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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VII, No. 254, 12<sup>th</sup> Waxing of Nadaw 1382 ME

www.gnlm.com.mm, www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Saturday, 26 December 2020

## Insein railway flyover 2 to be opened on Independence Day 2021

THE Insein Railway Flyover (2), Mingyi road tributary bridge, will be opened on the Independence Day, 4 January 2021.

The flyover was developed at the corner of Lan Thit road and Mingyi road by A1 Construction Company with the supervision of Myanma Railway, the Ministry of Transport and Communications, in Insein Township, Yangon Region.

The 441-foot-long flyover over the Insein Railway took a year to be finished and cost K1,900 million from the Union Fund.

“Vehicles coming from Hlinethaya and Insein townships will be able to cross this newly-built bridge, which will be very beneficial for drivers going to Mingyi road,” explained U Maung Cho, Chief Engineer, who was in charge of the road project.

It is reported that the new bridge (2) will have direct access to Insein Hospital, Government Technological Institute (Insein), District



Picture shows aerial view of Insein Railway Flyover 2 at the corner of Lan Thit Road and Mingyi Road in Insein Township, Yangon Region.

PHOTO: PWINT THITSAR

Administration Office and Office, making it convenient health workers, students and Pwint Thit Sar (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung) Township Administration for all traffic users, including departmental personnel.—

### 758 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 25 December, total figure rises to 120,546

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 120,546 after 758 new cases were reported on 25 December according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 120,546 confirmed cases, 2,552 died, 100,940 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 25 December 2020

Total Cases

120,546

New Cases

758

Total Death Tally

2,552

Discharged from Hospital

100,940

Daily death toll until 8 pm 25-12-2020

20

Ministry of Health and Sports



“People are the key”



Emmanuel Baptist Church in downtown Yangon is decorated with Christmas lights on 25 December 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**



St. Michael Catholic Church in Pyinmana is seen on Christmas, 25 December 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**



Christmas lights illuminate St. Mary's Cathedral in Yangon on 25 December 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**



Yangon City Hall decorated with lights is seen on 25 December 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

Kawthoung DMO holds coordination meeting on tourism revival



Kawthoung District-Level Destination Management Organization organizes meeting on tourism revival on 25 December. **PHOTO: KYAW SOE(KAWTHOUNG)**

**KAWTHOUNG** District-Level Destination Management Organization (DMO) held a coordination meeting on tourism revival in accordance with the health directives of the Ministry of Health and Sports yesterday in Kawthoung.

Departmental officials, hotel and tour operators, and tour guides participated in the dis-

ussion and gave suggestions. The Kawthoung District DMO aims to develop tourism destinations based on the traditional culture and natural resources of the region with the participation of the respective stakeholders, to respond to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and to facilitate the visit of tourists when domestic

and foreign tourism recovers in the post-COVID-19 period, to ensure the security and safety and to pre-plan the development of community-based tourism and the recovery of Myanmar's tourism sector.

There are about 11 beautiful islands for day trips, 26 islands for snorkelling and adventure trips and 13 islands for scuba diving trip. Seaborne tours are more likely to attract tourists than city tours in Kawthoung. Besides, the Salone or Mawkin people, a rare human race that attracts tourists, can be found in some islands of Kawthoung. In the past, Singaporean luxury cruise ships used to visit the seas and islands of Kawthoung as day trips from Phuket, Thailand, according to the records of the Department of Hotels and Tourism.—Kyaw Soe(Kawthoung)

*(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)*



Kawthoung District DMO aims to develop tourism destination based on the traditional culture and natural resources of the region.



(FILES) Visitors are seen on a beach in Kawthoung.



## Strive for development with united strength

All our ethnic national brothers and sisters need to strive with united strength based on national unity for the success of the peace process, for overcoming the various steps of the democratic transition process, for democracy to take firm root and for it to develop, progress and endure.

*(Extract from the Message of Greetings sent by President U Win Myint on 4 January 2020 on the occasion of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of Independence Day.)*



Landscape of Bagan Cultural Heritage Zone. PHOTO BY: TUN TUN THEIN

### Notification to Public

1. There were 654 cases of COVID-19 infection as of 22 December 2020 in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory. An analysis of the virus found that the number of cases was higher in December. Although most of them were repatriated people, truck drivers and helpers, there were some local infections, too.
2. Therefore, public access will be temporarily closed in the following areas, which are likely to be crowded with people during Christmas and International New Year holidays in December, in order to effectively prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory.
  - (a) Paunglaung River Recreation Centre (Zeyathiri Township)
  - (b) Pazunzate Waterfall (Pyinmana Township)
  - (c) Phalaung Waterfall (Pyinmana Township)
  - (d) Awaiyar Dam (Pyinmana Township)
  - (e) Myathida Waterfall (Pyinmana Township)
  - (f) Kotit Springs (Pyinmana)
  - (g) Mingala Lake (Zabuthiri Township)
3. Hence, we urge you to comply with the directives issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports and participate in the prevention and control of COVID-19 infection by avoiding going to crowded places to effectively prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory.

Nay Pyi Taw Council COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee

## ROK, UNHCR donate KF94 masks, ambulances to MoHS

THE Republic of Korea and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) donated masks and ambulances to the Ministry of Health and Sports to support Myanmar's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe attended the donation ceremony via videoconferencing yesterday.

During the ceremony, the Union Minister expressed words of thanks on behalf of the healthcare workers of COVID-19 treatment centres and hospitals and officials of the public health department who conduct ground survey for the control of COVID-19.

He also highlighted the more substantial bilateral relation between Myanmar and ROK through donations and planned to cooperate with ROK to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on businesses and



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe speaks at the virtual ceremony of ROK and UNHCR donating face masks and ambulances to MoHS on 25 December 2020. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR/MNA

socio-economic sectors in accordance with New Southern Policy Plus of ROK.

He stressed more than

\$3.2million worth of donations by ROK, KOICA, KOFIH, ASEAN-Korea Fund, Korean organizations, companies and the

Koreans living in Myanmar for COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities.

Then, Economic Advisor to

ROK President and Chairman for Presidential Committee on New Southern Policy Mr Park Bok-Yeong and UNHCR Representative in Myanmar Ms Hai Kyung Jun briefed the donation.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein also expressed words of thanks to the donors.

Mr Park Bok-Yeong, Korean Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Lee Sang-hwa and Ms Hai Kyung Jun handed over \$279,361 worth of 416,958 KF94 masks to Deputy Director-General of Yangon Region Public Health and Medical Services Department Dr Tun Myint.

Korean Association Representative Mr Chun Sung Ho presented five ambulances to Yangon Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein.-MNA

*(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)*



## ROK delegation visits Myanmar-Korea Friendship Dala Bridge in Yangon

A delegation from the Republic of Korea led by Mr Park Bokyeong, Chairman of the Presidential Committee on New Southern Policy, on their goodwill tour in Myanmar, visited the Myanmar-Korea Friendship Bridge (Dala) Project in Yangon yesterday.

At the bridge's briefing room, Consultant Company for the bridge construction Soosung Engineering's Deputy Project Manager Mr Park Andrew explained about the bridge construction project with the use of video clip including data and facts relating to the project, its importance, and potential development of the Yangon City.

Chairman of the Presidential Committee on NSP Mr Park Bokyeong said that despite a bridge that links between Yangon and Dala, it can be said that the one that links between ROK and Myanmar, adding that people who cross



A delegation from the Republic of Korea visits the Myanmar-Korea Friendship Bridge (Dala) Project in Yangon on 25 December 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

the bridge in completion of the bridge in 2022 would feel close friendship of the two countries.

Transportation between Yangon and Dala in the past was by waterway, and it took about two hours by cars. When the bridge is completed, it will only take about five

minutes and the lifestyle of the people in Dala side will develop, he said.

He added that a modern bridge constructed by ROK would emerge, and engineering technologies would be obtained from ROK, stressing the importance of the completion of the

bridge during the target time.

Deputy Minister for Construction Dr Kyaw Lin said that the completion of the bridge would help develop the lifestyle of people living in Dala side and would be a gateway to Yangon from Ayeyawady Region.

The Presidential Committee on NSP Chairman and the Deputy Minister looked around the workplaces on the project's temporary bridge and working platform in Yangon side.

