demonstrate to the women of Myanmar who have contributed so much to the COVID19 crisis response so far that their contributions and the value of their lives are fully recognized.

The United Nations remain firmly committed to supporting the Government of Myanmar, policy makers, civil society organizations, media, businesses and all of Myanmar's women and girls to promote gender equality, end gender-based violence and respond to COVID-19 pandemic through a gender lens to ensure no-one is left behind. This in turn will ultimately support bringing us back on track towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) hampered by the pandemic, and will further accelerate the achievement of the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan.

The promise of the Sustainable Development Goals and the MSDP—to leave no one behind—cannot be fulfilled without ending violence against women and girls.

Every woman and girl has the right to live free from violence. We must act together and in solidarity to protect their rights, standing up and saying "NO" to Violence.

SOURCE: UNFPA/UN Women in Myanmar, United Nations Country Team Gender Theme Group

COMMEMORATING 121ST ANNIVERSARY OF PUBLICATION OF SIGMUND FREUD'S INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS

'Freudianism and its discontents' vs efforts inspired by love in overcoming the Covid-19 scourge



By Dr Myint Zan

GENTLE reader: During the past 24 hours while you slept, you dreamt. You may not recall your dream, but you did dream or so say, contemporary neurologists and scientists.

For millennia there have been many treatises, tracts or plain 'hocus pocus' views about dreams human apparently dream when they were/are asleep. On 24 November 1899 Sigmund Freud's Interpretation of Dreams (first edition, in German Die Traumdeutung) was published perhaps initially in Vienna, Austria.

This article, in part, commemorates the 121st anniversary of Freud's 'dream book'.

151st anniversary of first publication of Charles Darwin's Origin of Species and 121st anniversary of Sigmund Freud's Interpretation of Dreams

On 24 November 1859 Charles Darwin (12 February 1809-19 April 1882) published a scientific landmark Origin of Species (short title) (in English). Exactly 40 years later on 24 November 1899 Sigmund Freud (6 May 1856-23 September 1939) published his Interpretation of Dreams (first edition in German).

One of Freud's biographers the late Peter Gay (20 June 1923-12 May 2015) observed (in my opinion somewhat anomalously) that there were

much less interest and excitement, on their first publications, of Freud's book compared to that of Darwin's 40 years earlier. As the late Professor Andrew S. Watson (2 May 1920- 2 April 1998) Professor of Law and Psychiatry at the University of Michigan Law School observed, in 1995, with a smile when I mentioned Peter Gay's comment to him 'It is very difficult to compete with that [Darwin's] book!'. I might just add 'rightly so too' (see below).

Two Biographies of Freud and No Person Being 'Wholly Praised or Wholly Blamed'

In 2018 I read the book Freud/ Fraud: *The Making of an Illusion* published in 2017 and written by Professor

Frederick Crews (born 20 February 1933).

As can be easily discerned from the title it is a critical indeed scathing critique of Freud and almost everything Freudian.

In contrast, another biography of Freud published about 30 years earlier (as can be easily seen, again, from the title) Freud: *A Life for Our Time* by Peter Gay (first published 1988) can be described, generically, as hagiographical.

But then stanza or Verse 228 of the Dhammapada states: 'there never was, there never will be nor does there exist now a man [now 'person'] who is wholly praised or wholly blamed.'

SEE PAGE-14

U Kyaw Moe Tun presents Credentials to the Secretary-General of the United Nations

U Kyaw Moe Tun, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Nations, New York, presented his Credentials to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Mr Antonio Guterres in New York on 19 November 2020.—MNA



အမျိုးသမီးများအပေါ် အကြမ်းဖက်မှုပျောက်ရေး (၁၆)ရက်တာလွင်ရှာယူ အဝီထိမ်းအမှတ်အခမ်းအနား
“အမျိုးသမီးများအပေါ်အကြမ်းဖက်မှု တာလွင်ရှာယူဖို့ သီးသန့်ရန်ပေးတာအတွက် အမျက်အလက်ကောက်ယူဖို့”
“Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!”

Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 24 November, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (17:30) hrs M.S.T today, the Cyclonic Storm (NIVAR) over the Southwest Bay of Bengal has moved Westwards and it is centered at about (200) Nautical miles East-Southeast of Puducherry and about (230) Nautical miles South-Southeast of Chennai (India). Weather is partly cloudy over the Andaman sea and Eastcentral Bay of Bengal and cloudy elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 25 November, 2020: Light rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Sagaing, Mandalay, Taninthayi and Ayeyawady Regions, Shan (South and East), Chin, Kayah and Kayin States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Sagaing Region, Kachin and Northern Shan States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 25 November, 2020: A few cloud.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 25 November, 2020: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 25 November, 2020: Partly cloudy.

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Myanmar human rights commission joins 17th Annual Meeting of SEANF, side events virtually

MYANMAR National Human Rights Commission virtually joined the 17th Annual Meeting of the Southeast Asia National Human Rights Institutions Forum (SEANF), Webinar on National and International Initiatives on Torture Prevention and Online Dialogue on Statelessness Issues in Sabah which were hosted by Komnas HAM (Indonesia) from 24 to 26 November.

The Chairman of Myanmar Commission U Hla Myint, the Deputy Chairman, Director-General of Commission's Office and other staff members joined the annual meeting and side events together with the chairpersons, members and staff of National Human Rights Commission from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand,

Timor-Leste and the Philippines.

The forum discussed the activities and development of SEANF member countries after the 16th meeting, approval of Guidelines for the use of SEANF social media platform, exchange of information regarding business sector and human rights issues among the member countries, approval of forum's statement regarding the migrant workers' issue during COVID-19 pandemic and the establishment of Permanent Secretariat.

An informal meeting between SEANF member countries and ASEAN Inter-governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) will be held on the morning of 25 November.



