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Friday, 4 December 2020

Independence Day Celebrations committee holds 3rd coordination meeting



Vice-President U Myint Swe chairs the third coordination meeting of the Central Committee on Celebrations of 73rd Anniversary of Independence Day in 2021, at the Union Government Office in Nay Pyi Taw on 3 December 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

The Central Committee on 2021 Independence Day 73rd Anniversary Celebrations held its 3rd coordination meeting via videoconferencing yesterday.

Vice-President U Myint Swe, in his capacity as chairperson of the central committee, attended the meeting together with senior government officials.

In his opening remark, the Vice-President discussed relevant aspects of the 73rd In-

dependence Day Celebrations on 4 January 2021 in line with directives, orders and guidelines of the National-Level Central Committee on COVID-19 Prevention, Control and Treatment and the Ministry of Health and Sports across the country.

The MoHS has set 10 guidelines in preparing for the event, and 6 rules for flag-hoisting and saluting ceremonies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 during the 73rd Anniversary Independ-

ence Day Celebrations.

The celebrations on 4 January will include national flag-hoisting ceremony, national flag-saluting ceremony, reading of the President's message and honorary title-awarding ceremony at the Thabin Hall of the Presidential Palace.

The Independence Day Reception and Dinner will not be held at the Presidential Palace this year. Instead, fireworks will be displayed for public view dur-

ing the evening celebrations.

The Vice-President added that essay and poem writing competitions and quiz and sports contests would not be held in Nay Pyi Taw and other regions/states to control the pandemic.

He also gave instructions for earlier disinfection of the event areas, medical tests for staff members who will perform duties at the event and other COVID-19 preventive measures.

He also discussed the work

assignments of the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture and the Ministry of Health and Sports before and during the celebrations.

Permanent Secretary U Zaw Than Thin from the Office of the Union Government presented the implementation of tasks assigned at the 2nd coordination meeting; Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Major-Gen Thaug Htike Shwe talked about

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order 33/2020

4th Waning of Tazaungmon, 1382
(3 December 2020)

Appointment of Judge in Mandalay Region High Court

In accord with the provisions stated in article 308 section (b) sub-section (4) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, article 82 section (d) of the Union Government Law, article 45 of the Union Judiciary Law and article 18 section (d) of Region or State Government Law, Daw Kyi Kyi Sein has been appointed as Judge for Mandalay Region High Court.

Sd/ Win Myint
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Objectives for 100th Anniversary of National Day 2020

- Rights to basic education for all school-age children
- Rights to life-long learning of practical and useful subjects for socio-economics
- More education investment in ethnic areas for multi-sectoral development of the Union
- Technological and infrastructural inputs for education development
- Establishment of a Democratic Federal Union with the collective strength of all the nationals

Motto of 100th Anniversary of National Day 2020

- Make the Union Peace with collective efforts of all the nationals commencing 100th anniversary of National Day

10th Waning of Tazaungmon 1382 ME
(9-12-2020)

Independence Day Celebrations committee holds 3rd coordination meeting

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preparations for flag hoisting, salute ceremony and parade and conducting swab tests of parade participants; Permanent Secretary U Myo Aung from the Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee about the formation of sub-committees and work committees, rehearsals for social distancing at the celebrations and awareness campaigns.

Next, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin presented about

the works of his sub-committee on the independence day dinner and reception; Deputy Director of Ordnance Services Brig-Gen Than Kyaw Soe about preparations for the shooting off fireworks during the evening celebrations; Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Maj-Gen Soe Tint Naing, Deputy Police Chief Police Major-General Aung Nang Thu and Police Colonel Soe Myint Oo, Head of the Traffic Police about security measures.

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint briefed on various public relations programmes in state-owned newspapers, televisions and radio, as well as live broadcasts of the event.

Permanent Secretary U Tun Ohn from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture and Deputy Minister for Education U Win Maw Tun also reported on the preparations of relevant sub-committees.

Union Minister for Health

and Sports Dr Myint Htwe and Permanent Secretary Dr Thet Khaing Win talked about COVID-19 preventive measures during the celebrations.

Director-General U Myo Hlaing from the Department of Sports and Physical Education and Permanent Secretary Daw Naing Thet Oo from Office of the Union Auditor-General reported on the works of their sub-committees.

Deputy Minister from the Office of the Union Govern-

ment U Tin Myint reported on ceremony to confer honorary titles and Deputy Minister for Electricity and Energy U Khin Maung Win about the preparations for ensuring regular power supplies during the celebrations.

Vice-President U Myint Swe gave suggestions and comments based on the discussions of the sub-committees after which the meeting was concluded.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

NRPC organizes coordination meeting on future peacemaking plans



A coordination meeting on making peace with ethnic armed organizations was held at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The meeting was taken part by Vice-Chairman of NRPC and Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo, Lt-General Yar Pyae, Lt-Gen Min Naung and Lt-Gen Aung Lin Dwe from the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Army), Secretary of Peace Commission retired Lt-Gen Khin Zaw Oo, Pyithu Hluttaw MP U Pyone Cho (a) U Htay Win Aung, Peace Commission Advisory Group members U Hla Maung Shwe and U Moe Zaw Oo and Director-General of Ministry of State Counsellor Office U Zaw Htay.

They discussed future peace negotiation with NCA-S EAOs, non-signatories of NCA and other peacemaking plans.

The second-day meeting will continue on 4 December.—Myo Min Naing

(Translated by Aung Khin)

National Reconciliation and Peace Centre holds talks on future peacemaking plans in Nay Pyi Taw on 3 December. **PHOTO: KO LAY**

Benefits from working together

If we want the whole country to develop, we need to combine all our human, financial and material resources and work strenuously together. Only then shall we benefit. It will be of no benefit if the Bamars, the Karens, the Shans, the Kachins and the Chins are divided, each going their own way. We will enjoy benefits only if we work together. And you will find that out only if you try it out.

(Extract from a speech delivered by General Aung San on 11 February 1947 in Panglong at a dinner with Sawbwas)



Shwe-Kyet-Yet and Shwe-Kyet-Kya Pagoda. PHOTO: THANT ZAW OO

International Day of Persons with Disabilities held virtually



Vice-President U Henry Van Thio speaks at the virtual ceremony marking International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December 2020. PHOTO: MNA

VICE-PRESIDENT U Henry Van Thio, in his capacity as chairperson of the National Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, delivered a speech via videoconferencing at the virtual ceremony marking International Day of Persons with Disabilities yesterday morning. Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye (Vice-Chairperson of the committee), Deputy Minister U Soe Aung, other senior officials, UN officials and representatives of disabled persons participated in this virtual ceremony.

During the ceremony, the Vice-President said that this

year's ceremony was held in the form of videoconferencing because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Myanmar has held the ceremony marking the International Day of Persons with Disabilities annually since 1994, according to the Vice-President.

At the time when the country is facing the COVID-19 pandemic, his committee is cooperating with the Joint Committee for the COVID-19 Emergency Response for Persons with Disabilities, the Myanmar Federation of Persons with Disabilities, and relevant ministries to provide support to disabled persons.

Regarding projects to help the PWDs, the Vice-President said that pilot projects for Bar-

rier-Free Community had been carried out at the Myoma Market and Water Park in Nay Pyi Taw.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism also announced on 14 June that the Myanmar Barrier Free Tourism Pilot Project would soon be carried out for Persons with Disabilities to be able to travel to the famous destinations in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, Yangon and Mandalay Regions and in Bagan. The 61st UN General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and its Optional Protocol on 13 December 2006. Myanmar ratified the UNCRPD on 7 December 2011, according to the Vice-President.

He said that Myanmar, in cooperation with UN organizations, development partners and organizations of Persons with Disabilities, is making efforts to adhere to the Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific (2013-2022) and the ASEAN Enabling Master Plan (2025).

The theme of this year's International Day of Persons with Disabilities is "Building Back Better: toward a disability-inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 World". Myanmar is making great efforts to continue supporting Persons with Disabilities during the COVID-19 crisis, to improve the living standards of Persons with Disabilities

with a budget of K3 billion, and to provide mental and physical assistance to the Persons with Disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the ceremony, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Mr Ola Almgren read out the UN Secretary-General's official message marking the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye delivered a congratulatory speech for the event. During the ceremony, the names of prize winners in the essay competition marking the International Day of Persons with Disabilities were also announced. —MNA (Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

COVID-19 Call Centre opens daily

In efforts to speed up the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 disease, the call centre (phone number 2019) is established by four communications operators and the Blue Ocean Company with the coordination of the Medical Research Department of the Health and Sports Ministry and Post and Telecommunications Department from 9 am to 5 pm daily at the Medical Research Department in Yangon.

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

“People are the key”

Working Committee meets to address impact of COVID-19 on country’s economy

THE eleventh meeting of the Working Committee to address the impact of COVID-19 on the country’s economy was held yesterday afternoon.

Chaired by Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun, the meeting was attended by members of the working committee Union Ministers, U Soe Win, U Thein Swe and Dr Than Myint, the Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar, U Kyaw Kyaw Maung and representatives of the Ministries concerned.