The bridge constructed with the use of EDCF loan is a four-lane cable-stayed type and is 6,128 feet long. The four lanes of the adjacent bridge in Dala side will lead to Dala Clock Tower, and of the four lanes in Yangon side, two will lead to Phone Gyi Street and one to War Dan and another to Pansodan taking Strand Road.

It will take a total of 41 months to fully complete the bridge and now 21 per cent complete.

In the afternoon, the ROK delegation attended the COVID-19 medical supplies donation ceremony made by Korean Association, ROK government and UNHCR at the Lotte Hotel. —MNA (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

## Yangon Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein attends inauguration of Pyi Taw Thit Public Housing

YANGON Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein attended the inauguration of Pyi Taw Thit Public Housing yesterday.

The Pyi Taw Thit Public Housing project was implemented by Yangon Metropolitan Development Public Co.Ltd and M.K.T Construction Company under the leadership of the Ministry of Construction, Yangon Region government and Hluttaw MPs.

The event was also attended by Yangon Region government officials, Region Hluttaw Speaker, Deputy Hluttaw Speaker, Hluttaw MPs, Deputy Minister for Construction Dr Kyaw Lin and the officials of Urban and Housing Development Department.

"The project is jointly conducted by the government and private sector. The Ministry of Construction and regional government cooperates for the redevelopment project. We will develop the mindset to relocate the original apartment owners at the housing and continue carrying out the urban



Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein inaugurates Pyi Taw Thit Public Housing in Yangon on 25 December 2020. **PHOTO: PWINT THITSAR**

development programmes. So, we set systematic plans. The residents who live in the apartment need regular maintenance for the housing units. I also want to urge them to maintain the all-round development," said Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein.

The Pyi Taw Thit Public Housing project covers 4.348 acres and comprises housing units, shops, offices and car parking. It is a 13-storey build-

ing including, underground parking.

"The situation of the old building became worse later in 1990. Those who lived at the top floor encountered the raindrops leaking from the ceiling. Most of the residents welcomed the redevelopment project of the authorities. But some were worry about it. All things are convenient for us due to the cooperation work between our representatives and Hluttaw MPs. In the past,

we used stairways and so it was the main difficulty for the elderly people and the disabled. Now, the officials install the elevator and flush toilet. They also create public recreational areas for the elderly and children. We thank the government and the relevant officials for this project," said U San Aung, resident of Pyi Taw Thit Public Housing.

Chairman of M.K.T Construction Company Limited U Myo Myint said, "The old

Pyi Taw Thit housing is more than 60 years old. The housing residents are not safe to live in such an old building. Now, they can live safely and peacefully in such new housing units. We also thank the Hluttaw MPs and Yangon Region government for their negotiation."

The Pyi Taw Thar housing was originally built in 1956 and demolished in June 2018. The government invited to tender on 18 October and M.K.T Construction Company won tender. The project was started on 1 January 2019 and completed on 30 August 2020. The original residents were relocated at the housing on 21 August. The officials provided cash assistance to the residents for two years to move and live somewhere before the project was started.

Moreover, the officials will construct 6-storey car parking that accommodates 378 vehicles and four elevators near Pyi Taw Thit Public Housing. —Pwint Thitsar

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



## China-Myanmar border checkpoints to extend opening times for faster trade flow

TWO main border checkpoints (Mant Wyint and Kyin San Kyawt) between China and Myanmar will extend opening times to speed up the trade flow delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the Muse-Namkham Merchant Association in Muse town.

With the extension of the opening hours, the related department led by U Hlaing Soe Thant, the district administrators, the chairman of Muse District Management Team, and the Muse-Namkham border trader association officials and Muse border trade association conducted informal meetings together with the officials from China. Then, they have reached an agreement to extend the opening time.

"The border authorities' requirements from the Myanmar



Picture shows a lorry at a border checkpoint between Myanmar and China. PHOTO: SALAI VEN RO HTAM (IPRD)

side are not fulfilled yet by the China side, although the latter has agreed to extend the opening time. That is the reason

why we cannot implement it, however.

"The Mant Wyint bilateral checkpoint will extend the

opening time to 24 hours and Kyin San Kyawt checkpoint will follow suit. Suppose the border checkpoints can successfully

extend the opening times as agreed by the two countries. In that case, both countries could speed up current bilateral trade flow doubly," said Chairman U Sai Nom of the Muse-Namkham Merchant Association.

The Mant Wyint checkpoint is open until 9 pm, and Kyin San Kyawt crossing is open till 6 pm. If it is necessary to speed up the trade flow between the two countries, Sin Phyu and Wan Ding land borders will be reopened.

"The Wan Ding border crossing from Pan Sai (Kyukok) is opened as agreed. Regarding the extension of the border opening time, Myanmar trader brotherhood associations have made preparations," said U Sai Nom.— Salai Ven Ro Htam (IPRD)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

## Rice export to China via Muse 105<sup>th</sup> Mile trade zone drops by half

By Nyein Nyein

MYANMAR rice export to China via Muse 105th Mile trade zone plummeted by half, according to the Muse Rice Wholesale Centre.

"Although Myanmar exported 60,000 bags of rice and broken rice daily to China from earlier October to 20 December; only 30,000 bags of rice can now be exported after 20 December," Vice-Chair U Min Thein of the Muse Rice Wholesale Centre said.

Myanmar rice export to China has dropped because Myanmar exported only the rice permitted for 2020 and the rice

is stockpiled in Muse wholesale centre.

"The 2020 rice export permit from China will end on 31 December. The rice from lower Myanmar does not reach the Muse border area because the permitted rice stock and the remaining rice are being exported to China before 31 December. There are many rice stocks in the Muse border area," he explained.

The price of broken rice is also a bit on the decline because of the high charges of export trucks and depreciation of the exchange rate. However, according to Muse Rice Wholesale Centre, Myanmar exported

about 30,000 bags of rice and broken rice to China daily.

The export rice to China is sold for ¥128 per 50-kg bag for broken rice, ¥136 per pack for Thuka rice and ¥137 per bag for Nga Sein rice in Muse market, according to Muse Rice Wholesale Centre.

China will issue the new rice export permits for 2021 in January. Also, China is likely to give more licences to the companies this year than last year, according to the rice traders' opinions.

"The Chinese government has granted rice export licences to 15 Chinese companies in the year 2020. We heard that the Chinese government would issue the rice permits for 2021 to 50 companies. But, we haven't received any confirmation yet. If the Chinese government confirms it, the export value will increase three times than in 2020. And, the border trade volume will increase compared to the previous years," said U Min Thein.

Myanmar has opened four border trade zones with China; Muse and Chinshwehaw in Shan State, and Kampaiti and Lweje in Kachin State. Majority of the trade is carried out through the Muse land border.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

## Import of surgical masks, medical-use respirators needs FDA approval

By Nyein Nyein

IMPORT of surgical masks and medical-use respirators are needed to seek FDA approval, said Dr Khin Chit, Deputy Director-General of Food and Drug Administration Department (FDA), the Ministry of Health and Sports.

"Earlier, COVID-19 prevention items, including surgical masks and medical-use respirators (N95/KN-95), were listed in those that did not require applying for an import licence from the FDA. Now, the surgical masks/ medical-use respirators (N95/KN-95) are required to seek import permit from FDA to enable the people to access the quality protective equipment and to meet more reliable quality standard for health workers," said the statement issued by FDA on 24 December.

"FDA has already made registration for those items. The N95 and KN-95 masks are registered in FDA and are allowed to import. But, we could not control effectively to get them in time during the pandemic period. We have also released import of the masks because we have to import a big

volume of the masks to ensure sufficiency. By doing so, every person can get the masks at an affordable price, and the masks will be sufficient for our country," said Dr Khin Chit.

However, the import of masks without a licence has been almost a year. If we continue to do so, there could be counterfeit and lower quality products, the FDA deputy director-general added.

"If we continue to allow the import of the masks without a licence, there will be a fake mask problem. We are finding some fake masks and lower quality products in the market. That can cause bigger problems. Now, we are aware of the importance of wearing masks, and everyone is wearing masks whenever they go outside. Only the quality masks can prevent the disease. So, we attempt to get the quality masks for the people," Dr Khin Chit explained.

On the other hand, we can make a registration for legal import companies. If the companies are still importing the lower quality masks, we can follow their history and take legal action against them.