Myanmar National Human Rights Commission takes part in 17th Annual Meeting of SEANF and side events virtually on 24 November . **PHOTO : MNA**

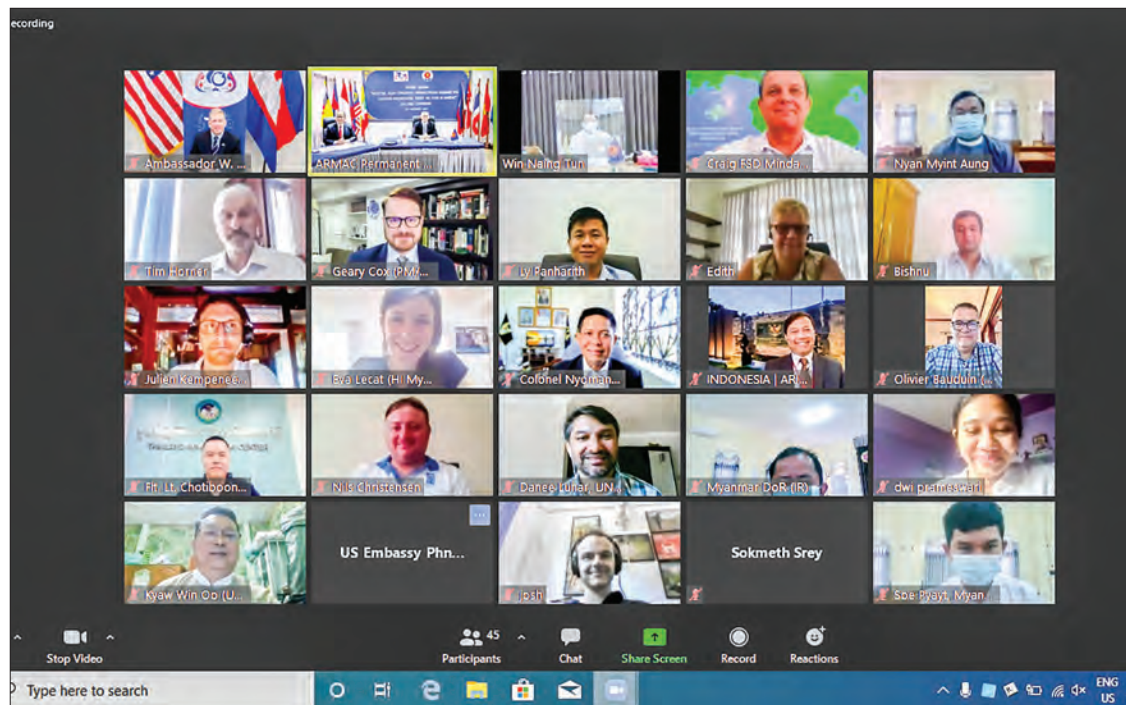
This is the very first meeting of SEANF and AICHR.

The annual meeting of SEANF and side events will be

held until 26 November and the current alternate Chair Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights will hand over

the chairmanship to Malaysia for 2021 after the annual meeting.—MNA (Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

ARMAC hosts regional webinar on explosive ordnance risk education



ARMAC discusses explosive ordnance risk education during COVID-19 crisis. **PHOTO : MNA**

THE ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) held the Regional Webinar on Protecting ASEAN Communities by Implementing Explosive Ordnance Risk Education during COVID-19 yesterday morning in Cambodia.

The Ambassador of United States to Cambodia Mr Patrick Murphy, Vietnamese Ambassador to Cambodia Mr Vu Quang Minh, in his capacity as the Chair of the Steering Committee of ARMAC, officials from the mine clearance centres of Cambodia, Laos, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam, the Child Protection Specialist from the UNICEF and the Director-General for the Resettlement Department of

the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement from Myanmar attended the webinar and exchanged opinions on how mine risk education activities are being carried out during COVID-19.

The ARMAC was established in 2012 by the ASEAN Leaders at the 21st ASEAN Summit with the representatives from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam which are at risk of landmines and explosive devices to conduct consultations and exchange opinions on mine risk education.—MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

92 Myanmar citizens arrive back home from abroad

THE 32nd relief flight organized by the Myanmar Embassy in Seoul landed in Yangon with 92 citizens from the Incheon International Airport of the Republic of Korea yesterday evening.

The MAI flight brought back the nationals who were 69 from the ROK, 9 from the United States, 5 from Norway, 2 from Canada, 1 from the UK, 4 from Germany and 2 from Italy. The Ministry of Labour,

Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Yangon Region government arranged 7-day quarantine at specific places or designated hotels, followed by the 7-day home quarantine.

To bring back the Myanmar citizens who are stranded in foreign countries by relief flights and chartered flights in accordance with the instructions from National-Level Central Committee

on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cooperated with the relevant ministries and Myanmar embassies from respective countries.—MNA (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Myanmar returnees queue at immigration desk in Yangon International Airport on 24 November. **PHOTO : MNA**



Black bean price on downward trend as demand dries up

THE price of the black bean is keeping its slump as there is no demand by India, coupled with the drop in prices in India's market, said a trader from Bayintnaung market.

On 24 November, the black beans were priced K1,004,000 per tonne for fair and average quality and K1,154,000 per tonne for special quality, data of Yangon Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung commodity depot) indicated.

The price of black bean dropped after the 2020 Myanmar General Election.

Before the General Election, the black bean was priced K1,072,500 per tonne on 7 November. The price drastically slipped to over K1,004,000 per tonne on 24 November.

Similarly, the pigeon peas market saw a gradual decline to K797,500 per tonne on 24 November, which plunged from K915,000 per tonne on 7 November.

India's suspension in bean demand causes the price to plummet in domestic markets, said U Min Ko Oo, secretary of Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association.

The domestic bean market is positively related to the law of supply and demand, he continued.

Myanmar has a stock of below 100,000 tonnes of black bean, and about 30,000 tonnes of pigeon peas are left in ware-



India narrowed down import deadline of beans and pulses, affecting Myanmar market. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

houses, the association stated.

On 1 October 2020, India issued a notification to purchase 150,000 tonnes of black beans instead, and the import deadline is March 2021. The licence will be equally granted for India's companies.

Although Myanmar does not have adequate stock, for now, it can reach the quota of 150,000 tonnes, along with the beans which will be harvested next season, U Min Ko Oo maintained.