Following the setting up of COVID-19 relief funds of Kyats 200 billion, the Committee approved Kyats 101.9283 billion to 3,394 enterprises as first disbursement and Kyats 64.6680 billion to 2,939 enterprises as second disbursement. The meeting discussed matters relating to carry out an assessment on the effective impact of the loan disbursed, government’s support to improve country’s economy in line with “Enchanting Myanmar Health and Safety Protocol” and issues presented by the ministries and other organizations to Working Committee.—MNA



Union Minister U Thaung Tun participates in the meeting of the Working Committee to address the impact of COVID-19 on the country’s economy on 3 December 2020. PHOTO: MNA

MoHS, World Bank discuss loan for COVID vaccine purchase plan

THE Ministry of Health and Sports and the World Bank organized a virtual meeting on the purchase and distribution of COVID-19 vaccine yesterday.

During the meeting, Ms Mariam Sherman, World Bank Country Director for Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos, said that although it was not known yet which vaccines to be used, arrangements relating to the purchase, transportation and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines were to be reported.

Mr Paul Jacob Robyn, Senior Health Specialist at the World Bank, said that additional fund of US\$60 million from IDA 19 had been allocated for the purchase, transport and distribution of COVID-19 vaccine in Myanmar.

Myanmar was included in the member countries of CO-



Ministry of Health and Sports and World Bank hold virtual meeting on the loan for COVID vaccine purchase plan on 3 December 2020. PHOTO: MNA

VAX facility offering fair and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines. Therefore, Myanmar can purchase vaccine via CO-VAX facility by adding funds, and can apply for loan from World

Bank if the vaccines for more than 20 per cent of the population are purchased, he said.

He also detailed the requirements for the purchase of the coronavirus vaccines.

Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe expressed thanks for World Bank for the assistance in Myanmar’s health sector and COVID-19 response processes.

The ministry is cooperating with the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry and the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations on the international loan plans.

National-Level Central Committee on COVID-19 Prevention, Control and Treatment will give the decision for the purchase of the vaccine.

Myanmar is included in the 92 member countries of COVAX mechanism that will get the vaccine for 20 per cent of the each country’s population free of charge or at lower price.

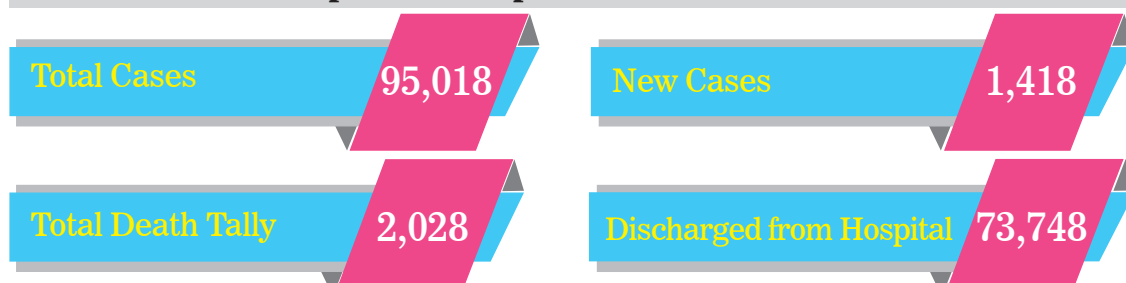
Officials from the Ministry of Health and Sports and the World Bank participated in the meeting.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

1,418 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 3 December, total figure rises to 95,018

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rise to 95,018 after 1,418 new cases were reported on 3 December according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 95,018 confirmed cases, 2,028 died, 73,748 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 3 December 2020



Daily death toll until 8 pm 3-12-2020

30

Ministry of Health and Sports

This is the IT age



This is the IT age. IT is developing all over the world. Although the arrival of this technology was later than that of many countries, it has spread rapidly in the country. The percentage of mobile phone use among the public has exceeded 100 per cent in the past five years. It means that one person is using more than one SIM card. In addition, people are using mobile phones skillfully. Plans are being made to conduct an educative programme on the effective use of mobile phones in business and education and to support the economic development of our people. The plans will be implemented soon.

(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's report on COVID-19 situation amid containment measures, on 21 November 2020)

MoC minister joins 6th India-CLMV Business Conclave 2020

UNION Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint participated in the opening ceremony of the 6th India-CLMV Business Conclave 2020 jointly held virtually by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India and Confederation of India Industry (CII) yesterday afternoon.

At the ceremony, Union Minister Dr Than Myint said India, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Viet Nam are the neighbouring countries with many similarities in culture, art and traditions as well as with strategic political and economic cooperation. He added 2020 is also a significant year for India and CLMV countries to set a milestone in digital economic integration.

He said these countries are still able to share their digital experiences and continued trade and investment cooperation despite the many challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. He urged to cooperate, with the digital technology platform, to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on small and medium enterprises and start-up businesses, to ensure the



Union Minister Dr Than Myint participates in the opening ceremony of the 6th India-CLMV Business Conclave 2020 via videoconference on 3 December 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

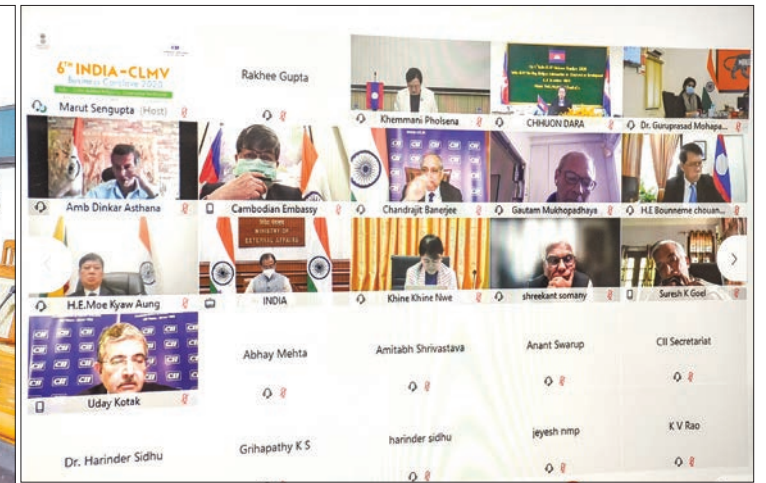
smooth flow of goods along the supply chains and to promote acceptable business practices and business networking in order to continue to explore new business opportunities.

The Union Minister added although the trade between India and ASEAN countries reached US\$97 billion and business in services reached \$45 billion in 2018-2019, the trade and investment between India and CLMV countries are still needed to increase.

He said the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) is a solid

foundation for cooperation in the transport and communication sectors as well as culture, education and tourism sectors between CLMV, Thailand and India and he called on to continue to work together for peaceful, prosperous and strong regional cooperation that can meet global development challenges.

At the ceremony, the Minister for the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Laos, the Minister of State for the Ministry of External Affairs of India, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of



Commerce of Cambodia, the Secretary for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade Department of the Ministry of Commerce of India, the President and Director-General for the Confederation of India Industry (CII) delivered opening speeches respectively. The ceremony was also attended online by Indian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Saurabh Kumar and Myanmar Ambassador to India U Moe Kyaw Aung, experts, entrepreneurs and representatives from partner countries.

Plenary sessions were held

by each country and representatives from the private sector, and entrepreneurs will participate in the discussion to be held on 4 December.

The Ministry of Commerce, the Myanmar Trade Promotion Agency and the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry exhibited rice, sesame, beans, rice, fruits and fishery products at the online fair jointly held with the ceremony. —MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)



Locals attend the animal husbandry course at Ouk Kyaung Village near Mann Oil Field in Minbu (Saku) Township on 3 December. **PHOTO: MNA**

MPRL E&P organizes animal husbandry course for locals in Mann Oil Field

MPRL E&P, the oil and gas exploration and production company, opened an animal husbandry course in cooperation with the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department for the local people of Mann Oil Field at Ouk Kyaung Village in Minbu (Saku) Township in Magway Region yesterday.

The three-day training that will conclude on 4 December was organized in line with COVID-19 guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports and was teaching the subjects of breeding of cattle, pigs, indigenous chickens, animal husbandry, and asexual re-

production.

The purpose of the training is to fulfil the requirement of skilled breeding workers. The completion of the course will be beneficial for the implementation of systematic breeding, reducing breeding costs, and sustainability of the vocations of the local people.

MPRL E&P is a joint-ventured company with Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise.

A total of 26 trainees from 10 villages near the Mann Oil Field attended the training.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

MoPFI discusses JICA, Two-Step Loan for agricultural sector

THE Steering Committee on Implementing Agricultural and Rural Development Project (JICA, Two-Step Loan) held a meeting via videoconferencing yesterday.

Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry U Maung Maung Win, in his capacity as the chairman of the steering committee, discussed the benefits from Phase I of JICA, Two-Step Loan conducted with K200 billion in 2017 for the farmers, plans of JICA to provide the needed technology and capital amount for agriculture and livestock sectors in Phase II like Phase I.

The deputy minister added JICA loans comply with the country's economic policies, MERRP (Myanmar Economic Recovery and Reform Plan) and CERP (COVID-19 Economic Plan), the draft of an action plan to provide the whole supply chain and to produce value-added products

using machinery instead of traditional production methods for food security and exports, Comprehensive Master Plan of Myanma Agriculture Development Bank (MADB) which is serving as Executing Agency for JICA project and cooperation works of relevant departments for the success of JICA Two-Step Loan.