(Translated by Hay Mar)



Rice bags are stored in piles at a warehouse. PHOTO: TIN ZAR HLATING



**CHIEF EDITOR**

Aungthu Ya  
aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm

**DEPUTY CHIEF EDITOR**

Aye Min Soe  
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

**SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**

Kyaw Myaing

**EXECUTIVE EDITOR**

Aung Khin

**LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITORS**

Ye Htut Tin  
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com  
Aung Htein  
Tun Tun Naing

**TRANSLATORS**

Hay Mar Tin Win, Ei Myat Mon,  
Kyaw Zin Lin, Kyaw Zin Tun,  
Maung Maung Swe, Khine Thazin Han,  
Ei Phyu Phyu Aung

**REPORTER**

Nyein Nyein Ei,

**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar  
Kyaw Zeya

**COMPUTER TEAM**

Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,  
Kay Khaing Win,  
Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin,  
Thein Htwe, Nyi Lin Thu

**EDITORIAL SECTION**

(+95) (01)8604529,  
Fax - (+95) (01) 8604305

**CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION**

San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,  
Hotline - 09 974424114

**ADVERTISING & MARKETING**

(+95) (01) 8604530,  
Hotline - 09 974424848  
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com  
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

gnlmnews@gmail.com  
www.gnlm.com.mm  
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## Artistic Buddha statues housed at Myinkhwataung



Artistic Buddha statues are seen at the Myinkhwataung (Horseshoe Mountain) in Kanbalu Township. **PHOTO: NWE NADI (MYIT NGE)**

MYINKHWATAUNG (Horseshoe mountain), located near Wattoe village in Kanbalu District, is an exciting place to visit in Sagaing Region. The mountain is also next to the Kin Tat Dam, the main

source of water for agriculture all year round. The Myinkhwataung and surrounding area also serve as a wildlife sanctuary for birds and animals.

Myinkhwataung is an interesting place that has long been known as Horseshoe Mountain because of its horseshoe-shaped footprints on rocks all over the mountain. It is said that King Alaung Si Thu built pagodas while he was staying at the mountain during his tour to the country. You can see now the pagodas of the king on the mountain as well.

There are also small caves on the mountain, as well as horseshoe prints. Those caves were connected to each other in the past but have been closed

now. In addition to the caves, there are many unique tunnels, which are home to some of the iconic Buddha statues.

Meditation camps are held annually at Myinkhwataung, and on special occasions, the mountain and the Kin Tat Dam have become crowded places. It is forbidden to hunt and killing animals on the mountain. Because of Shwe Taung Oo Sayadaw's missionary work on the Mountain, you can admire the pagodas there and even after his death, the pagodas are still kept preserved. Nowadays, you can visit the unique Horseshoe Mountain with its natural vegetation and unique caves and hooves.—Nwe Nadi (Myit Nge) (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

## Shwe Hinthas released into Yangon Kandawgyi Lake

Maung Nyan Lin and family released a total of 14 Hinthas (Ruddy Shelduck, scientific name: Tadorna ferruginea) at Kandawgyi Lake yesterday in Yangon.

"In India, if you catch such a rare bird, you will be sentenced to three years in prison. Now, 14 Hinthas (Ruddy Shelduck) have been released, I bought them from Bago for 30,000 kyats

each," said U Thein Tun, a resident of Pabedan Township, Yangon.

They also released 200 ducks during last weeks at the Kandawgyi Lake. Although there are many rare species of plants and birds at the lake, the water clean-up operation for the water birds has been slow.—Thant Zin Win (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)



A Hintha (Ruddy Shelduck) is released into Kandawgyi Lake in Yangon. **PHOTO: THANT ZIN WIN**

## Police confiscate illegal drugs in Hsenwi, Kunlong

Illegal drugs worth of K430 million were seized in Hsenwi and Kunlong Townships, Shan State, according to a statement from the Myanmar Police Force.

A joint team of members of

the Anti-Drug Police seized 64kg of opium powder, and rounds of ammunition from the TOYOTA VIGO along with Jonemi (a) Santhe, Lao Wu (a) Lee Min Chan (a) Kyaw Htwe, Yanpharwan (a)

Wuthee (a) Kyaw Khine on 24 December in Kunlong.

Similarly, a joint team of members of the Anti-Drug Police and officers from the Customs Department also arrested

Zaw Htet who carried 19,250 kg of Sodium Cyanide from Muse to Mandalay the same day.—MNA (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)



Three suspects Jonemi, Lao Wu, and Yanpharwan are seen with seized drugs. **PHOTO: MNA**



Suspect Zaw Htet is seen with confiscated Sodium Cyanide. **PHOTO: MNA**

### 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



YEAR IN RETROSPECT: PANDEMIC

# The virus that shut down the world: 2020, a year like no other

COVID-19 is everywhere, literally, and during 2020 its spread and resulting impact has led to a global crisis of unprecedented reach and proportion. In a six-part series closing out this tumultuous year, UN News looks at the impact on people in every part of the world and some of the solutions that the United Nations has proposed to deal with the fall-out of the pandemic. In this first feature, we lay out some of the key events of the past 12 months. As 2020 comes to an end and people around the world try to make sense of how the world has changed, they are faced with one stark and brutal statistic. The number of people who have died after catching COVID-19, is creeping towards the two million mark. Early in the year, international travel was severely restricted, and people like these travellers in Thailand learnt of the importance of PPE, an acronym which quickly entered the global lexicon (which is short for personal protective equipment). Soon, there were concerns about a global shortage of PPE and the UN supported various countries in the procurement of supplies, including China where the virus first emerged. As COVID-19 took hold, countries and cities across the world entered lockdown with the closure of schools, cultural and sports venues and all non-essential businesses. Normally bustling city centres, like the Kenyan capital Nairobi, were eerily quiet as people stayed at home.



Passengers wearing face masks and disposable ponchos get their passports checked at Don Mueang International Airport in Bangkok, Thailand. **PHOTO: UN NEWS/JING ZHANG**

The United Nations did stay open for business across the world, although most of the key events, like the annual meeting of the new session of the General Assembly in New York, did look very different. Only a small number of delegates were allowed into the chamber as world leaders gave their speeches virtually.

Across the world, people were adapting to new social distancing guidelines and were reminded about the importance of handwashing as a way to reduce the transmission of diseases.

Students who were not able to go to school had to adapt to a new reality and find ways to keep up with their studies.

While Africa appeared to suffer less from the virus than other continents, at least in terms of absolute infections and deaths, the UN did voice concerns that the pandemic would push millions more into poverty. Especially important to the UN was supporting refugees and other vulnerable people on the move across the world, such as the hundreds of thousands of Rohingya people who have sought shelter across the border in Bangladesh.

Progress has been made, in record time, by scientists developing new effective vaccines against COVID-19 and by the end of 2020, the first people, mainly in developed countries, were being inoculated. As the world enters 2021, the pandemic is still raging and, after an apparent mid-year lull in many countries, more infections and more deaths are being reported. With more vaccines being rolled out, the international community is being urged to work together to stop the spread and follow science-based guidelines.

For a more detailed picture of how the world looked in 2020, look out for our UN News end-of-year series of special reports, as the year draws to a close.

SOURCE: UN News

CHRISTMAS DAY

## Don't squander sacrifices of 2020: WHO chief



A man wearing protective suit sprays disinfectant as preparation for the upcoming Christmas amid the COVID-19 outbreak at a Church in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Dec. 24, 2020. **PHOTO: JULI NUGROHO/XINHUA**

THE sacrifices made to protect people during the coronavirus pandemic must not be squandered over the festive period, the World Health Organization's chief said in a Christmas message.

Millions were making "heart-wrenching sacrifices" by staying away from loved ones on Christmas Day, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a video clip posted to Twitter late Thursday, while others will have a missing face at the family table.

He said vaccines, now beginning to be deployed in countries around the world, were starting to offer a way out of the crisis that has engulfed the planet this year.

"As 2020 draws to an end, a pandemic of historic proportions is preventing many of us from celebrating in the ways we would like," Tedros said.

"Instead, hundreds of millions of people are today making great, heart-wrenching sacrifices by staying apart to stay safe.

"But in doing so, they are giving the most precious gifts: the gifts of life and health."

The novel coronavirus has killed at least 1.7 million people since the outbreak emerged in China last December, while almost 78.7 million cases have been registered, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP.