On 22 May, India rapidly changed the import period of black bean (400,000 tonnes) to three months by August-end 2020 from the earlier set deadline of March 2021, prompting Myanmar's bean body to call for an extension of the deadline, as per its official notice.

Although the bean body asked to extend the August-end deadline, India still has not responded to the

request. Myanmar exported only 100,000 tonnes of black beans then, the association stated.

Since 2017, India has been setting import quota on beans, including black bean and pigeon peas. Therefore, the growers face difficulties to export their beans to India market.

Myanmar has to export black bean and pigeon peas under a quota system and limit period. Consequently, there is no guarantee that we could get the prevailing market price next year, the market observers shared their opinions.

Following the uncertainty in markets of black bean and pigeon peas, the association suggested, in October-end, that the growers cultivate black-eyed bean more. — GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Gold price dips over \$40 in global market within one day

By Nyein Nyein

THE gold price has seen a significant one-day drop of over US\$40 in the global market following the global cues, said U Myo Myint, chair of Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA).

On 23 November, gold price hit \$1,871 per ounce in the global market. Then, the price fell to \$1,824 per ounce on 24 November, with a big drop of over \$40 within one day.

Following the COVID-19 vaccine development, some major industries and businesses restarted. The gold market has become sluggish as the investors returned to other sectors, he said.

The domestic gold prices are slightly declining following the global rate. The pure gold fetched K1.3 million per tical (0.578 ounces, or 0.016 kilogrammes) in the local market. Nevertheless, the local market did not shake up as it is supposed to be, due to the shortage of raw material and a slight gain in the dollar, he added.

"The gold price is fluctuating at around K1.3 million per tical. For now, the old gold scrap and jewellery are refined into the pure gold bar as the raw material has not entered the Yangon market

due to the COVID-19 health guidelines. Consequently, the price did not fall as much as we consider," said the YGEA chair.

The daily transaction of 50 visses (a viss equals to 1.6 kg) of gold were earlier seen in the market. Now, about five visses are rarely traded per day, he continued.

According to gold traders, during the past four months, the domestic gold was priced with the minimum rate of K1,216,500 (1 July) and the maximum rate of K1,296,500 (27 July). The price moved in the range of, K1,286,500 on 13 August and K1,332,500 on 7 August. The local gold reached the lowest level of K1,310,500 (2 September) and the highest level of K1,314,000 (1 September). In October, the rate ranged between K1,307,800 (30 October) and K1,316,500 (21 October).

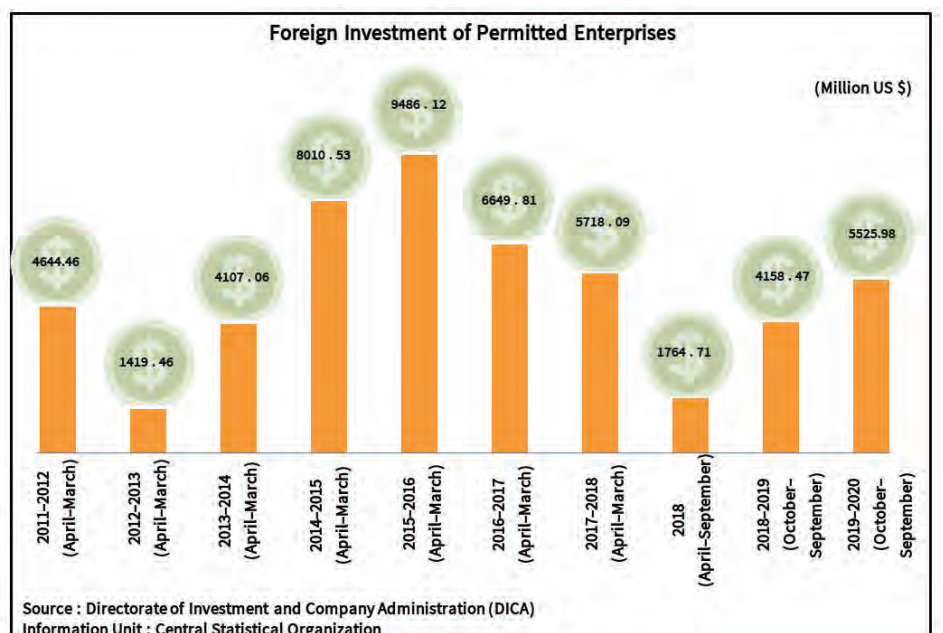
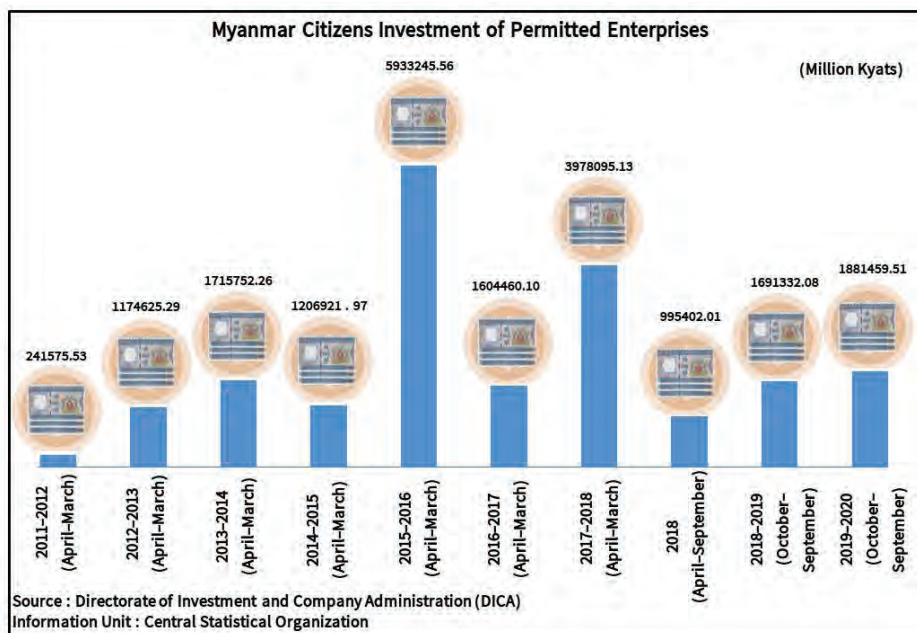
With global gold prices on the uptick, the domestic price hit fresh highs last year, reaching K1,000,000 per tical between 17 January and 21 February, crossing K1,100,000 (22 June to 5 August), climbing to over 1,200,000 (7 August-4 September), and then reaching an all-time record high of K1,300,000 on 5 September 2019.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Gold price has seen a significant one-day drop of over US\$40 in the global market. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

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

KBZMS to provide health insurance for Inter Pan's investors

INTER PAN, one of Asia's largest real estate companies, signed a partnership agreement on 19 November with KBZMS to provide free Arrawjan Health Insurance to its investors in Myanmar.