Managing Director for MADB U Min Thu presented the completion of JICA Two-Step Loan Phase I and action plans for Phase II while the official of JICA Head Office briefed the loan for Phase II and other work plans.

The meeting was attended by the officials from the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, JICA Myanmar Head Office, JICA Head Office and JICA Consultant. —MNA (Translated byKTZH)



Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Win participates in the virtual meeting of the Steering Committee on Implementing Agricultural and Rural Development Project (JICA, Two-Step Loan) on 3 December 2020. PHOTO: MNA

Chin State sees ecotourism development with new tourist destinations



Chairman and members of Destination Management Organization observe the destinations for ecotourism development in Kanpetlet, Chin State. PHOTO: KO LAIN



Members of Destination Management Organization collect and throw trash into dustbins on Mount Victoria in Chin State. PHOTO: KO LAIN (IPRD)

THE ecotourism will be implemented in Kanpetlet Township, Mindat District of Chin State to promote the tourism industry, according to the

state Destination Management Organization (DMO).

The DMO members inspected two new places which are locally called Twe Li (Lake

and Si Tone Lone (a stone on the verge of the hill). Twe Li means black water and Shi Tone Lone means a big rock in a cold place. They are lo-

cated in Nat Ma Taung (or) Khaw-nu-soum National Park with full of Taung Zalal (rhododendron), the symbolic flower of the Chin State.

The DMO members also conducted a plastic campaign at the popular recreational areas and on the top of the Nat Ma Taung (or) Mount Victoria.

They conduct such campaign for the public to take rest peacefully at the clean environment and they will also explore new tourist site and make preparations amid COVID-19 to promote the eco-tourism industry, said the Secretary of DMO.

The Administrators of Kanpetlet, Nat Ma Taung (or) Khaw-nu-soum National Park, Staff of Hotels and Tourism, local tourist guides, business people and youths participated in the campaign. — Ko Lain (IPRD) (Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



Pictures show the scenic views of a lake and mountains in Kanpetlet Township, Chin State. PHOTO: KO LAIN (IPRD)

Stock trading value on YSX extends drops in November

THE volume of shares traded on the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) sank to the lowest level of K552.9 million in November this year, with 107,028 shares, the YSX's monthly report indicated.

In January 2020, 196,836 shares worth K1.25 billion were traded on the exchange while 188,919 shares, with an estimated value of K1.48 billion, were traded on the deal in February and 228,913 shares valued K1.42 billion were traded in March respectively. It touched the lowest of K902 million with 173,808 shares in April. It rose to K1.2 billion with 200,416 shares being traded in May. The share volumes traded on the exchange surged to 221,682 in June, with

estimated value K1.3 billion and then, it fell to K1 billion with 125,137 shares in July. In August, the exchange witnessed a low of stock trading value at K747.5 million, with 118,850 shares traded. The value slightly rose to K838.67 million, with 85,237 shares on the exchange in September. It continued drops in October with 85,630 shares worth K673.5 million, the exchange's monthly report showed.

At present, shares of six listed companies -- First Myanmar Investment (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB), First Private Bank (FPB), TMH Telecom Public Co. Ltd (TMH) and the Ever Flow River Group

Public Co. Ltd (EFR) -- are being traded on the exchange.

In November, the share prices of FMI were closed at K9,900 per unit, MTSH at K3,700, MCB at K8,400, FPB at K22,000, TMH at K2,700 and EFR at K3,900 respectively.

The stock markets worldwide have reported their largest declines since the 2008 financial crisis. Similarly, the local equities market is also scared by the COVID-19 crash, a market observer points out.

At present, people are putting money in savings, rather than investing amid the COVID-19 crisis, he added.

Next, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar

(SECM) has allowed foreigners to invest in the local equity market from 20 March 2020. The foreign shareholding amount stood at 4,509,475 shares of three listed companies on the exchange as of November-end.

Furthermore, YSX launched pre-listing board (PLB) on 28 September 2020 to provide unlisted public companies with fund-raising opportunities and build a bridge toward listing on YSX, YSX stated.

The YSX was launched three years ago to improve the private business sector. It disseminates rules and regulations regarding the stock exchange and knowledge of share trading through stock investment seminars. The

stock exchange has also sought the government's support to get more public companies to participate in the stock market and help more institutional investors, such as financing companies, investment banks, and insurance companies, to emerge.

Amid the COVID-19 crisis, Myanmar's securities market has been able to continue operating without stopping trading.

A total of 2.4 million shares worth K13.39 billion were traded on the YSX in 2019, a significant increase compared to the previous year, according to the annual report released by the exchange.

— Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

About 50 companies reported dissolving on MyCo registry system

By Nyein Nyein

THE Directorate of Investment and Company Registration (DICA) received a report for dissolution of 50 corporate enterprises on the online registry system, MyCO, under the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, said U Thant Sin Lwin, director-general of the DICA.

At present, there is no corporate insolvency or personal bankruptcy registered on the DICA, he continued.

"The DICA receives the report for dissolution of corporate enterprises. There are many work procedures to dissolve the company. We still cannot regard them as bankruptcy for now.

About 40-50 companies were filed for dissolution," he affirmed.

Those companies include business failure and dissolution, dissolution of partnership, deadlock and dissolution and closing the business for new collaboration and new corporation.

"As far as I am concerned, corporate insolvency includes liquidation or winding-up process for non-viable businesses. Some companies are insolvent, he explained.

Those filed for dissolution are small firms, he added.

The Insolvency Law came into effects on 25 May 2020. The DICA is responsible for the insolvency register.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

FDI tops \$209.616 mln as of 25 November

MYANMAR has attracted US\$209.616 million in foreign direct investments as of 25 November in the current financial year 2020-2021 started on 1 October, including the expansion of capital by the existing enterprises, as per the statement of Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC).

The figures also include \$9.86 million in investments in Thilawa SEZ under the Special Economic Zone Law.

According to the statistics, 14 foreign enterprises have obtained permits from MIC and endorsements from regional and state Investment Committees between 1 October and 25 November in the current FY under the Myanmar Investment Law,

bringing in the capital of \$65.786 million. Amid the COVID-19 concerns, foreign direct investments flow into many types of businesses, including the garment enterprises, MIC stated.

Of the investment proposals, the manufacturing and labour-intensive businesses are prioritized by the commission. The commission ensures to approve responsible companies by assessing environmental and social impacts. The commission is working together with the relevant departments to screen the projects, said U Thant Sin Lwin, secretary of MIC.

In the current financial year, the MIC has set an FDI target of \$5.8 billion. The Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic

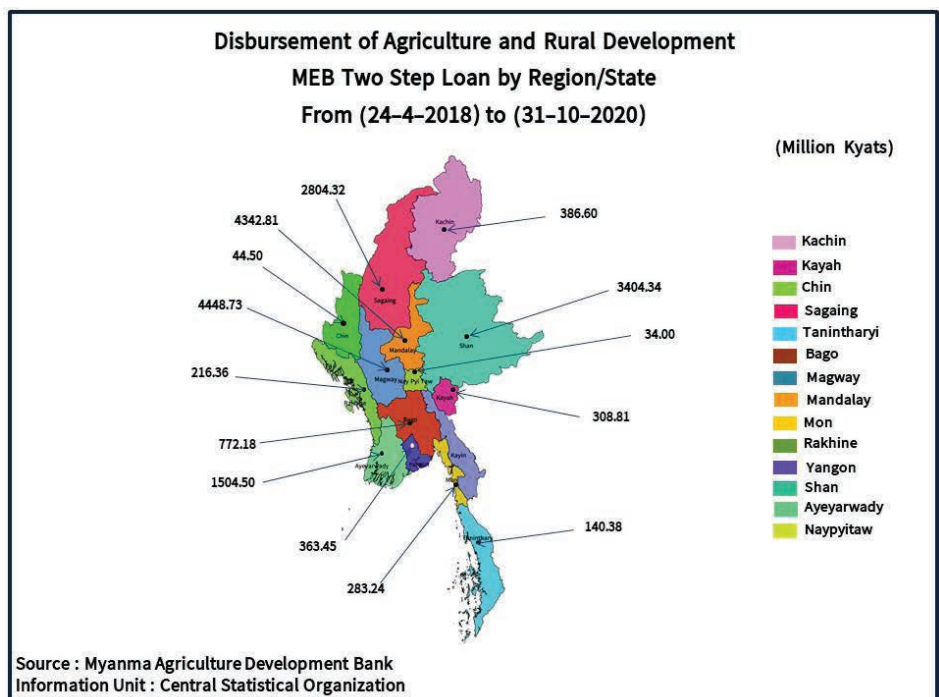
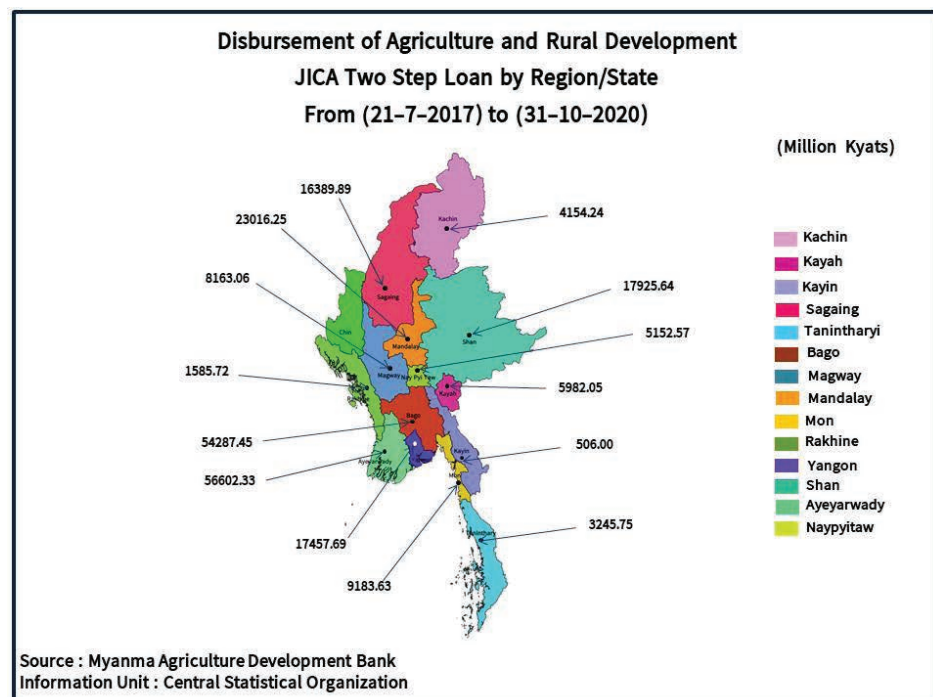
Relations has been inviting responsible businesses to benefit the country.