"All around the world, throughout this most trying of years, we have seen over and over again the sacrifices of so many people to protect and preserve life," said Tedros.

"We must not squander their sacrifices, nor those made by so many families who, this holiday

season, will sit at family tables missing a familiar face.

"Despite so much loss, we have built so much hope. Vaccines are offering the world a way out of this tragedy. But it will take time for the whole world to be vaccinated."

According to the WHO's overview of different candidate vaccines, 61 have entered human trials, 16 of which have reached final-stage mass testing.

A further 172 candidate vaccines are being developed in laboratories with a view to eventual human testing.

Tedros said: "We must continue taking comfort in the fact that by caring for others, through acts of solidarity and safety, we can share the greatest gift of all: the gift of life."

SOURCE: AFP

GRIM TOTAL

## Coronavirus cases in Europe top 25 million



Pedestrians wearing face masks are seen in Munich, Germany, on Nov. 13, 2020. **PHOTO: KEVIN VOIGT/XINHUA**

MORE than 25 million coronavirus cases have been officially recorded in Europe, according to an AFP tally based on official health statistics at 1100 GMT on Friday.

The 52 nations are the world's worst affected zone in terms of the number of infections, followed by the US and Canada at 19,188,172, Latin America and the Caribbean at 15,024,469 and Asia at 13,617,004.

Europe was the first global region to clock half-a-million deaths on December 17.

SOURCE: AFP



# Concrete steps we can take to prevent fire devastation

WHILE fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic, we are entering the dry season which always brings fires to our communities.

Myanmar adopted plans to address the nine natural disasters under the categories of urban fire, forest fire, flood, earthquake, storms, tsunami, drought, landslide and frost after the 2008 Cyclone Nargis.

But, today, we need to review our yearly plans in accordance with the changing types of natural disasters and modern technologies which should be in line with the national health guidelines. We should all note that this year's plan should encourage being cognizant of social distancing and COVID-19 health guidelines such as wearing masks and face shields even in the wake of a fire.

To safeguard communities in regions and states, every community in a high-risk area needs to have risk-reduction plans for minimizing vulnerabilities to fire.

The plans would include preventing illegal storage and trading of fuels and intensifying the fire response activities such as encouraging fire drills and creating critical buffers.

While people may react differently to various forms of disaster, such as evacuating from a fire or sheltering place following an earthquake, with any disaster, preparedness is the same. The more prepared we are, the better our survivability.

Now, regional and state authorities and local communities are urged to remain mindful of other disasters such as fires because we have seen outbreak of fires after the rainy season.

Nobody can predict what's going to happen. We can hope for the best, but we must prepare for the worst so we can be ready should the need arise.

Local organizations and businesspersons joined hands with the government whenever natural disasters took place in Myanmar.

Prevention works must be conducted in places where natural disasters could occur and preparedness and drills must be conducted nationwide.

Having correct and timely information is important in conducting search, rescue and rehabilitation works. Emphasis must be placed down to the grass roots for this.

We can take concrete steps and should still practice how to be safe when disasters happen.



THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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# The Annual National Literary Prize Awarding Ceremony

By Lokethar

THE Annual National Literary Prize Awarding Ceremony was held in Yangon on the 15th of December 2020. The opening ceremony was addressed by His Excellency The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on-line from Nay Pyi Taw. The following paragraph of HE The President's address, expresses clearly the aim and objectives of holding the event. To quote from his speech "Literature can be a great tool to promote democratic practices and knowledge of the citizens, to appreciate democracy, to understand and appreciate diversity and to strengthen the bonds of friendship among ethnic people" unquote. President's speech also retraces the origin of the literary event and the Burma (now Myanmar) Translation Society, as HE The President mentioned "was established under the guidance of the architect of Myanmar's independence Bogyoke Aung San in August 1947. It became "Sarpay Beikman" in May 1948, a well known literary enterprise".

Bogyoke Aung San knew that after attaining Independence, the majority of the people of Myanmar would need broadening their knowledge in all spheres to understand and appreciate the practice of democracy in Myanmar. He knew that there was a vast expanse of knowledge in different languages that would need to be translated into the Myanmar language so that all people of Myanmar could access the world of knowledge in the Myanmar language. That was the reason he advised setting up of the "Burma (now Myanmar) Translation Society", which later became the "Sarpay Beikman".

### Many translated works

In his speech, HE the President

pointed out that the Sarpay Beikman had produced many translated works for promotion of general knowledge about the world at large for the citizens of Myanmar. It had also been able to present awards to promote Myanmar literature, in all its forms.

What I would like to emphasize here is the need for people to access the vast literary resources of the world to gain knowledge and insight into matters that would rightly guide their thoughts and actions and enrich their lives. As such, it calls for the world of knowledge and information to be presented to the people in the language they can read and understand. This in fact had been the initial mission of the Sarpay Beikman (The Burma Translation Society) set by Bogyoke Aung San.

As we are all aware, knowledge in every field has been increasing exponentially around the globe. In particular there is a vast amount of knowledge on every aspect of life and living available over the "Internet", much of which need to be translated into Myanmar language for the Myanmar peoples' knowledge base to be up to date in this "Digital" age.

However the knowledge is also available in print form for those who would like to "read" and acquire the knowledge and information. The knowledge and information is likely to be in various languages not familiar to the majority of "readers" in Myanmar. Hence translation of the printed material into Myanmar language only can help serve the majority of Myanmar people in their quest for knowledge.

### Various aspects of Myanmar life

Another equally important aspect of translation is the need for translating informative material from Myanmar language to English and other foreign languages for the benefit of



A periodical of The Burma Translation Society. The Burma Translation Society was renamed "Sarpay Beikman" (Palace of Literature) in 1963. PHOTO: PRINTING AND PUBLISHING DEPARTMENT/MOI/FILE

foreigners who wish to know more about the various aspects of Myanmar life and culture as well as about doing business in Myanmar. Many foreign entrepreneurs would particularly want to know about the various laws and rules relating to doing business in Myanmar. At the present time the laws that have been enacted or amended by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw are in

the Myanmar language with "official translation" in English language of only a few. Hence more laws need to be officially translated into the English language for foreigners to comprehend them. Such laws would include laws relating to business ventures, intellectual property matters, rights of workers, dissolution of business, taxation, transfer of funds and so on; need

particularly to be translated into English for the benefit of foreign entrepreneurs. As regards translation of Laws and Rules it is learned that there is a "Legal Translation Commission". Perhaps translation sub-committees on specific areas such as "Social Laws", "Business Laws" and so on could be formed under Commission for better coverage and speedier translation of the laws that would be of use to foreign investors. Besides, accounts of historical interest and cultural heritage of Myanmar written by well known Myanmar writers could be translated into English for the benefit of foreigners who visit Myanmar as tourists.

As there are, in Myanmar, many competent translators of foreign languages (particularly English) to Myanmar, perhaps the Sarpay Beikman could organize the task of translating a wide variety of non-fiction, factual written materials in a foreign language and publishing them in the form of affordable print material for the benefit of the people as was and still is, it's mission. Of course it's current "Translation Awards" conforms somewhat to the idea, but then it focusses on a single person's translating ability with many participants vying for the same prize, translating the same "Book/Printed Material" which is not very productive from the point of view of the reading public.

The Sarpay Beikman, was formed in the first instance as an enterprise to carry out its mission as the leading translators, printers and publishers of reading material to serve the Myanmar public. It is hoped that It would also be the "Beikman" for spreading of "Myanmar Literature" of all the Nationalities of Myanmar.

With charity to all and malice to none.



## UK COVID-19: THE INCREASE IN TRANSMISSIBILITY

# Virus strain to cause more deaths in Britain: study

A MUTATED coronavirus strain spreading in Britain is on average 56 per cent more contagious than the original version, scientists have warned in a study, urging a fast vaccine rollout to help prevent more deaths.

The new variant, which emerged in southeast England in November and is spreading fast, is likely to boost hospitalizations and deaths from Covid

next year, according to the study published Wednesday by the Centre for Mathematical Modelling of Infectious Diseases at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Researchers, focusing on the English south east, east and London, said it was still uncertain whether the mutated strain was more or less deadly than its predecessor.