With this partnership, KBZMS will be able to provide the health insurance, intensive care insurance, personal injury insurance to the Inter Pan's clients, and this can pave the way for significant expansion of the health insurance coverage across Myanmar.

"I am glad to cooperate with Inter Pan. We have the same ambition to improve our customers'

quality of life by providing the right product solutions. With this cooperation, we hope to accelerate the growth of Myanmar's health insurance market," said Mr Jyothish Parameswaran Mohini, the head of commercial KBZMS.

"Inter Pan Investment Company is committed to mitigating the financial loss of the clients caused by unforeseeable health events in times of uncertainty by endowing free Arrawjan Health Insurance," said Ana Victoria, the Regional Director of Inter Pan.

KBZMS, Myanmar's leading insurance company, is rapidly ex-

panding its customer base with Partnership Agreements and technological upgrades.

IKBZ Insurance signed a partnership agreement with Japanese giant Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance to form a joint venture called KBZMS, and it is the first officially-licensed private insurance company in Myanmar with a minimum capital of K40 billion (US\$ 26.4 million).

IKBZ has 21 branches in 19 cities including Yangon, Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw, Taunggyi, Pyay, Patheingyi, Sittway, Magway, Meiktila, Pakokku, Monywa, Kalay, Myitkyina, Lashio, Bago, Maw-

lamyine, Myeik, Myingyan and Tachilek. It offers a full range of general insurance products from motor to property, fire, shipping and health insurance for individuals and groups. Inter Pan has been a multinational finance company since 1990 with 50 branches worldwide. In three decades, the company was awarded Best Futures Brokerage Award, Brokerage with Largest Volume of Multilateral Transactions Award, Most Trusted Futures Broker Awards and Most Compliant Futures Broker Awards.—GNLM (Translated by Hay Mar)

Over 900 returnees from China stranded in Muse

OVER 900 Myanmar citizens who returned from China were stranded in Muse town, Shan State (North). The Muse Health Department is detecting COVID-19 on the returnees once every two days and found one man positive on 18 November, according to Muse Township Admission and Resettlement Sub-Committee.

"On 18 November, one returnee was found COVID-19 positive, and he is undergoing medical treatment at Muse District People's Hospital. Now, he is in good health condition. The sub-committee is systematically accepting the returnees from China and sending the returnees to their places," said U Aung



Myanmar citizens who returned from China were stranded in Muse town after a man was found COVID positive on 18 November. PHOTO: SALAI VEN RO HTAN (IPRD)

Moe Lwin, the secretary of the Muse Township Admission and Resettlement Sub-Committee.

The COVID-19 positive pa-

tient was hospitalized in Muse District People's Hospital and is now taking medical treatment.

The three persons having had

contact with the positive patients were quarantined at Pyidaungsu Sports Ground in Muse Town.

There have been more than 900 returnees from China in Muse town since 1 November till today. Some residents from Muse donated the food, accommodation and other necessary items for the returnees. The repatriation sub-committee for preventive measures against COVID-19 has systematically accepted and detected the returnees from China. The committee is conducting the COVID-19 test on the returnees every two days under the guideline of the Shan State government. —Salai Ven Ro Htan (IPRD)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Endangered Popa langurs need conservation

INTERNATIONAL researchers in the second week of November discovered new primates Popa langur, which is critically endangered in the world. They desperately need biodiversity conservation measures to protect the primate species from extinction, U Ngwe Lwin, Programme Manager for Fauna & Flora International Myanmar said.

The leaf-eating primate species – Popa langur is discovered in Myanmar. The Popa langur differs from other known species in fur colouration, tail length and skull measurements.

"The primate species can only be found in Myanmar. The DNA tests prove that this is a new langur species. The species are found in the vicinity of Mount Popa, an extinct volcano and pilgrimage site that is home to Myanmar's most venerated spirits and also provides a vital sanctuary for wildlife. This being so, they are named Popa langur. However, the ecosystem is falling apart, and they are being hunted and facing a declining population. They



Popa langur, the primate species, can only be found in Myanmar. PHOTO: PAINZALOAT THEIN NYUNT

are listed as critically endangered species", said U Ngwe Lwin. About 200-250 are left in the wild across the country. An estimated 100 of them are found in the vicinity of Mount Popa. They are on

the brink of extinction, and the species need desperate conservation, FFI (Myanmar) researchers said.

"The sole effort of the Forest Department will not help restore the ecosystem for wildlife animals. The community participation plays a pivotal role in the conservation of the wildlife", U Ngwe Lwin highlighted.

The Popa langur can be found in the areas of Mont Popa, Bago mountain range, Panlaung and Padalin Cave Wildlife Sanctuary in Shan State and Yathe Pyan Cave in Kayin State. The habitats in the northeastern region are still undiscovered.

The German Primate Centre (DPZ) and FFI, in cooperation with other partners including NGOs, universities and museums, have been investigating the evolutionary history and species diversity of langurs in Myanmar and the leaf-eating new primate species named Popa langur were discovered, FFI Myanmar stated. —Peinzalote Thein Nyunt

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

CONSUMERS' WILLINGNESS

National Retail Federation expects US holiday sales to grow despite pandemic

THE National Retail Federation (NRF) on Monday forecasted that holiday sales during November and December will increase between 3.6 per cent and 5.2 per cent over 2019 despite uncertainty due to COVID-19.