The country fell short of the FDI target of \$5.8 billion in the 2019-2020 financial year, registering FDI inflows of only \$5.68 billion, according to data from the DICA. The commission and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) will jointly review the Myanmar Investment Promotion Plan due to the coronavirus impacts, to boost the agricultural, health, industrial and digitization sectors for the post-coronavirus era.

As per the MIPP, the country expects to attract foreign direct investments of over \$200 billion in 20 years. — Htet Myat

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Trade Mark Ads Call Thin Thin May, 09251022355



COVID-19 vaccination programme requires rigorous logistics coordination

WHEN it comes to mass immunization against COVID-19, our country is planning to purchase the vaccine at low price or free via COVAX facility for 20 percent of the country's population.

Meanwhile, a meeting between the Ministry of Health and Sports and the World Bank yesterday over US\$ 60 million ODA loan from the World Bank for procurement of vaccines comes as tremendous and welcome news.

It reflects that we will see a first batch of immunization soon. The more people who receive the vaccine, the more protected everybody will be. The time has come to consider which groups are vulnerable for infection and which groups deserve priority for vaccination.

It should be noted that over 2,000 have died from the novel coronavirus so far out of 95,000 cases.

As the Union Government is taking steps to protect the most vulnerable people from the agonies of COVID-19, all hands from the government and private sectors should be on deck to effectively organize a national vaccination programme on an unprecedented scale.

Success of a national vaccination programme will require a rigorous command of logistics, coordination between government departments concerned, clear and effective communication with the public and a sustained culture of transparency and professionalism. Some vaccines are needed

to be kept at minus 70 degrees C.

We are confident that the experiences of the Ministry of Health and Sports and its health workers and experts in immunization programmes would make the coming national immunization programme against COVID-19 a success.

We must prepare now for day one of the vaccine's availability through a comprehensive national strategy for procurement, logistics, the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and immunization.

It could take a considerable amount of time to mass produce the vaccine and distribute it around the world.

The expectation is that Covid-19 vaccines will be given to those in health services first, as well as the most vulnerable members of society, before it's rolled out to the rest of the population.

And, even with a vaccine, it will take time for the global economy and our economy to get back to pre-crisis levels.

Hence, before being vaccinated against the coronavirus, we need to be very vigilant during this critical period.

Commemoration of Centennial: Bringing the University Back into Excellence (Part 4)

Professor Chaw Chaw Sein (PhD), University of Yangon

(CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS ARTICLE ON 30 NOVEMBER)

IN LIGHT of commemorating the University centenary, the writer would like to highlight how the Department of International Relations has worked in collaboration with University administration and development partners by reviewing the existing curriculum of IR and drafting new curriculum for Political Science (PS) that was reintroduced again in 2013. Here, I would like to admit, today PS is far different from old days that we have learned in our university life.

Faculty system

In 1957, the University practiced faculty system and the Department of Modern History and Political Science was organized under the Faculty of Social Science. When new education system was introduced in the universities of Myanmar in 1964, the faculty system was abolished and departments took place in it. This new system brought Department of Modern History and Political Science almost to



Summer School Programme: curriculum development and capacity building for teaching and research.

an end along with student uprising that took place throughout the country. From 1988-2010, the idea of PS was not on the top agenda of university education as Myanmar was under military administration.

Series of reforms

When the new democratic government was formed in 2011,

industry of Education assigned the Department of IR, University of Yangon and Mandalay to produce political scientists that will be in line with "New Transition Myanmar" in 2013. Since then, our Department has to take dual responsibilities: not only reviewing the existing curriculum of IR but also drafting new curriculum and course guide for PS. Doing those at the same time are quite challenging for IR faculty members. I never forget the days of transitional period of Myanmar as our faculty members devoted their time with those heavy workloads. Drafting a teaching plan for PS, getting approval for the plan from Board of Study, University Senate and Ministry of Education, organizing workshops and seminars for curriculum development with foreign scholars, inviting curriculum specialists, meetings and discussing with development partners are not an easy work for us. At the same time, we need to provide training for our faculty members to teach these new courses to the outstanding students.

The new courses

The new courses that we haven't learned during our days of University life are: public policy and public administration, political theory, political economy,

gender, media, peace and security and comparative politics etc. These new subjects are really important for the transition Myanmar in carrying out political and economic reforms.

Remarkable achievements

I would also like to share some remarkable achievements of the Department. A notable workshop that we participated for the first time was "Roundtable Discussion: Building Social Sciences and Humanities in Myanmar." It was held with Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science and Central European University on 25-28 June 2012 at the Diamond Jubilee Hall, University of Yangon. The workshop was attended by members of Myanmar Academy of Arts and Sciences, Rectors and Professors from the University of Yangon, Yangon Institute of Education, Yangon Institute of Economics, Yangon University of Foreign Languages and University of Mandalay together with invited guests from Open Society Foundations. As an outcome of the discussion, Visiting Professor Programme for International Relations, Law and Archeology disciplines of University of Yangon were conducted with the expense of the Open Society Foundation (OSF). Under this programme, twelve

visiting professors, four for each discipline, were invited for 2012-2013 Academic Year. Accordingly, we drafted and submitted the work plan on "Visiting Professor Programme" to support the teaching of "Development Politics" and "Political Science" in International Relations Department. With this enthusiastic efforts, distinguished professors from Europe and Asia trained the IR faculty members at the University with the support of OSF from 2013 to 2015. The OSF organized distinguished professors from Hong Kong University, Oxford University, Columbia University, American University, Nagoya University, International University of Japan and Central European University for this programme.

Research fellow programme

In 2016, when OSF focus more on research fellow programme, the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), a German Foundation continued to support this programme under the name of "Summer School Programme." Four Summer School Programmes have been held at the Department of IR in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The Fourth programme for 2020 was held with online due to COVID-19 pandemic. These programmes brought together

participants from the Department of IR of our University and other universities where IR is accommodated. Besides Summer School Programme, the Department organized three-day workshop on curricula development in 2017 and 2019 to learn the curricula and courses from Asian Universities such as De la Salle University, Tsinghua University, Chung Ang University, Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi), Ewha Womans University of Korea, Passau university and ANU with the support of KAS.

Furthermore, with the desire to draft curriculum with learning outcomes and course guide, we received Ms Jennifer Jones from Australia. She was assigned as curriculum development officers under the programme of the Australia Volunteers for International Development with the support of Scope Global from 2015 to 2016. She was attached at the Department for two years and with her kind support, the faculty members are well adapted to draft the course guide and lesson plan. These programmes have contributed the curriculum development, teaching and research capacity of faculty members which in turn brings the University back into excellence.

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“အမျိုးသမီးများအပေါ်အကြမ်းဖက်မှု ကာကွယ်တုံ့ပြန်ရေး ဘီလီယံ ဝန်ထူထောင်ရေးအဖွဲ့ အရက်အလတ်ကောက်ပျက်”

“Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!”

Myanmar Daily Weather Report
(Issued at 7:00 pm Thursday 3rd December, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30) hrs M.S.T today, the Cyclonic Storm (Burevi) over Gulf of Manner has moved Westwards and it is centered at about (5) Nautical miles South-Southwest of Pamban and about (120) Nautical miles Northeast of Kanyakumari (India). Weather is cloudy over the Westcentral and Southwest Bay and partly cloudy over the Andaman sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON THE 4th December, 2020: Rain are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Shan, Kayah, Kayin, Mon States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Strong easterly winds with moderate to rough seas are likely at times Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in strong easterly winds may reach (30-35)m.p.h. Sea will be slight to moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (6-9) feet in Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and about (3-5) feet Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Bago, Yangon, Taninthayi Regions and Kayah, Kayin, Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4th December, 2020: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4th December, 2020: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4th December, 2020: Generally fair weather.

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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.