"Nevertheless, the increase

in transmissibility is likely to lead to a large increase in incidence, with Covid-19 hospitalisations and deaths projected to reach higher levels in 2021 than were observed in 2020, even if regional tiered restrictions implemented before 19 December are maintained," they said.

The authors warned that a national lockdown imposed in England in November was unlikely to prevent an increase of in-

fections "unless primary schools, secondary schools, and universities are also closed".

Any easing of control measures, meanwhile, would likely prompt "a large resurgence of the virus". This meant that "it may be necessary to greatly accelerate vaccine roll-out to have an appreciable impact in suppressing the resulting disease burden".

In announcing more stringent lockdown measures over the

Christmas holiday, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Saturday the new viral strain "may be up to 70 per cent more transmissible than the original version of the disease".

The discovery of the new strain set off alarm bells worldwide just as more countries began vaccination campaigns to halt a pandemic that has claimed more than 1.7 million lives since it emerged a year ago in China.

Many countries quickly imposed bans on travel from Britain, but EU governments have since begun to relax the restrictions.

The co-founder of BioNTech — one of the firms behind the vaccine that is being rolled out worldwide this week — has said its drug is "highly likely" to work against the mutated strain detected in Britain and otherwise can be adapted in six weeks.

SOURCE: AFP

## 73rd Independence Day Anniversary (2021)

### National Objectives

1. All Union nationals to protect and strive with "collective strength" for Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of National Unity, and Perpetuation of National Sovereignty.
2. All citizens to be able to enjoy on the same level - social equality, economic equality, political equality, equality as citizens, equal opportunity, and equality before the law.
3. To strive towards the amendment of the Constitution for the emergence of a genuine Democratic Federal Union.
4. To build a modern developed Democratic Federal Union by nurturing Union spirit for the perpetuation of the Union.
5. The government, together with the people to confront with collective strength the challenges faced by the entire people with increased momentum for all-round development of the country.

**Myanmar Daily Weather Report**  
(Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 25th December, 2020)

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

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 26th December, 2020:** Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Taninthayi Region. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin, Eastern Shan, Kayin, Mon States and generally fair 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 moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5-8) feet in Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and about (4-6) feet Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coast.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT:** Likelihood of slight increase of night temperatures in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady Regions and Kayah, Kayin, Mon States.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26th December, 2020:** Fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26th December, 2020:** Generally fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26th December, 2020:** Fair weather.

**WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND:** Weather will be generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay Regions.

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## EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF COVID-19 VACCINES

## Pope urges COVID 'vaccines for all' in Christmas message

POPE Francis in his Christmas message on Friday called for "vaccines for all, especially the most vulnerable and most in need in all regions of the planet" for the coronavirus, which he said had exacerbated existing global crises.

Vaccines were "glimmers of hope in this period of darkness and uncertainty," Francis said in the annual "Urbi et Orbi" speech "to the city and the world".

"I call on everyone, on leaders of states, on businesses, on international organizations, to promote cooperation and not competition, to find a solution for everyone: vaccines for all, especially the most vulnerable and most in need in all regions of the planet." The pandemic had come at a "moment in history, marked by the ecological crisis and grave



Catholic devotees attend a Christmas eve mass maintaining social distancing to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 coronavirus, outside the Quiapo church in Manila. PHOTO: AFP

economic and social imbalances", the pope added, saying that made it "all the more important for us to acknowledge one another as brothers and sisters". SOURCE: AFP

## NEWS IN BRIEFS

## Morocco Orders 65 Million Vaccine Doses

Morocco said Thursday it had ordered 65 million doses of novel coronavirus vaccine, as the North African kingdom prepared to launch a vaccination campaign targeting 25 million people.

"Preparations have reached very advanced stages," Health Minister Khalid Ait Taleb said in a statement on the roll-out plans.

"Field exercises covering all stages of the process of vaccinating citizens have been put in place."

A government source confirmed to AFP that Morocco has opted for the Chinese Sinopharm and British AstraZeneca vaccines, which both require two shots.

No date has been given for the arrival of the jabs or for the start of the vaccine rollout.

The vaccination campaign will first target frontline staff in the health, security and education sectors, as well as vulnerable and elderly people, before being extended to the rest of the population.

King Mohammed VI has decreed that the vaccine will be administered free of charge.

Morocco, a country of around 35 million people, has officially recorded more than 425,000 novel coronavirus cases and 7,130 deaths.

SOURCE: AFP

## Covid-19 jabs start as Gulf rolls out mass vaccinations

Kuwait began coronavirus vaccinations on Thursday, following several other Gulf states in rolling out a mass inoculation campaign.

"This vaccine is safe and has been approved by many countries," said Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah, who was the first to receive the jab, state media reported.

Kuwait, which has officially confirmed more than 148,000 coronavirus cases including 924 deaths, received the first 150,000 doses of the vaccine developed by US pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech on Wednesday.

Qatar, which has confirmed more than 142,000 cases including 243 deaths, launched a vaccination campaign on Wednesday.

SOURCE: AFP

## THE HIGHEST DAILY INCREASE

## South Korea reports record virus surge on Christmas Day

SOUTH Korea reported its highest daily number of coronavirus cases on Friday, as the country's Christmas celebrations were marred by a harsh third wave of Covid-19.

The nation has been held up as a model of how to combat the virus, with the public largely

following official guidelines, but Friday saw a record 1,241 new infections.

"We strongly recommend and request that you cancel all of your meetings and gatherings, even with your close family members," said Yoon Tae-ho of Central Disaster Management

Headquarters.

Seventy per cent of the fresh cases came from the greater Seoul area, home to half the country's 52 million people.

In an attempt to contain the rising infection numbers, from Wednesday private social gatherings of more than four people in the greater Seoul area were banned until January 3 by officials.

Churches have switched to online masses or small-scale services, and ski resorts and national parks have been shut down nationwide.

At Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, one of the biggest Protestant churches in South Korea, only about 15 staff, choir members and a pastor — all masked — attended its Christmas service, which was broadcast online.

"Normally our church venue can house up to 12,000 peo-

ple," Park Jae-woo, a member of the church, told AFP, describing not being able to celebrate in person with others as "heart-breaking".

"But we fully understand that social distancing rules are necessary to protect lives."

Only 15 Catholic believers were allowed to attend Christmas mass at Myeongdong Cathedral in central Seoul, and they had to make a reservation in advance to take part.

Those who couldn't get a spot were seen praying outside the cathedral, wearing masks, in front of the statue of the Virgin Mary.

South Korea has been expanding its mass testing programme — providing tests for free in the greater Seoul area until January 3 — and more than 118,000 tests were conducted on Thursday alone, authorities said.

SOURCE: AFP



Followers on the screen attend an online Christmas service at the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul on December 25, 2020, amid precautions due to the Covid-19 coronavirus. PHOTO: AFP/JUNG YEON-JE

## TURKEY

## Starting to use China's Covid-19 vaccine after strong results

TURKEY will receive its first shipment of China's Sinovac coronavirus vaccine within days as preliminary domestic tests showed it was 91% effective, Health Minister Fahrettin Koca said on Thursday. Ankara in the next few days will also sign a deal with Pfizer/BioNTech for

4.5 million doses, with the option to buy 30 million more from the US pharmaceutical giant and its German partner, Koca said

Turkey will initially receive three million doses of Sinovac and have the option for 50 million more as it begins inoculations next month, starting with

healthcare workers and the most vulnerable. Koca said the first shipments of the Chinese vaccine will be sent to Turkey on Sunday.

The preliminary tests on 7,371 volunteers in Turkey showed that the Chinese vaccine was 91.25 per cent effective,

although phase three tests were still not complete.

Turkey "will be able to vaccinate 1.5 million or even two million people per day," Koca said, adding that the "first stage" of vaccinations would cover nine million people.

SOURCE: AFP



NEW REQUIREMENT

# US to require negative virus test for UK arrivals

US authorities announced Thursday that passengers arriving on flights from the United Kingdom will need to test negative for coronavirus before departure, the latest restriction imposed due to a new COVID-19 variant.

News of the strain, believed to be more transmissible, led to nations around the world closing their borders to travellers from the UK.

The new rule takes effect Monday and requires a negative test within 72 hours of departure, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said in a statement.

“This additional testing requirement will fortify our protection of the American public to improve their health and safety and ensure responsible international travel,” it added.