The numbers forecast by NRF exclude automobile dealers, gasoline stations and restaurants.

"Given the pandemic, there is uncertainty about consumers' willingness to spend, but with the economy improving most have the ability to spend," NRF Chief Economist Jack Kleinhenz said in a

statement. Kleinhenz said households have strong balance sheets supported by a strong stock market, rising home values and record savings boosted by government stimulus payments issued earlier this year. "After all they've been through, we think there's going to be a psychological factor that they owe it to themselves and their families to have a better-than-normal holiday," Kleinhenz said, while noting that there are risks to the economy if the virus continues to spread.

SOURCE: XINHUA

"CIRCLE OF FRIENDS"

China vows to expand global free trade area network

CHINA will step up efforts to expand the free trade area network across the world to enlarge its "circle of friends", according to China's Commerce Minister Zhong Shan.

After signing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), China will see the China-Cambodia free trade agreement take effect at the earliest and accelerate investment agreement negotiations with Europe, Zhong said in a signed article published Tuesday in the People's Daily.

Zhong also urged efforts to upgrade the existing trade pacts with ASEAN, Singapore, Re-

public of Korea (ROK) and New Zealand, and facilitate China-Japan-ROK, China-Gulf Cooperation Council, China-Norway and China-Israel free trade agreement negotiations.

With the RCEP reaching a higher level in fields including customs procedures and trade facilitation, intellectual property protection, e-commerce and trade remedies, China will actively engage in dialogue and communication with more major economies and regional trade mechanisms, he said.

Covering a market of 2.27 billion people and a combined GDP of 26.2 trillion U.S. dollars, the RCEP



China's Minister of Commerce Zhong Shan attends a press conference on China's domestic market and all-round opening-up for the second session of the 13th National People's Congress (NPC) in Beijing, capital of China, March 9, 2019. PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE

signatories, which account for about one-third of the world's economy, will become a large integrated market. SOURCE: XINHUA

STOKING THE FIRES

India's love affair with coal cools as pressure grows on sector

FUNDING for coal projects in India has plunged for the second straight year, new figures showed

Tuesday, as the world's second biggest coal importer weans itself off the dirty fuel.

Research was released showing a drop in investment days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi reaffirmed the country's commitment to exceeding its targets under the Paris climate agreement.

India has the world's fourth-largest reserves of the fossil fuel and its cities are often shrouded in coal-induced smog, but Modi on Sunday told a virtual G20 summit that the South Asian giant was "exceeding" its targets.

SOURCE: AFP



India has the world's fourth-largest reserves of coal. PHOTO: AFP

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(22/2020-2021)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in Myanmar Kyats.

Sr No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(a)	DMP/L-146(20-21) (Retender)	Electrical Spares for ZJ 70L Sr 1 Rig (17) Items	Ks
(b)	DMP/L-204(20-21)	Module Studded for 3 NB 1300C Triplex Pump Ex ZJ 50D Drilling Rig (6) Nos	Ks

2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qtty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available during office hours commencing from 25 November 2020 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No. (44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

3. The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than 12:00 pm on 28 December 2020.

4. Tender Closing Date & Time - 28-12-2020, 12:00 pm

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph No. + 95 67 - 411206

Ministry of Transport and Communications
Myanma Port Authority
Invitation to Open Tender

1. Myanma Port Authority is planning to construct the following three vessels by foreign currency, USD (United States Dollar) only within for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 fiscal years. Therefore, interested Tenderers are cordially invited to submit complete project proposal for the following project-

Particular	Currency	Tender closing date and time
20M 1000BHP Harbour Launch (3-units)	USD only	30 th December, 2020 13:00 hrs

2. Tender Forms can be purchased at the planning Section, Theinbyu Dockyard, Mechanical Engineering Department, No.557/559, Strand Road, Botahtaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar of during office hours starting from 1 Dec 2020.

3. Tender to be performed by one tender two sealed envelopes system, Prequalification Bid and Price Bid to be submitted with each sealed envelope. We will explain about the Prequalification Bid at 13:00 hrs. on 15 Dec 2020 at the Meeting Room-No.1 of Head Office, Myanma Port Authority, No-10 Pansodan Street, Kyauktada Township, Yangon, Myanmar.

4. If you need more detailed information, please can be inquired at telephone no. 951-8610218, 951-8610225. Webmail: info@mpa.gov.mm

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BANDUNG VOY. NO. (679 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BANDUNG VOY. NO. (679 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 25-11-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES

'Freudianism and its discontents' vs efforts inspired by love in overcoming the Covid-19 scourge

FROM PAGE-9

Freud perforce becoming a 'Pyi Pyae' in the last 18 months of his life

Almost literally in the last year of Sigmund Freud's life, he became – to employ a term first devised and used by mainly the ancien (not ancient) (previous) Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) regime a Pyi Pyae ပြည်ပြည်: The term Pyi Pyae is very derogatory and should not be translated as 'expatriate'. Even the more elaborate 'one who ran away from his mother country' does not quite capture the derogatory and vitriolic nature of the epithet used by the then BSPP hacks which, sadly, indeed outrageously is still being used in the Burmese middle school history textbook (Grade VIII) as of 2019.

Freud had to leave his native Austria for Britain in June 1938, and he died there just over a year later in September 1939.

Freud Not becoming a Nobel laureate either in Medicine or in Literature

Peter Gay wrote that in 1929 the Nobel Committee decided not to seriously consider Freud any more for the Nobel Prize in Medicine or Physiology. This decision was made after a referee (whose name we do not know, maybe a previous Nobel laureate in medicine) opined, in effect, that

Freud's theories were (and are), in the context of the medical field, not scientific. Peter Gay stated in his biography that in Freud's diary of October 1929, there was a short note to himself that he was 'passed over for the Nobel prize'.

Considering Freud's fame or notoriety (based on one's perspective) did Freud 'need' the Nobel prize in medicine even if he might have arguably coveted it?

Another 'iffy' history or query: should Freud have been awarded the Nobel prize for literature instead? (He didn't get it either) (see below).

Not 3rd after Copernicus and Darwin but a 3rd after Montaigne and Nietzsche?