We Love Yangon receives K200 mln fund through KBZPay

By Nyein Nyein

THE We Love Yangon charity organization received K200 million fund through KBZPay during COVID-19 period, said U Ah Yay Kyo, the vice-chairman of We Love Yangon team.

The charity organization on behalf of the donors handed over these funding to those places which require aid.

"Earlier, we have spent the donation on fixing the basins and distributing the hand gels, masks, thermometers and personal protection items. Later, we have donated the fund to poor or low-income families from the related townships. During the second wave, we have changed the whole system of the donation. We have taken necessary action to set up a COVID centre in Phaungyi. We have also assisted the COVID centre in Yoma, Aung Myint



Members of We Love Yangon provide foods for locals in Yangon Region during the second wave of COVID-19 in Myanmar. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

Moe, Hlaing. Then, we have donated K20 million worth of aid to Thanlyin hospital. The Fortune Plaza Centre was also organized by We Love Yangon,"

said U Ah Yay Kyo.

Besides, our team also provided K50 million to access the lamp posts and upgrade the roads, according to We Love

Yangon team.

Although we had difficulty having vehicles to donate things to the COVID centres and hospitals earlier, we are now allowed to rent the buses from YRTA, and home-used cars from the donors, he added.

However, around 30 or 50 volunteers from We Love Yangon are infected with the COVID-19 during the pandemic period, said U Zaw Win Khaing, the general secretary from We Love Yangon.

We Love Yangon was formed with 11 committees and located in 42 townships. Later on, the We Love Yangon will carry out for green environment in Yangon region. Now, writer Daw Than Myint Aung acts as the chairperson of We Love Yangon which was established on 5 March with about 3,000 members.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Myanmar nationals, seamen fly back home by relief flights



Myanmar returnees queue for immigration service at the Yangon International Airport on 3 December 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE 3rd relief flight of Myanmar National Airway (MNA) organized by the Myanmar Consulate-General in Hong Kong landed at Yangon International Airport bringing back a total of 148 Myanmar nationals after they were stranded in Macao due to the suspension of international flights yesterday evening.

The another MNA relief flight organized by the Myanmar Embassy in Singapore and Myanmar Seafarer Employment Service Federation (MSESF) also brought back a total of 147 Myanmar seamen from Singapore yesterday evening.

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 and Myanmar seamen 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, shipping companies and Myanmar embassies from respective countries. — MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Light truck ablaze on road in Yangon

A light truck was totally damaged by fire on road in Yangon yesterday morning. The report of Tamway Township Fire Services Department said that the accident occurred on Lay Daunt Kan Road, Tamwaylay Ward, Tamway Township in Yangon Region.

According to the investigation, the Hijet car heading for Thingangyun Township from Tamwe Township was damaged by fire when the car wire connecting the speaker and the battery got overheated.

No casualties were reported with the damages amounting to



Firefighters try to extinguish a car fire on Lay Daunt Kan Road in Tamway on 3 December 2020. **PHOTO: NAING LIN AUNG (IPRD)**

K500,000, according to the Fire Services Department.

The car was damaged, and the Fire Services Department

team managed to extinguish the fire with the operation ending at 9:50 am.

The police have filed charges

of negligence against U Maung Maung Cho, the driver of the Hijet. — Naing Lin Aung (IPRD)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

SPUTNIK V

Putin orders 'large-scale' vaccinations to start next week

PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin ordered a large-scale voluntary vaccination programme against COVID-19 to begin next week across Russia, saying teachers and doctors should be first in line to get the country's flagship Sputnik V vaccine.

President Vladimir Putin told health officials Wednesday to start widespread vaccinations next week, adding that Russia has produced close to 2 million doses of its Sputnik V vaccine.

The announcement came the same day Britain approved the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for a rollout starting next week.

Last week Russia announced that interim test

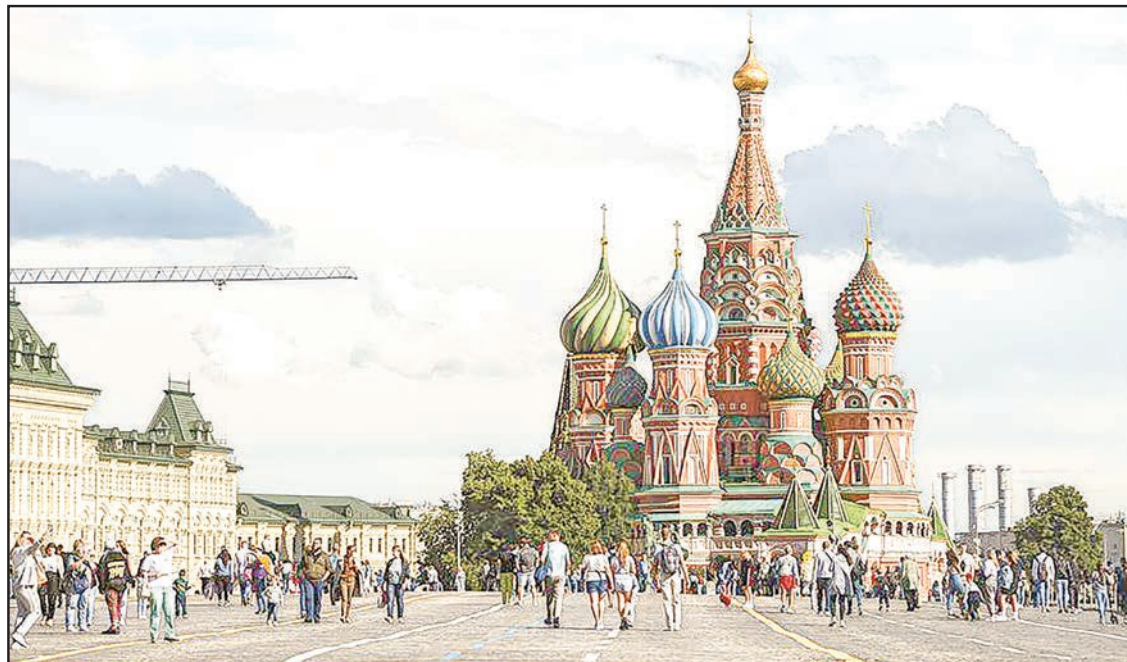
results showed the Sputnik V vaccine was 95 per cent effective, a higher efficacy than its international competitors.

Sputnik V—named after the Soviet-era satellite—is in its third and final stage of clinical trials involving some 40,000 volunteers.

"I would ask you to organize the work so that by the end of next week we will have started this large-scale vaccination," Putin said, speaking in a video conference call with Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova, who is leading the coronavirus task force.

The president noted that teachers and medics will be the first to receive the jab.

SOURCE: AFP



People are seen on the Red Square in Moscow, Russia, on July 24, 2020. Russia has registered 5,811 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, taking its total to 800,849, the country's COVID-19 response centre said in a statement. PHOTO: XINHUA/EVGENY SINITSYN

THE NEW RULES

Italy curbs Christmas travel to avoid virus 'third wave'



The Italian government on Wednesday approved a law banning travel between regions over the Christmas period, and between towns on Christmas Day. The village of Sassello, Liguria, a region of north-western Italy, following overnight snowfall on 2 December. PHOTO: AFP

ITALY on Thursday announced national travel restrictions for the Christmas holidays designed to limit the spread of Covid-19 in the European country first hit by the pandemic.

The new rules, together with an existing curfew and other regulations already in place, seek to curb circulation throughout the country during the festive period by limiting the number of gatherings.

Earlier this year, a punishing lockdown of all Italy's 60 million residents helped bring the outbreak under control, but the government is trying to avoid missteps made over the summer after the lockdown lifted, when the return of vacationers fuelled a new rise in cases.

"If we let down our guard now, the third wave is just around the corner," Health Minister Roberto Speranza told parliament on Wednesday. Travel between Italy's regions will be prohibited from December 21 through January 6, with people barred from travelling outside their own towns on December 25, 26 and January 1. The decree includes the "strong recommendation" to avoid hosting those who do not live together.

Other regulations set to be signed later on Thursday are expected to mandate a 10-day quarantine for those arriving in Italy from foreign countries, beginning on December 20.

The move is in part designed to prevent Italians from travelling to ski slopes that are still open in neighbouring EU countries.

SOURCE: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

FAKE WEBSITES AND FALSE CURES

Crime gangs threaten Covid-19 vaccine campaigns, Interpol warns

INTERPOL on Wednesday warned authorities worldwide of the threat from organized crime groups during upcoming Covid-19 vaccination campaigns, including fake vaccines and the theft of supplies.

Distribution of three new coronavirus vaccines is set to begin soon and many people will be desperate to protect themselves as quickly as possible, offering ready targets for criminals. "As governments are preparing to roll out vaccines, criminal organizations are planning to infiltrate or disrupt supply chains," Juergen Stock, head of the global policing agency based in Lyon, France, said in a statement. SOURCE: AFP

CHINA

Last-stage trials and emergency use

CHINA has four coronavirus vaccines in phase 3 trials -- typically the last step before regulatory approval -- but has not released much of its data. Although regulators have yet to approve China's vaccines for mass distribution, the country has approved some advanced candidates for emergency use, giving jobs to people ranging from state employees to international students since July. SOURCE: AFP

OLYMPICS HEALTH RULES

Less contact, short trips: virus-hit Olympics bosses set out rules

ATHLETES at the coronavirus-postponed Tokyo Olympics will face regular testing, restrictions on mingling and potential punishment for non-compliance with health rules, organizers said Wednesday as they outlined plans for holding the Games.