The US in March halted the arrival

of foreign nationals who had visited the UK in the preceding two weeks, which significantly cut air traffic from there.

Some airlines, including British Airways and Delta, had already agreed to require passengers test negative before departure to New York from Britain because of the new strain.

European Union governments have begun easing travel bans on the UK put in place to contain the variant, with nations being urged to reopen their borders with mandatory tests for arrivals. The co-founder of BioNTech – one of the firms behind the vaccine that is being rolled out worldwide this week – has said its drug is “highly likely” to work against the mutated strain detected in Britain and otherwise can be adapted in six weeks.

SOURCE: AFP



Travellers arrive at terminal 4 at JFK International airport in New York on December 22, 2020. PHOTO: KENA BETANCUR—AFP

CORONAVIRUS RULES CHANGE

## Italy enters red zone over holidays amid COVID-19 spike



At the start of the year, Italy has become the first European country to take drastic isolation measures as it grapples to get its COVID-19 outbreak under control. The town of Codogno, one of 11 under coronavirus lockdown in northern Italy. PHOTO: MIGUEL MEDINA/ AFP/FILE

ITALY on Thursday entered a nationwide red zone of very high risks forced by a spike in COVID-19, which is set to remain in place through Christmas and New Year’s Day to Jan. 6.

Italy has become the first European country to take drastic isolation measures as it grapples to get its COVID-19 outbreak under control. The town of Codogno, one of 11 under coronavirus lockdown in northern Italy. PHOTO: MIGUEL MEDINA/ AFP/FILE

Red zone rules include a ban on travel between regions, a 10 pm to 5 am curfew, closure of shops, bars and restaurants, as well as an urge for keeping holiday gatherings at home to a minimum of two adult visitors.

To contain the second wave of COVID-19, the government has categorized Italy as three colour-coded areas, namely yellow, orange and red, with different levels of restrictions corresponding to the severity of virus transmission.

Areas with uncontrolled transmission that stretches the national health system beyond capacity are defined red, with the toughest anti-virus limits in place, said the Ministry of Health. Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte on Dec. 18 announced the designation of the entire country as a red zone over the holidays to stem the virus spread.

Infections as of Thursday stood at 593,632 in this country with a population of about 60 million, the ministry said, adding that 505 patients succumbed to COVID-19 on Thursday, pushing the overall fatalities up to 70,395 since the pandemic started.

Among the positive cases, 566,973 with light or no symptoms were quarantined at home, 24,070 hospitalized with symptoms, and 2,589 in intensive care units.

SOURCE: Xinhua

A NEW CORONAVIRUS VARIANT

## S.Africa rejects claim its Covid variant more dangerous than UK strain

SOUTH AFRICA’S health minister has rejected his British counterpart’s claim that a new coronavirus variant in the country is more contagious or dangerous than a similar one in spreading the UK.

“At present, there is no evidence that the 501.V2 (variant) is more transmissible than the United Kingdom variant — as suggested by the British Health Secretary,” Zwelini Mkhize said in a statement published late Thursday.

“There is also no evidence that (it) causes more severe disease or increased mortality than the UK variant or any variant that has been sequenced around the world”.

Announcing restrictions on travel from South Africa Wednesday, Britain’s Matt Hancock had said that the variant there was “highly concerning, because it is yet more transmissible, and it appears to have mutated further” than the similar strain in Britain.

The British minister’s words “have created a perception that the variant in SA has been a major factor in the second wave in UK,” Mkhize said.

SOURCE: AFP

COVID VARIANT

## Hong Kong imposes three-week hotel quarantine for visitors

HONG KONG extended its compulsory quarantine to three weeks for almost all international travellers from Friday, saying the measure was needed to prevent new, more infectious, coronavirus variants from spreading.

The government said expert advice suggested that the incubation period of the virus could be longer than 14 days in some people — so passengers will now have to undergo compulsory quarantine in designated hotels for three weeks, rather than the previous two.

Only travellers arriving from mainland China, Macau, and Taiwan will be exempt from

the tighter restrictions.

The government also announced a ban on people who have stayed in South Africa in the past 21 days from entering Hong Kong.

A new variant of the coronavirus, believed to be more infectious, has been spreading in South Africa, and several other countries have placed restrictions on travellers from the nation.

Since Tuesday, flights from Britain have also been banned from Hong Kong, following the discovery of a new strain of coronavirus there.

Health officials said two stu-



Police patrol a party district making sure bars are abiding by Covid-19 coronavirus restrictions in Hong Kong on December 24, 2020. PHOTO: AFP/ISAAC LAWRENCE

dents returned to Hong Kong from the UK might have been

infected by this new variant.

SOURCE: AFP



## FRATERNITY WAS A WATCHWORD

## Pope says fraternity the watchword 'at this moment in history'



Pope Francis highlighted the plight of children caught up in war, singling out victims in Syria, Yemen and Iraq in his Christmas message. **PHOTO: VATICAN MEDIA/AFP**

POPE Francis said in his Christmas message Friday that fraternity was a watchword for these unusually troubled times exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic. "At this moment in his-

tory, marked by the ecological crisis and grave economic and social imbalances only worsened by the coronavirus pandemic, it is all the more important for us to acknowledge one another as brothers and sisters," he said in his "Urbi et Orbi" message.

He said this call for solidarity was especially aimed at "people who are the most fragile, the sick and all who at this period find themselves without work or in grave difficulty due to the economic consequences of the pandemic and to women who have been subjected to domestic violence during these months of confinement". The pontiff also touched on the plight of children caught up by war, singling out

victims in Syria, Yemen and Iraq in his Christmas message.

"On this day, when the word of God became a child, let us turn our gaze to the many, all too many, children worldwide, especially in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, who still pay the high price of war," he said. "May their faces touch the consciences of all men and women of good will, so that the causes of conflicts can be addressed and courageous efforts can be made to build a future of peace," he said. Pope Francis will make a historic visit to Iraq in March, the Vatican said Monday, the first ever by a pontiff and which will include a trip to the city of Mosul, a former jihadist stronghold. **SOURCE: AFP**

## MOUNTING DEBTS

## Montenegro shuts down its national airline



Montenegro Airlines saw its revenues fall by 80 per cent this year. **PHOTO: AFP**

MONTENEGRO'S government is shutting down its national carrier, burdened with mounting debts that left it dependent on state subsidies. "We cannot take any decision that would be legal ... to prolong the life of Montenegro Airlines," Minister of Investment Mladen Bojanic said Thursday at a press conference. Procedures to shut down the company, which employs around 360 people, would cost around €50 million and should begin "as soon as possible," he added. Bojanic also said that the tiny Balkan country of around 600,000 people would aim to get a new carrier off the ground in six to nine months. Montenegro Airlines' fleet consisted of four leased planes – three Embraer 195s and a Fokker F100. The company registered nearly 660,000 passengers last year, the highest figure since it was established in 1994, according to official data. **SOURCE: AFP**

## CRIMINAL PROBE

## Russia probes Navalny ally for 'threatening suspected poisoner'

RUSSIAN authorities on Friday launched a criminal probe into an ally of Kremlin foe Alexei Navalny and raided her flat for allegedly threatening a man Navalny said took part in his poisoning.

Investigators accused Lyubov Sobol of trespassing "with the use of violence or a threat to use it" after she rang the doorbell of the alleged agent from Federal Security Service (FSB), the country's main security agency.

Sobol's lawyer Vladimir Voronin told AFP that the opposition activist was currently a witness in the probe but added that he expected Sobol to be charged later Friday.

Just after 7:00 am (0400

GMT) on Friday, the 33-year-old opposition activist posted a video on Twitter from inside her apartment before going incommunicado.

In the video her seven-year-old daughter can be heard crying as someone pounds on the front door, demanding it be opened.

A separate CCTV image released by Navalny's allies shows masked men in black uniforms – one carrying a crowbar – inside Sobol's Moscow residential building.

Investigators confiscated Sobol's tech devices as well as her daughter's mobile phone, her associates said.

On Monday, Navalny said he



Lyubov Sobol was accused of trespassing and violence. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

had tricked an alleged chemical weapons expert with the FSB named Konstantin Kudryavtsev into admitting the domestic in-

telligence agency had sought to kill him this summer by placing poison in his underwear.