Freud wrote in one of his essays that Nicolas Copernicus (19 February 1473-24 May 1543) by proving the heliocentric theory and Charles Darwin (12 February 1809-19 April 1882) by stating that homo sapiens are a product of evolution and not 'special creation' had 'dethroned humans from the pedestal'. Freud stated that he took the next step – after Copernicus and Darwin by arguing, perhaps 'proving' in his view – that humans are not rational animals, but they are in bondage, amidst the clutches so to speak of unconscious motives, desires and indeed perhaps, at times, even 'evilisms' that lurked in what he termed the Id in the human psyche.

The audacity (so to speak) of Freud to compare himself with these two great scientists prompted the late Harold Bloom (11 July 1930-14 October 2019) a famous literary critic and Distinguished Professor of Humanities at Yale University to write that Freud who wanted to be a 'third after Copernicus and Darwin' can be considered as a third after Montaigne (28 February 1533- 13 September 1592) and Nietzsche (15 October 1844-15 August 1900) as a modern literary figure of great importance. Bloom meant that Freud was more of a modern essayist like Montaigne and Nietzsche rather than a pukka ('pure') (medical) scientist.

Bloom had a Chapter in his book *The Western Canon* (first published 1994) entitled 'Freud: A Shakespearean Reading'. Bloom stated that William Shakespeare (23 April 1564-23 April 1616) not Freud was the world's first psychologist and that Freud's writings could be analyzed from a Shakespearean viewpoint. At the same time, (unlike Frederick Crews who has virtually nothing complimentary to say about Freud) Bloom also wrote that Freud was 'possibly the best mind of our [20th] century' [sic, quoted exactly as it was written].

Freud's theories in the light of non-falsifiability thesis of Karl Popper

The philosopher of science

Sir Karl Popper (28 July 1902-17 September 1994) was also critical of Freudianism asserting that Freud and Marx's theories can be 'supported' by their admirers by 'extracting from any social phenomena to claim that their theories are right'. He mentioned Einstein's Theory of Special Relativity of 1905 which was proven right (because it was capable of being proven wrong (unlike Marx's and Freud's theories) in 1919 by an expedition led by the astronomer Sir Arthur Eddington (28 December 1882-22 November 1944) through scientifically recording the celestial phenomena during and after an eclipse that occurred in May 1919 that can be observed in a few parts of the world.

Two Freud admirers and their research work

There are at least two Freud admirers whom I personally know. The late Professor Andrew S. Watson of the University of Michigan Law School in the United States (in whose class 'Law and Psychiatry' yours truly stood co-equal first and obtained the grade of A plus and a Certificate of Merit for Winter Term 1982) was a Freudian as can be seen from his book *Psychiatry for Lawyers* (first published 1969).

Professor Melford Spiro (26 April 1920 -18 October 2014) was an anthropologist and Burma scholar. In his book *Buddhism*

and Society: A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes (second edition, 1982) at page xii Professor Spiro wrote about 'the genius of Sigmund Freud whose theories help me perceive at times resolved Myanmar social phenomena studied from an anthropological viewpoint'.

Lieb und Arbeitk ('To Love and To Work')

I first learned of the statement (rightly) attributed to Freud from Andrew Watson's *Psychiatry for Lawyers*. In the German language, in part, it reads *Lieb und Arbeitk* ['To] love and [to] work' should be one of the characteristics and indeed tasks of a 'mature person', Freud had stated.

Is there any justification to juxtapose not necessarily to compare it with contrast or even to analogize between what Freud meant by 'love' and the Buddhist concept (in Pali language) of metta with metta 'loving-kindness'? Compare it with the Buddhist concept of *မေတ္တာ* metta translated from the Pali language as 'loving-kindness'?

The dedicated, valiant efforts that are being made by admirable people the world over to overcome the once-in-a-century scourge by the name of Covid-19 that afflicts the planet, it is submitted, displays service to humanity inspired by 'love' in the sense of what Freud meant and also that of metta 'loving-kindness'.

A GLOBAL DONOR CONFERENCE

Japan pledges \$720 mil. for Afghan reconstruction at int'l confab

JAPAN pledged some \$720 million over the next four years for Afghan reconstruction at an international conference in Geneva on Tuesday that brought together over 80 countries and international organizations to help the war-torn country recover from years of violence.

Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi, in his statement, said, "Japan continues to stand with the Afghan government and its people. We will work on providing assistance from 2021 to 2024, maintaining the amount comparable to the past four years, which was \$180 million per year."

The meeting, held at the United Nations' European headquarters and online due to the coronavirus pandemic, is set to unveil financial assistance for the period between 2021 and 2024.

Afghanistan has relied on outside assistance for most of its national budget. But the international community is seeking to build up the country's capacity during what is often described as the "decade of transformation" from 2015 to 2024.

The Afghan government and the Taliban have been in talks since September for permanent cease-fire. But the country remains unstable amid a spate of attacks by the Taliban and terror attacks by the Islamic State extremist group.

"For the negotiations to move forward, we call on all the concerned parties for an immediate and comprehensive cease-fire. We strongly hope that the negotiations will lead to sustainable peace, and ensure," Motegi said.

SOURCE: KYODO

LOCAL INFECTIONS LINKED TO THE AIRPORT

Hundreds of flights cancelled as Shanghai tackles virus outbreak

HUNDREDS of flights at one of China's busiest airports were cancelled Tuesday as Shanghai raced to bring a local coronavirus outbreak under control.

Health officials have tested thousands of staff at Pudong International Airport since a small clutch of Covid-19 cases in the city was linked to several cargo handlers.

China — where the virus first emerged late last year — has largely brought the pandemic under control through travel restrictions and lockdowns, but it is now battling a number of domestic outbreaks in different cities.

Shanghai has reported seven local infections linked to the airport this month, with most cases found in the past few days.

The outbreak has sparked

plans to give high-risk workers at the travel hub an experimental vaccine. China has already been providing to state employees, international students and essential workers heading abroad since July.

On Tuesday, figures from

data services firm VariFlight showed that over 500 flights out of Pudong Airport had been called off — nearly half the day's scheduled flights.