After months of talks, officials issued a 54-page report outlining how they believe the Games can go ahead, even if the pandemic is not under control by the new start date of July 2021.

Quarantine requirements will be waived for overseas spectators, who will also be able to use public transport, but they will have to observe rules ranging from mask-wearing and a ban on cheering to keeping their ticket stubs to help contact-tracing.



A man (R) has his temperature checked by a thermography device in Tokyo on Oct. 21, 2020, during a demonstration to the media of security checks for next year's Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics in the Japanese capital. PHOTO: KYODO

Tokyo 2020 CEO Toshiko Muto acknowledged strict safety measures will make the games "different", but expressed hope they can still be held in a celebratory atmosphere.

"It will be simple rather than festive, but I hope it will be something moving that encourages people through the power of sport," he said.

SOURCE: AFP

THE JUDGEMENT

Thai PM wins crucial legal battle to stay in office

THAI Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha, under pressure from months of street protests, Wednesday survived a legal challenge over his living arrangements that could have seen him thrown out of office.

The kingdom's nine-member constitutional court ruled that Prayut was not guilty of conflict of interest by living in an army residence after leaving the military.

"The status of General Prayut Chan-O-Cha as prime minister and defence minister remains unchanged," the head judge said.

The court ruled that Prayut's status as prime minister entitled him to live in the house even though he stepped down as army chief in 2014.

The ruling, though widely expected, is likely to inflame the protest movement that has shaken Thailand since July calling for Prayut, who came to power in a coup, to quit.

As the judgement was read out, pro-democracy protesters massed for a fresh rally at a



Thailand's constitutional court ruled that Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha was not guilty of conflict of interest by living in an army residence after leaving the military. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

major intersection in northern Bangkok.

"I'm not surprised because I think the court received the directive from the top and the court is not fair," Reeda, 26, a graduate student, told AFP as demonstrators gathered at Lat Phrao intersection.

"In the past they always decide decisions that contrasts with the feeling of the people."

The judge said the military had changed the status of the residence from an army house to a guesthouse in 2012 "so technically, the defendant's no longer

living inside an army house".

PM relaxed

The main opposition party Pheu Thai brought the legal challenge, which if it had succeeded would have forced Prayut and his cabinet out of office.

The premier has previously argued his family must stay at the army house on a military base for security reasons.

He appeared relaxed on Tuesday ahead of the decision, saying he would send his lawyers to the court but would not go in person.

SOURCE: AFP

US START-UP EAT JUST

Lab-grown meat to go on sale in Singapore in world first

LAB-GROWN chicken will soon be available in restaurants in Singapore, after the city-state became the first to green-light meat created without slaughtering any animals.

US start-up Eat Just said on Wednesday that its meat had been approved for sale in the city-state as an ingredient in chicken nuggets. The news

marks a "breakthrough for the global food industry", said the company, as firms increasingly try to find less environmentally harmful ways of producing meat. "I'm sure that our regulatory approval for cultured meat will be the first of many in Singapore and in countries around the globe," said Josh Tetrick, co-founder and CEO of Eat Just. Consumption of

regular meat is an environmental threat as cattle produce methane, a potent greenhouse gas, while logging forests to make way for animals destroys natural barriers against climate change.

Demand for sustainable alternatives to meat is rising due to growing consumer pressure, but other products in the market are plant-based. SOURCE: AFP

ANNUAL RISE CONFERENCE

Asia tech conference ditches Hong Kong for Malaysia

A major Asia-focused tech conference announced on Thursday it is ditching Hong Kong in favour of Malaysia in a fresh blow to the Chinese financial hub's push to attract tech talent. The annual RISE Conference brings together CEOs, startups and investors and has been held in Hong Kong over the last five years.

But organizers said they would move their annual conference to Kuala Lumpur in 2022.

"Hosting RISE in Kuala Lumpur is going to expand the event into an exciting region of south-east Asia," Casey Lau, co-host of RISE said in a statement. The decision comes as major tech firms fret over the accelerating crackdown by Beijing on dissent in Hong Kong after last year's huge and sometimes violent democracy protests.

In June, Beijing imposed a sweeping national security law that grants authorities significant powers to access company servers and networks.

The crackdown prompted the United States to declare Hong Kong no longer sufficiently autonomous from authoritarian China, which blocks access to many of the world's top tech companies.

After the law was enacted, major tech companies like Facebook, Google and Twitter said they were suspending requests from the Hong Kong government and law enforcement authorities for information on users. Plans for an underwater data cable between Los Angeles and Hong Kong were also scrapped after the US government expressed fears China might steal data from it.

SOURCE: AFP

MOON MISSION

China's Chang'e-5 completes sampling on moon

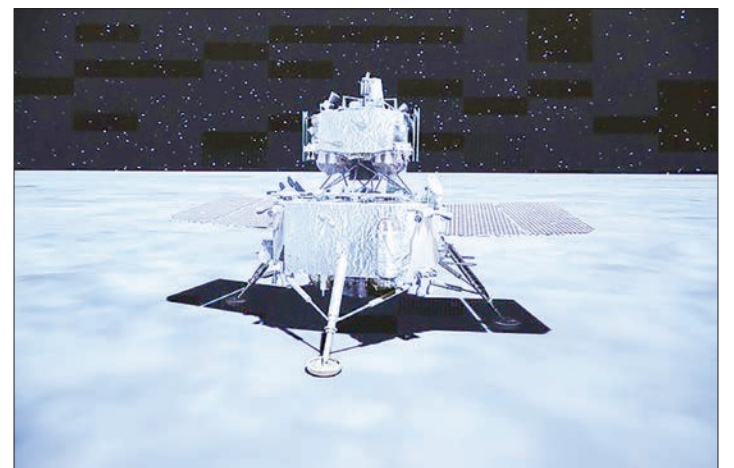
CHINA'S Chang'e-5 probe has completed sampling on the moon, and the samples have been sealed within the spacecraft, the China National Space Administration announced Thursday morning.

Launched on Nov. 24, the spacecraft landed on the north of the Mons Rumker in Oceanus Procellarum, also known as the Ocean of Storms, on the near side of the moon on Dec. 1 with a task to retrieve China's first samples from an extraterrestrial body.

China's Chang'e-5 spacecraft successfully landed on the near side of the moon late Tuesday and sent back images, the China National Space Administration (CNSA) announced.

At 11:11 pm, the spacecraft landed at the preselected landing area near 51.8 degrees west longitude and 43.1 degrees north latitude, said the CNSA.

At 10:57 pm Tuesday, the lander-ascender combination of Chang'e-5, from about 15 km above the lunar surface, started a powered descent with a variable thrust engine ignited. Its relative vertical velocity to the moon was lowered from 1.7 km



This image taken from video animation at Beijing Aerospace Control Centre (BACC) on Dec. 2, 2020 shows Chang'e-5 spacecraft landing on the moon. **PHOTO: XINHUA/REX**

per second to zero.

The probe was adjusted and approached the lunar surface during the descent.

After automatically detecting and identifying obstacles, the probe selected the site and touched down on the north of the Mons Rumker in Oceanus Procellarum, also known as the Ocean of Storms, on the near side of the moon.

During the landing process, the cameras aboard the lander took images of the landing area, said the CNSA.

Under ground-control, the lander carried out a series of status checks and settings, preparing for around 48 hours of work on the surface of the moon.

SOURCE: Xinhua



A major Asia-focused tech conference announced on Thursday it is ditching Hong Kong in favour of Malaysia in a fresh blow to the Chinese financial hub's push to attract tech talent. **PHOTO: RISE CONFERENCE HOMEPAGE/AFP**

ECLAC DATA

Foreign direct investment in LatAm to plunge 55 pct in 2020: UN agency

FOREIGN Direct Investment (FDI) in Latin America and the Caribbean could plunge by up to 55 per cent in 2020 due to the pandemic, the United Nations regional economic commission said on Wednesday.

Inflows to the region reached 160.721 billion U.S. dollars in 2019, down by 7.8 per cent from a year ago, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean said in an annual report on Wednesday.

The amount is predicted to drop by 45-55 per cent in 2020 due to COVID-19

related crisis, showing “the steepest decline” in regional FDIs this year, said the commission.

Worldwide, the amount of FDI is going to shrink by 40 per cent in 2020, it said. FDI has made relevant contribution to regional economy as it complements national investment, brings in new capital, and helps to expand export-related activities, said the report.

The inflows also facilitate the developments in automotive industry, telecommunications, digital economy and sectors with



The UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) presents a report titled “Foreign Direct Investment in Latin America and the Caribbean 2019” in Santiago, Chile, Aug. 14, 2019. PHOTO: XINHUA/JORGE VILLEGAS

strategic importance amid the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the pharmaceutical industry and that of medical devices.

In presenting the report, the commission’s Executive Secretary Alicia Barcena urged countries to make necessary policy changes to ensure FDI is used for driving a structural change.

“It is urgently necessary to restore the role of industrial policies as an instrument for transforming the region’s productive structure,” she said.