**SOURCE: AFP**

## COLUMBUS, OHIO

## Police killing of unarmed Black man ignites fresh outrage in US

THE fatal shooting of an unarmed Black man by police in Columbus, Ohio – the US city's second such killing this month – sparked a fresh wave of protests



Protestors demonstrate against the police killing of Andre Hill in Columbus, Ohio, which sparked a fresh wave of outrage against racial injustice and police brutality. **PHOTO: AFP**

on Thursday against racial injustice and police brutality in the country. Andre Maurice Hill, 47, was in the garage of a house on Monday night when he was shot

several times by a police officer who had been called to the scene for a minor incident.

Seconds before the gunfire, bodycam footage shows Hill walking towards the policeman holding a cell phone in his left hand, while his other hand cannot be seen. Columbus police chief Thomas Quinlan announced Thursday that he was moving to fire the officer, Adam Coy, on allegations of "critical misconduct".

"We have an officer who violated his oath to comply with the rules and policies of the Columbus Division of Police," Quinlan said in a statement. "This violation cost an innocent man his life." **SOURCE: AFP**

## BALLOON BOY

## US parents in bizarre 'balloon boy' hoax granted pardon

TWO Colorado parents jailed for falsely claiming their six-year-old son Falcon had floated away in a homemade balloon shaped like a flying saucer have been granted pardons by the western US state's governor. Richard and Mayumi Heene pleaded guilty in 2009 to the "balloon boy" hoax, which became a worldwide media sensation with millions watching live as the silver helium balloon drifted through the skies for 70 miles (110 kilometres).

The October 2009 incident ended after five hours when the grounded balloon was found to be empty and Falcon emerged from a hiding place at the family home.

The husband and wife, accused by prosecutors of plotting to use the publicity to land a reality television series, were pardoned Wednesday by Governor Jared Polis. "It's time to no longer let a permanent criminal record from the balloon boy saga follow and drag down the parents for the rest of their lives," wrote Polis in a statement, saying the pair had "paid the price in the eyes of the public". Law enforcement's suspicions were inflated when Falcon let slip in a CNN television interview that the entire episode had been done "for the show". **SOURCE: AFP**



**SUPPORTING REGIONAL BANK MERGERS**

## BOJ expands scheme to help mergers to cover community-based lenders

THE Bank of Japan said Friday it will expand its special programme aimed at supporting regional bank mergers to cover smaller community-based lenders in a bid to prompt reorganizations of struggling local financial institutions.

The BOJ said last month it will provide an additional 0.1 per cent interest on the balance of current account deposits held by regional banks and community-focused shinkin banks at the central bank if they decide to merge with others or integrate their businesses.

On Friday, the BOJ announced it will expand the target of the three-year programme through fiscal 2022 to smaller community-based credit unions as well as agricultural and fishery cooperatives offering financial services.

The BOJ's move has been in line with Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's call for reorganizing regional banks. Before taking office in September, Suga said there are too many regional lenders in a rapidly aging Japan.

The central bank calculates it would pay up to 70 billion yen (\$676 million) a year if all of about 1,200 regional and community-based lenders apply for the planned programme slated to be introduced in March.

SOURCE: Kyodo

**PROTESTING FARMERS ARE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED**

## Indian PM Narendra Modi makes fresh appeal to farmers protesting over new laws



Farmers hold placards and shout slogans against Narendra Modi during a protest in Amritsar on 13 December. PHOTO: AFP

INDIAN Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday offered to hold fresh talks to end a stalemate over new agricultural reforms, in his latest push to win over farmers protesting for almost a month against

the move.

Tens of thousands of farmers have been camping out near several entry points to New Delhi since November 26 against three new laws they say will lead to dismantling of

regulated markets. They also fear the government would stop buying wheat and rice at guaranteed prices, leaving them at the mercy of big corporates. In a speech beamed live to millions of farmers across

the country, Modi sought to allay their misgivings, insisting the laws, passed in September, would give them the freedom to sell their produce "anywhere and to anyone they like".

"Lies are being spread that the local mandis (markets) will shut down, the minimum support price will be stopped... don't be misguided by those having political motives," Modi, 70 said. "I am saying this with humility that we are ready to discuss every issue of the farmers, even with those (political parties) who are against us, for the sake of our farmers."

Modi also released \$2.5 billion to 90 million farmers under a financial scheme that his party launched last year.

SOURCE: AFP

**SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE**



Fishing had been the subject of bitter last-minute wrangling in the post-Brexit trade deal. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

## Brexit fishing compromise finally surfaces

AN EU-UK trade deal years in the making finally emerged Thursday after the EU and Britain reached a compromise on access to the wealth of fish in British waters. The issue had been the subject of bitter last-minute wrangling.

### Share and share alike

Like all nations, Britain has an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) that stretches up to 200 miles (320 kilometres) from its shores.

EU members -- including Britain until January this year -- long agreed to share management of their zones and developed a common fisheries policy (CFP) that allocated quotas of different stocks to each nation's fishing fleet.

More than 100 different species have been managed jointly by the EU and UK in the North Sea and North Atlantic.

On top of the CFP, there is limited access for certain EU countries' vessels to Britain's

territorial waters between 6 and 12 miles from the coast, based on historic fishing practices.

### Vital for EU fishermen

EU fishermen make a total catch worth around 650 million euros (\$790 million, £580 million) each year in British waters. That means around 40 per cent of the value of fish caught in Britain's EEZ goes to the fleets of eight EU nations, according to a European Parliament report. Norway also gets a share of the haul.

For the French industry, fish caught in British waters account for 20 per cent of the total annual value, while the figure is even higher in Belgium (50 per cent), Ireland (35 per cent), Denmark (30 per cent) and the Netherlands (28 per cent) according to figures from 2011-15.

Spain, Germany and Sweden also send ships into British waters.

SOURCE: AFP

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V PRESIDIO VOY. NO. (049W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V PRESIDIO VOY. NO. (049W/E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **25-12-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP/MITT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department  
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPPING PTE., LTD

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HALUS VOY. NO. (KHLU0159N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V KOTA HALUS VOY. NO. (KHLU0159N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-12-2020** 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 ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES



सत्यमेव जयते

## Embassy of India, Yangon Tender Notice

Sealed tenders are invited for supply and installation of computer and other equipment. Details are available in the website <https://embassyofindiayangon.gov.in/> Tender - Tender (Embassy's) and CPP Portal. Last date is **7 January, 2021**.

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# Sagaing iron smelting furnace in Yadanabon era

By Maung Tha (Archaeology)

**AN IRON** smelting furnace built in Yadanabon era (1853-1885 AD) among many historical buildings in Sagaing Township which has already turned 705 shows an evidence on bully of British till today.

The Department of Archaeology and National Museum is maintaining such furnace located in Thazi Ward near Shwetaung-Umaw Pagoda in Sagaing. It was one of industries established in Yadanabon era. Construction of the furnace started in June 1874 but it did not finish till 1878. Upon completion, the furnace could operate production with the use of 100 tonnes of coal per day.

## Industries in Yadanabon era

After two aggressive wars with British, Myanmar poured out utmost efforts for modernizing the country as much as it

can. Such energetic efforts were dubbed as last endeavours of Konbaung dynasty by veteran writer Ma Kyan.

Starting from 1854 AD, Kin Mindon and Crown Prince Kanaung established modern industries and workshops, changed new currency system, cast coins and sent youths abroad to learn modern technologies. As of 1858, they established industries in Yadanabon Royal Palace.

Maha Yazawingyi History mentioned there were more than 50 industries and factories in Yadanabon era but British records stated there were nine factories only, quoted by historian Daw Kyan in her paper on factories in Yadanabon era. Firm evidences showed existence of cannon and gun factory, weaving factory, ship-building factory, saw factory, coin factory, sugar factory, indigo factory and iron smelting furnace.