Almost half of scheduled inbound flights were also cancelled.

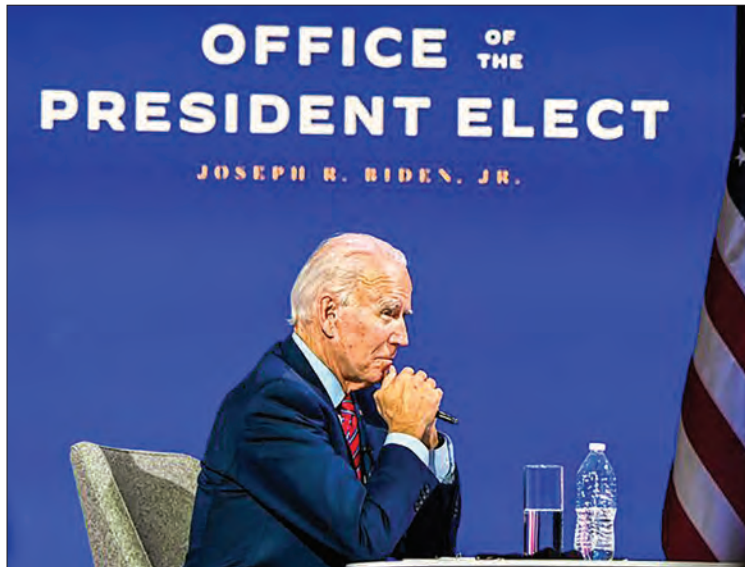
SOURCE: AFP



Passengers entering China wait for a transfer bus at Pudong International Airport in Shanghai, east China, March 19, 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA/DING TING/FILE

“DO WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE”

Trump finally agrees to Biden transition - but still not conceding



U.S. President-elect Joe Biden participates in a virtual meeting with the United States Conference of Mayors at his transition headquarters in Wilmington, Delaware, on Nov. 23, 2020. PHOTO: AFP

PRESIDENT Donald Trump came his closest yet to admitting election defeat Monday after the government agency meant to ease Joe Biden's transition into the White House said it was finally lifting its unprecedented block on assistance.

Trump acknowledged it was time for the General Services Administration to “do what needs to be done.”

In the same tweet he insisted that he was still refusing to concede, saying: “Our case STRONGLY continues, we will keep up the good fight, and I believe we will prevail!”

But for the Republican to sign off on the GSA's decision

to work with the Biden transition team signalled that even he sees the writing on the wall after three weeks of evidence-free claims that the November 3 election was stolen from him.

This means that Biden's team will now have access to funds, office space and the ability to meet with federal officials.

Biden's office, which hours earlier announced a highly experienced group to be nominated for top US foreign policy and security posts, said the GSA would now allow “support necessary to carry out a smooth and peaceful transfer of power.”

SOURCE: AFP

LIST OF COVID-19 'GREEN COUNTRIES'

Israel drops Saudi Arabia from virus quarantine list, day after Netanyahu's reported visit

A day after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's reported trip to Saudi Arabia, Israel's health ministry added the kingdom to its list of coronavirus “green” countries, exempting returning travellers from quarantine.

The health ministry on Tuesday confirmed that Saudi Arabia had been added to the safe list a day earlier, but dismissed any link to Netanyahu's reported visit to the futuristic Red Sea city of Neom on Sunday.

“The process is very simple and it happens once every two weeks,” health ministry director-general Hezi Levi told public broadcaster Kan on Tuesday morning. “On the previous list Saudi Arabia was red,” he said. “The morbidity rates decreased.

It's now green.

“It has nothing to do with anyone's visit to any country.”

Israeli media reported that Netanyahu travelled to Neom for landmark talks with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia, which has no official diplomatic ties with the Jewish state.

There has been unconfirmed speculation that Saudi Arabia might be seeking to become the latest Arab state to normalize ties with Israel.

An Israeli government source contacted by AFP confirmed the talks, which Riyadh firmly denied on Monday, and the kingdom has publicly said it will not establish diplomatic relations with Israel until the



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. PHOTO: FAYEZ NURELDINE/SARAH SILBINGER/AFP/FILE

Palestinian conflict is resolved.

Had Saudi Arabia not been on Israel's coronavirus green list, Netanyahu and his staff

would technically be compelled to quarantine for 14 days upon return.

SOURCE: AFP

FOREIGN POLICY TEAM

Biden cabinet picks promise calm after Trump upheaval

US President-elect Joe Biden's expected nomination of deeply experienced Antony Blinken for secretary of state highlights his message that a steady hand is back at the helm, in contrast to President Donald Trump's ongoing but failing attempts Monday to overturn the election.

Biden is set to announce his first cabinet picks on Tuesday and the names being floated signal the Democrat's overriding desire to lower the temperature in Washington and restore tra-

ditional US leadership abroad.

Blinken, a former number two of the State Department and a longtime advisor to Biden, would spearhead a fast-paced dismantling of Trump's disruptive “America first” policies, starting with rejoining the Paris climate agreement and the World Health Organization and resurrecting the Iran nuclear deal. According to US media reports, the foreign policy nominations rollout is also set to include Jake Sullivan as national security adviser and

career diplomat Linda Thomas-Greenfield for UN ambassador. Like Blinken, they are both strongly rooted in government service careers and served under president Barack Obama when Biden was vice president. The picks underline an emphasis on professionals whom Biden already knows well, in contrast to the Trump White House where officials were often picked without having traditional background for the job or proved incompatible and departed in acrimony.

The expected announcements come against an unprecedented backdrop of Trump refusing for the third week to acknowledge his election defeat and blocking Biden's access to the normal process for preparing an incoming government. Biden is to be sworn in on January 20, but so far only a slowly growing minority of Republican leaders has denounced Trump's conspiracy theory that mass fraud robbed him of victory, despite there being no evidence for this.—SOURCE: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

TERRITORIAL WATERS

Russia says chased off US warship in its Pacific waters

A Russian warship caught a US Navy destroyer operating in Russia's Pacific waters on Tuesday and chased it off, the defence ministry in Moscow said.