SOURCE: AFP

‘HARD AND DANGEROUS’

Romania’s mining heartland faces up to post-coal future

IN the large, dark locker room of southern Romania’s Lonea coal mine, 20-year-old Liviu dons his uniform and helmet before embarking on a six-hour shift in a vanishing industry.

“I found this job interesting because you retire faster, when you reach 45 years old,” Liviu tells AFP before descending 400 metres underground in an elevator dubbed “the birdcage” by his fellow miners.

But whether he gets to re-

tire as a miner may be out of Liviu’s control as Romania tries to bring an end to 160 years of coal-mining history in the Jiu Valley region. Out of 15 mines active there before the fall of communism in 1989, only four are still operating today and two are already scheduled to close.

While the rest of Romania gears up for parliamentary elections on Sunday, the prevailing mood in the Jiu Valley is one of apathy and mistrust.

“What hope can I have? Who has ever tried to do something for this valley”, says 38-year-old miner Lucian Iganescu, from nearby Vulcan.

‘Hard and dangerous’

The sector historically enjoyed support from the communist regime and thereafter from left-wing president Ion Iliescu, who in the 1990s deployed miners against street protesters on several occasions.

But since joining the EU in 2007, Bucharest has wound down subsidies for the loss-making coal sector and production has plummeted from 22 million tonnes in 1992 to just 600,000 tonnes last year. The Jiu Valley now counts just 4,500 miners down from some 54,000 in 1990.

Alin Udvar, manager of the Lonea mine, expects the last tonne of coal to be extracted as soon as 2024.

While he hopes that some

of his 543 employees will then be transferred to neighbouring sites, they are scheduled to close in 2030. Udvar echoes Liviu in giving one of the main attractions of the profession: “You become a miner to retire early.”

In Romania, one of the EU’s poorest countries, a miner with 20 years experience receives a pension of 4,000 lei (830 euros or \$1,000), almost 10 per cent more than a miner’s average salary.

SOURCE: AFP

425.5 BILLION EUROS (\$514 BILLION)

China edges past US as Europe’s top trade partner



The EU has been China’s top trade partner since 2004 when it overtook Japan, but this is the first time the inverse has been true, France’s Insee statistics agency said Wednesday.

PHOTO: XINHUA/LI YING

CHINA pushed past the United States in the third quarter to become the European Union’s top trade partner, as the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the US while Chinese activity rebounded. Over the first nine months of 2020, trade between the EU and China totalled 425.5 billion euros (\$514 billion), while trade between the EU and the United States came in at 412.5 billion euros, according to Eurostat data. For the same period in 2019, the EU’s trade with China came in at 413.4 billion euros and 461 billion euros with the US. Eurostat said the result was due to a 4.5 per cent increase in imports from China while exports remained unchanged. “At the same time trade with the United States recorded a significant drop in both imports (-11.4 per cent) and exports (-10.0 per cent),” Eurostat said.

SOURCE: AFP

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

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

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NEWS
IN BRIEF

RADICAL TEACHINGS

French raids to target mosques accused of radicalization

FRENCH authorities will swoop Thursday on dozens of mosques and prayer halls suspected of radical teachings as part of a crackdown on Islamist extremists following a spate of attacks, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said.

Darmanin told RTL radio that if any prayer hall was found to promote extremism it would be closed down.

The inspections to be carried out on Thursday afternoon are part of a response to two gruesome attacks that particularly shocked France – the beheading of a teacher who showed his pupils cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed and the stabbing to death of three people in a church in Nice.

SOURCE: AFP

THE MILITARY'S
COUNTERINTELLIGENCE
SERVICE

German military probes far-right suspects in its midst

GERMANY'S armed forces say it is investigating links to far-right groups within its ranks as the national media reported Wednesday that a main suspect committed suicide on Wednesday.

The military's counter-intelligence service (MAD) revealed on Tuesday that it has been investigating "several suspects" in a technical quality management unit in Ulm over alleged participation in the so-called "Citizens of the Reich" or "Reichsbuerger" movement.

Adherents of the movement question the legitimacy of the modern Federal Republic of Germany and have in the past entered into armed confrontations with police.

A day later, the ministry confirmed that an individual in the same unit has committed suicide, with German media including broadcasters ARD and SWR identifying him as the key suspect in the Reichsbuerger probe.

SOURCE: AFP

"I'LL SEE YOU IN FOUR YEARS"

Trump floats idea of 2024 White House run



US Attorney-General Bill Barr has said he has seen no evidence that would have "effected a different outcome in the election". PHOTO: AFP/FILE

STILL irate and bitter one month after his election defeat to Joe Biden, Donald Trump is openly musing about a second run at the

US presidency in 2024.

Refusing to accept defeat, Trump's lawyers and supporters continued Wednesday to file law-

suits and even call for extraordinary intervention, such as martial law, to force a new vote.

And Trump released an extraordinary 46 minute video in which he again claimed that he was robbed of victory in a "rigged" election.

But at a White House Christmas party on Tuesday, the president suggested he might have lost this battle, but would not retire quietly as a one-term president. "It's been an amazing four years. We are trying to do another four years. Otherwise, I'll see you in four years," he told guests.

The comment was perhaps the closest the 74 year old Trump has come to admitting his quixotic, month-long quest to reverse

Biden's win has failed.

All six contested states have now certified their tallies, and the national count gives Biden nearly seven million more votes than Trump, an insurmountable four percentage-point margin.

On Tuesday Attorney-General Bill Barr declared that the Justice Department had found no significant evidence of fraud in the election.

Biden meanwhile continued to prepare for taking office on January 20, telling The New York Times in an interview how he plans to revive the economy.

"I want to make sure we're going to fight like hell by investing in America first," Biden said.

SOURCE: AFP

A POST-BREXIT DEAL

UK PM 'optimistic' of EU deal but ready to cope without

PRIME Minister Boris Johnson is "optimistic" about striking a post-Brexit deal with the European Union but ready for Britain to trade on new terms without one, aides said on Wednesday.

"He is optimistic but he's also always said that he is confident and comfortable that we would be OK without a deal," Johnson's press secretary Allegra Stratton told reporters.

"If a deal can be struck that's all to the good, but he's also confident that we can move towards trading on what he calls Australia terms," she said, referring to Johnson's formulation for trading under World Trade Organization terms. With intensive talks in London going down to the wire, the Downing Street comments came as chief EU Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier warned he could not guarantee a deal with

Britain and that the next few days will be crucial.

Differences remain over regulatory issues, governance of a future pact, and fisheries,

Barnier was quoted as saying by EU diplomats as the clock ticks to the end of a post-Brexit transition period on December 31.

"We remain engaged in in-

tensive talks. We want to reach an FTA (free trade agreement)," Johnson's official spokesman added on the briefing alongside Stratton. SOURCE: AFP



Prime Minister Boris Johnson is "optimistic" about striking a post-Brexit deal with the European Union but ready for Britain to trade on new terms without one. In this June 28, 2016 file photo, a cyclist rides past the Elizabeth Tower, center, which houses the Big Ben bell in the Palace of Westminster in central London. PHOTO: BEN STANSALL / AFP

THE NEW FLEET

Israel gets new missile boat as Iran tensions surge



Israeli soldiers onboard the Israeli vessel Saar 5 Class Corvette "INS Hanit" take part in the "Novel Dina 17" training session in the Mediterranean Sea on April 4, 2017. PHOTO: JACK GUEZ/AFP/FILE

ISRAEL received the first of its new missile boats on Wednesday, with a top naval officer telling AFP the fleet upgrade "dramatically" improves the country's ability to counter regional rivals, including Iran.

The procurement of four naval vessels and three submarines from German industrial giant Thyssenkrupp has been the subject of long-running corruption probes involving top allies of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

But graft allegations aside, the ships themselves form a key part of a major naval upgrade in the Jewish state, Israel's head of naval operations, Rear Admiral Eyal Harel, said in an interview last week.

Harel said the new fleet would bolster the navy's capacity to defend increasingly lucrative offshore natural gas assets from rivals like Lebanon's Shiite group Hezbollah, which receives backing from Iran. SOURCE: AFP

THE COST OF THE DINNERS

Japan prosecutors seek to question ex-PM Abe on spending scandal: media

JAPANESE prosecutors are seeking to question former prime minister Shinzo Abe over a scandal involving the cost of events held for his supporters, local media said Thursday.

Under Japanese law, spending on political events must be reported, but prosecutors allege that Abe's office failed to do so for dinners his political group organized on the eve of government-sponsored cherry blossom viewing parties.

Public broadcaster NHK said the group paid more than eight million yen (\$76,000) for the events over five years until 2019.

The Tokyo Prosecutors Office, which declined to comment on the story, has already questioned Abe's secretaries for allegedly failing to properly report the cost of the dinners.

NHK and Jiji Press agency said prosecutors wanted to question Abe about his knowledge of the payments.



Japanese prosecutors want to question former prime minister Shinzo Abe about spending on dinners organized before the traditional cherry blossom viewing. PHOTO: JIJI PRESS/AFP/FILE

Abe, who has not yet responded to the prosecutors' request, has already denied any wrongdoing, saying guests, including voters in his constituency, attended at their own expense. Abe resigned in Sep-

tember over health issues after becoming the country's longest-serving premier.

He weathered several scandals while in office, including over the cherry blossom parties, a decades-old tradition intended

to honour the great and good for their achievements.

Abe's government was accused of stacking the event with supporters, and even inviting a member of Japan's infamous Yakuza mafia. SOURCE: AFP

SINO-RUSSIAN EAST ROUTE ENERGY PROJECT

China-Russia east-route natural gas pipeline's Changling-Yongqing section put into operation



Photo taken on Dec. 3, 2020 shows the Yongqing compressor station of the Changling-Yongqing section of the China-Russia east-route natural gas pipeline in Yongqing County, north China's Hebei Province. The China-Russia east-route natural gas pipeline's Changling-Yongqing section, linking Changling of northeast China's Jilin Province and Yongqing of north China's Hebei province, went into operation on Thursday. PHOTO: XINHUA

THE middle section of the China-Russia east route natural gas project began operation on Thursday, providing a stable natural gas supply to the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, according to a release by the China Oil & Gas Piping Network Corporation.

The middle section links transmission stations between Changling in Northeast China's Jilin Province, to Yongqing, North China's Hebei province intersecting five provincial-regions including Jilin, Inner Mongolia, Liaoning, Hebei, and Tianjin.

The middle section, which began construction in July 2019, has a total length of 1,110 kilometres. It will increase China's gas supply capacity by 27 million cubic metres per day, ensuring a stable gas supply throughout North China's winter heating season while improving air quality and the energy mix in the Bohai Economic Rim.

The project is connected using a domestic pipeline network including the Shaan-Jing pipeline system and Tangshan LNG storage facilities, enhancing peak shaving capacity, and boosting interconnectivity for natural gas in China. SOURCE: Xinhua

THE 69-YEAR-OLD FORMER BUS CONDUCTOR

Indian action hero Rajinikanth enters political fray

INDIAN film superstar Rajinikanth on Thursday became the latest in a long line of big-name actors to enter politics, vowing to bring in "corruption-free" government to his home state. The action hero, one of Asia's best-paid actors, said on Twitter that with "huge support from people" he would be launching a political party in January that is expected to contest elections scheduled in Tamil Nadu state next year.

The 69-year-old former bus conductor said the public wanted "honest, transparent, corruption-free, caste-less, secular and spiritual politics" in the state.

"Wonderful and amazing things will happen!" he

added without stating explicitly that he would stand himself. The actor enjoys a cult-like following across India where he is called "The Superstar" or "Thalaivar" (leader).

Every new film sends Tamil Nadu into a frenzy, with fans getting haircuts like his most recent character or having his face tattooed on their bodies.

Rajinikanth, who worked on buses in the southern city of Bangalore before moving into acting in 1973, proved his political muscle in 1996 when he called on fans to oppose the Tamil Nadu government, which was then voted out of power. SOURCE: AFP



Fans pouring milk on a Rajinikanth poster. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

NEWS IN BRIEF

EMISSION CONTROL

Japan nears decision to ban new gasoline-only car sales in mid-2030s

THE government is closer to a decision to ban sales of new gasoline-only cars in Japan in the mid-2030s, officials said Thursday, as part of efforts to reduce climate change-causing emissions in line with the global trend. The goal, which would promote a shift to all-electric, fuel cell, and gasoline-electric and plug-in hybrid cars, comes as Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga pushes forward with his campaign to make Japan carbon emissions neutral by 2050. A panel at the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry is set to include the target in its report to be compiled by the end of this year, they said.

SOURCE: Kyodo

CYCLONE BUREVI

Cyclone hits Sri Lanka as southern India hunkers down

CYCLONE Burevi hit Sri Lanka overnight, rattling the island nation but leaving it relatively unscathed on its way to southern India, officials said Thursday.

Burevi, the second cyclone in the southern Bay of Bengal in a week, slammed into north-eastern Sri Lanka just before midnight (1830 GMT).

Packing winds up to 100 kilometres (60 miles) an hour, it soaked parts of the country but caused no casualties and less devastation than feared.

SOURCE: AFP

MNL sets agendas for upcoming domestic leagues

MYANMAR National League Committee yesterday held a virtual meeting to discuss the MNL agendas for the upcoming tournaments in 2021.

Chairman of the MNL Committee and President of the Myanmar Football Federation U Zaw Zaw and owners of the Myanmar National League Clubs joined the MNL videoconference meeting.

First, the MFF President U Zaw Zaw expressed words of thanks to all the club owners and football officials for their efforts for the development of football sports during the pandemic period.

“Every football club will certainly have more or less financial crisis due to the economic downturn, and it is necessary to reduce spending more carefully so as not to make it more difficult. As it is a long journey, we have to keep a systematic financial method in the long run,” U Zaw Zaw said.

“Despite all the difficulties during the COVID-19 period, Myanmar National League will try to hold the 2021 versions of the domestic tournaments in accordance with the international football standard and regulations,” U Zaw Zaw added.

Next, MNL vice-president



Chairman of the Myanmar National League Committee U Zaw Zaw joins the MNL videoconference meeting to discuss football matters on 3 December 2020. **PHOTO: MNL**

Dr. Sai Sam Tun expounded the financial statement for the previous MNL football season and the financial situation for the next season.

MNL Chief Executive Officer U Soe Moe Kyaw also briefed on the current situation of the Myanmar National League clubs by reviewing on the future football plan.

During the meeting, football authorities decided to hold the Myanmar National League I matches from April to September 2021, depending on the COVID-19 condition.

The Myanmar National

League II is also planned to host from May to August, and Bogyoke Aung San Shield football tournament will be held from June to September.

The Women’s League is scheduled to run from April in the first round and May to July in the next round, respectively.

The final decision will be made at another league committee meeting early next month.

The number of teams competing in the domestic tournaments will also be decided during the next meeting, according to the Myanmar National League Committee.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

‘Next year we have to do it’: Neymar keen for Messi reunion



Reunited? Lionel Messi (left) and Neymar (right) played together for three seasons at Barcelona. **PHOTO: LLUIS GENE/ AFP**

MANCHESTER (United Kingdom)—Neymar dropped a bombshell on Wednesday as he followed up scoring twice for Paris Saint-Germain in their 3-1 Champions League win over Manchester United by revealing his desire to reunite with Lionel Messi next season.

The Brazilian enjoyed four

successful seasons alongside the six-time Ballon d’Or winner at Barcelona before making a world record 222 million euro (\$264m) move to the French capital in 2017. “It’s what I most want, to enjoy being with him on the field again,” Neymar, whose contract at PSG runs until 2022, told ESPN. “I want to play with

him for sure, next year we have to do it.”

Neymar was heavily linked with a return to Barcelona in 2019, but the Catalan giants were unable to fund an acceptable offer for PSG. Barca have had to agree salary cuts worth 122 million euros in players’ salaries this season to help offset the financial hole left by the coronavirus pandemic and are highly unlikely to be in a position to bring Neymar back next year. Instead, it is Messi who could be on the move as the Argentine is out of contract at the end of the season and publicly expressed his desire to leave in August. Then Barca president Josep Maria Bartomeu would not free Messi from the final year of his deal at the Camp Nou, but Bartomeu has since resigned with new presidential elections scheduled for January 24.—AFP ■

About 18% of Olympic tickets to be refunded over postponement

TOKYO—The Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic organizing committee said Thursday they received requests for refunds for about 18 per cent of the tickets bought for the Olympics due to the one-year postponement caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

Organizers said they received some 810,000 applications for Olympic ticket refunds out of about 4.45 million tickets sold in the domestic lottery, and are considering reselling the refunded tickets in the future.

“We are grateful that more than 80 per cent (of ticket holders) are looking forward to the

Olympics. We are moving forward with preparations for a safe and secure tournament,” an organizing committee official said.

Tickets that have already been purchased for the Tokyo Olympics, now scheduled to be held next summer from July 23 to Aug. 8, remain valid in principle for rescheduled events. Organizers decided to offer refunds for domestic ticket holders who can no longer attend the games because of the one-year postponement.

Applications were accepted from Nov. 11 to 30 and refunds will begin being issued late this month.—Kyodo ■



The test events for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics: Shuai Luo of China competes against Joseph Choong of Great Britain during the men’s fencing ranking round on day one of the UIPM World Cup, Modern Pentathlon test event for the Tokyo 2020, at the Musashino Forest Sport Plaza on June 27, 2019 in Chofu, Tokyo, Japan. **PHOTO: KYODO/FILE**

Ronaldo scores 750th career goal as Juventus thrash Dynamo Kyiv

TURIN—Cristiano Ronaldo on Thursday scored his 750th career goal as Juventus thrashed Dynamo Kyiv in the Champions League.

Juventus registered an impressive 3-0 win in the clash. Ronaldo scored one goal during the match and with this, he touched the 750-goal mark.

Federico Chiesa and Alvaro Morata netted the other two goals for Juventus in the match.

After achieving the new milestone, Ronaldo thanked all the players, coaches and his ‘loyal opponents’ for making him work hard.

“750 goals, 750 happy moments, 750 smiles in the faces of our supporters. Thank you to all the players and coaches that helped me reach this amazing number; thank you to all my loyal opponents that made me work harder and harder every day,” Ronaldo tweeted.

This was Juventus’ fourth win from the five matches that they have played in this season of Champions League. The club will now take on Torino in Serie A on Saturday.—ANI ■