The USS John S. McCain, a guided-missile destroyer, violated Russia's territorial waters by moving two kilometres beyond the maritime border at 0317 GMT into Peter the Great Gulf, the ministry said in a statement.

The US ship had been operating for several days in the Sea of Japan and was being tracked by Russia, the ministry said.

The Admiral Vinogradov, an anti-submarine destroyer in Russia's Pacific Fleet, sent a warning to the US ship and threatened to “use a ramming manoeuvre to drive the intruder out of its territorial waters”. The US ship immediately returned to neutral waters, the statement said, and was being monitored.

SOURCE: AFP

TENSIONS FLARE

Brazil police fire tear gas at protests over Black man's killing

Brazilian police used tear gas and rubber bullets Monday to disperse protesters marching against the death of a black man beaten to death by white guards at a Carrefour supermarket.

Several days of protest have erupted in Porto Alegre, southern Brazil, after video footage last week showed 40-year-old welder Joao Alberto Silveira Freitas being punched in the face and head by a security guard while another guard held him.

Monday's march occupied a street and interrupted traffic in front of a Carrefour branch in the city.

A small number of protesters threw stones and fireworks at the police, who dispersed the group using tear gas and rubber bullets, AFP reporters witnessed.

SOURCE: AFP

Spectators allowed to return — in limited amounts — to sports events in England



Up to 4,000 people can return to outdoor sports stadiums in parts of England classified as at low risk from coronavirus from Dec. 2. **PHOTO: AFP**

LONDON — Premier League clubs can look forward to welcoming back spectators in limited numbers next month for the first time since March, following an announcement by the British government on Monday.

Up to 4,000 people can return to outdoor sports stadiums in parts of England classified as at low risk from coronavirus from Dec. 2, the government said, permitting the resumption of attendance at soccer, rugby and racecourses among other sports.

The crowd ceiling will be set at 4,000 or half the stadium capacity, whichever is lower, in the lowest-risk “tier one” parts of the country once a stricter lockdown due to the pandemic ends, the government said.

In “tier two” areas, the limit will be 2,000 outdoors, or half the capacity, it said.

In the highest “tier three” regions where COVID-19 infections are high, no spectators will be allowed.

A few pilot events have been held with spectators, such as a cricket match at The Oval, while Brighton hosted Chelsea before this season’s Premier League got underway.

However, England’s soccer and rugby leagues, as well as horse racing venues, have not allowed spectators since the first lockdown began in March.

Sports facing financial losses as a result of the absence of fans from stadiums can access a £300 million (\$400 million) “Winter Survival Package” of loans and grants. The government said it would spell out which regions of England will sit in which tier on Thursday, based on the latest weekly coronavirus data.—AFP ■

Firmino is key player in Liverpool ‘orchestra’, says Klopp

LONDON — Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp says Roberto Firmino is a key player in his Anfield “orchestra” despite the Brazil forward’s recent lack of goals for the Premier League champions.

Firmino’s header in Sunday’s 3-0 victory over Leicester was only his sixth goal in the whole of 2020.

Firmino’s lack of goals is a stark contrast to Klopp’s free-scoring trio of Mohamed Salah, Sadio Mane and Diogo Jota. The 29-year-old has never been viewed as a pure finisher, but criticism of his lack of goals has grown in recent months.

However, Klopp, whose side host Atalanta in the Champions League on Wednesday, insists

Firmino’s value is measured in more than just goals.

“Scoring was always important for Bobby but Bobby is a complete footballer,” Klopp said on Tuesday.

“A football team is like an orchestra, you have different people for different instruments, and some of them are louder than others, but they are all important for the rhythm.

“Bobby plays like 12 instruments in our orchestra. He’s very important for our rhythm.”

Jota’s fine form since joining from Wolves has raised questions about Firmino’s place in the starting lineup, but Klopp said he was not worried about the Brazilian.

“I’m not concerned about

anything with Bobby, but I know from time to time it happens that he scores a goal,” he said.

“This goal was very important, and what I loved most was the reaction of the boys. You saw the celebration, it was really emotional.

“Obviously the players read newspapers, unfortunately, and they saw there was some criticism, so they were really happy for him to score.”

Liverpool will welcome back Salah after he missed the Leicester game because of a positive coronavirus test while on international duty for Egypt. He has now tested negative.

Three points against Atalanta would guarantee progress to the Champions League knockout phase and offer Klopp the chance to rest players.

Liverpool have kept four clean-sheets in their past seven matches despite a defensive injury crisis and have yet to concede a goal in three European games this season.

“How the boys did it is exceptional — different line-ups, different pairings, but now we have to keep doing it like this, or even better,” Klopp said.

“The changes we have to make, we will make, the boys will have to adapt to each other, to different line-ups.—AFP ■



Liverpool’s Roberto Firmino celebrates his goal against Leicester. **PHOTO: LAURENCE GRIFFITHS POOL/AFP/FILE**

Tokyo Games to be new Olympic model for post-COVID era: Gov. Koike



Screengrab from a Youtube livestream shows Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike holding a press conference at the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan in Tokyo on Nov. 24, 2020. **PHOTO: KYODO**

TOKYO — Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike said Tuesday she expects next summer’s postponed Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics to serve as a model for games taking place after the novel coronavirus pandemic.

“Following Tokyo, Paris will host the (Summer) Games in 2024 and then Los Angeles in 2028. We will create a new model that benefits the post-COVID world and I wish to pass this on to these two cities,” Koike told a press conference at the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan.

The Japanese government has reiterated that the Tokyo Olympics, originally scheduled to take place this year but postponed in March due to the global health crisis, will open as planned

on July 23 next year. The organizing committee has been discussing ways to hold a “safe and secure” games despite a recent spike in the number of infections in the country.

“The Tokyo 2020 Games can also symbolize the resilience of humanity as we work together to defeat this invisible enemy, COVID-19,” Koike said, adding that the host city will take “all possible measures” to ensure the safety of athletes and others involved.

In order to gain support from the Japanese public and the rest of the world, Koike said it is “crucial” to consider further cost reductions, while vowing to work to simplify preparations and the operation of the games as much as possible.—Kyodo ■