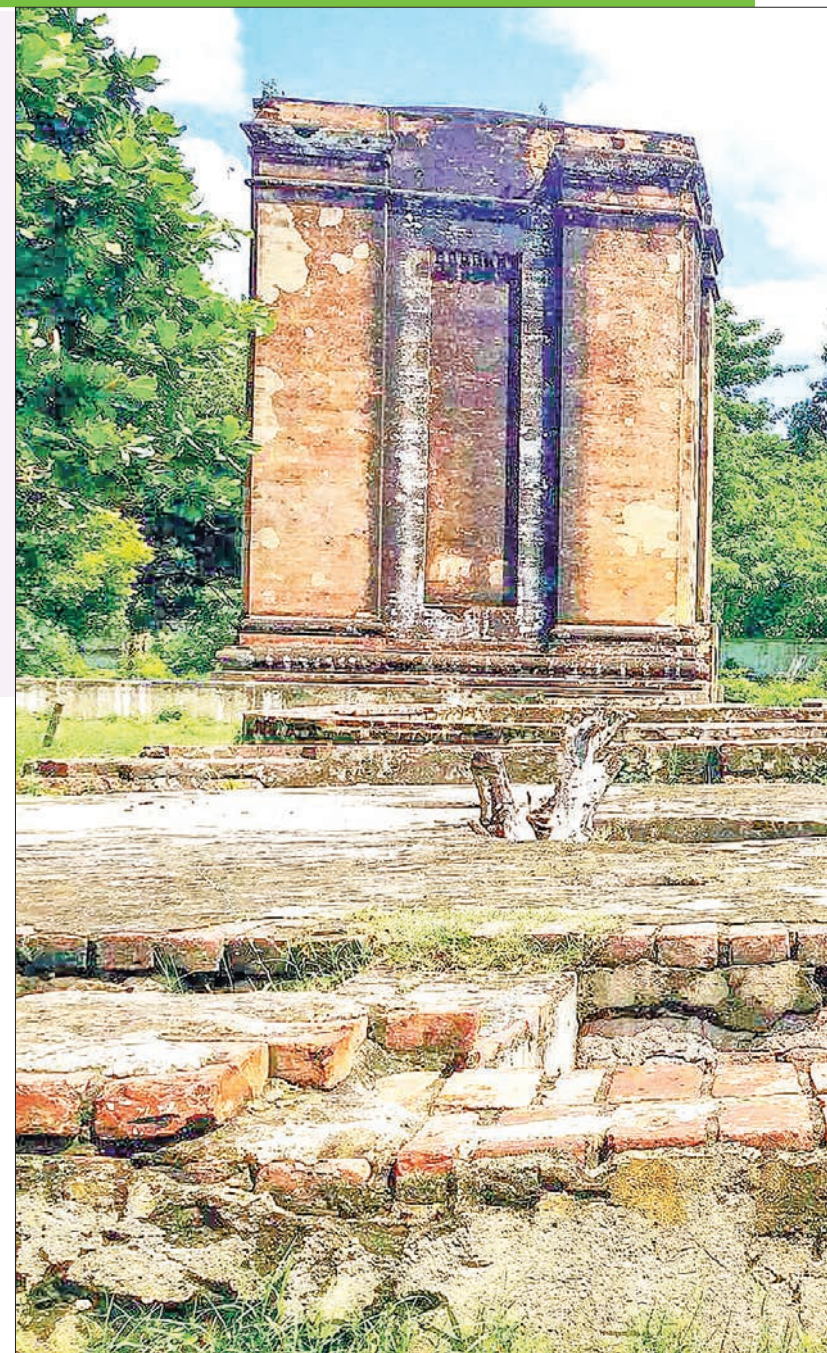
There were two iron smelt-

ing furnaces in Yadanabon era. One of two took a position near Saw Factory, northwest of Ponnagon cemetery. Such furnace was combined with five workshops including blacksmith, metal smelting and iron smelting furnace. Another one was Sagaing iron smelting furnace.

Iron smelting furnace vs. deceitful Clement William

Cornerstones were laid by Prince Makhaya, Secretary of Bhamo and Pontoon superintendent in Nayon of 1236 ME for construction of Sagaing iron smelting furnace. The Myanmar Herald Tribune daily issued on Saturday on 13 June 1874, showing the story with headline "Son Prince Makhaya, Secretary of Bhamo and Pontoon Officer leave for Sagaing to inspect cornerstone laying of iron smelting furnace".

The government of Myanmar king signed an agreement with Dr Clement William in Oc-



Crown Prince Kanaung's Iron Smelting furnace in Sagaing.

tober 1870 to take machinery and recruit industrial technicians for construction of the iron furnace. According to the agreement, Dr Clement William took responsibilities for sending the iron furnace by charging K380,000. He left for England in 1871 to buy necessary machinery.

Kinwun Mingyi talked with Dr Clement William in England about issue of iron furnace in 1872. The minister sent glass superintendent to inspect machinery for iron furnace. Clement William reported to Kinwun Mingyi on purchase of the iron furnace in October 1872, saying that as he paid 15 pyas per K100 for increasing charges of iron, coal and labour wages, it was no reason to exceed more than K380,000 of charges, and pledged to give the iron furnace within 17 months.

He sent 50 tonnes of lower structure for the furnace to Myanmar from Liverpool of England on 17 December 1872. Clement William called on Kinwun Mingyi at Yangon port on 29 March 1874 and said full equipment of machinery for Sagaing iron smelting furnace arrived but Myanmar did not get it.

Clement William demanded more K60,000 but Myanmar

government paid K440,000. Even though, full equipment of the iron furnace did not arrive in Myanmar. In negotiation, Clement William further demanded K72,940 from Myanmar government.

He showed reasons on increasing prices of iron in England, over charges in boycott of labourers, remaining salaries for two engineers, buying of asbestos bricks for sugar mill, different currency value in changing gold coins, and cost for return of two engineers to England.

The government of Myanmar king paid K62,360 to Clement William in May and June of 1875. So, total expense for the furnace to Clement William reached K512,940 and there remained to pay K10,580. But, Clement William evaded to English without handover of equipment for the furnace which arrived in Yangon, to Myanmar government.

Youth engineers from England William, Jones, Holgate and Graham fitted machinery at Sagaing Iron Furnace in April 1874. But, their installation did not complete due to lack of full equipment. Myanmar government paid salaries to engineers for 16 months and expense for returning charges to







### Situation of iron smelting furnace

A 15 metres high brick building constructed on a square shape foundation in northeast corner of the furnace is blast furnace plant. Its bottom is formed with 1.1 metres wide and 2.1 metres high ventilation. Upper side of 3.2 metres wide hole is blast furnace kiln and the lower side, smelting of iron ore. While cleaning the furnace, parts of molten lava but any evidence was not found for operating the furnace yet.

Circular and square pits were found in the compound of the iron furnace in addition to tubes made of concrete tubes. In addition, a brick tank with 10 metres in length and 8 metres in width can be seen there.

Although King Mindon strived for shaping Myanmar as an industrialized nation with modernity last around 150 years but his mission failed due to disturbance in various ways and means committed by the colonialists. And then, Myanmar lost her independence in 1885.



England to them.

### Bias decision for iron smelting furnace case

Myanmar government sent a complaint to the commissioner on the case of Sagaing iron furnace in October 1875 and demanded K2.6 million as compensation for losses in the project and cost for salaries of operators, interpreters and workers. Clement William also complained that he did not get complete amount for the project from the Myanmar government and wished to get K190,000 more including interest and compensation for expense not paid till the agreement term was overdue.

The case did not reach agreement till 1876. Both sides agreed to accept the decision of Deputy Commissioner Colonel H.T. Duncan, the representative of British government in Royal Palace. So, the trials started on 31 July 1877.

H.T. Duncan decided Myanmar government had to pay further K26,680 including remaining cash K10,580 for the iron furnace to Clement William. In the decision, Clement William had to hand over machinery for the iron furnace which arrived in Yangon

to Myanmar government within 30 days. After that, Myanmar government had to pay K16,680 to Clement William within 10 days. Remaining K10,000 had to be trusted at Charter Bank with the accounts of a Bishop or other one agreed by both sides. Clement William had to take the cash after handing over the machinery to Myanmar government in line with the agreement. Within 10 days after taking over the machinery, if Myanmar government did not pay cash, it had to pay 10 per cent interest per year for the delay terms.

H.T. Duncan left the compensation demanded by Myanmar government because it could not mention how about loss for the case. Although Myanmar government accepted his decisions with great consideration, Clement William requested the commission to submit his appeal to the Indian government. But, the commissioner turned down the appeal of Clement William because the former decision was fair.

The case of iron smelting furnace concluded in 1878. It was expected that although Myanmar government took over machinery from Yangon for the

furnace, it was not sure to get complete sets. At that time, foreign engineers returned home while it was time of dying for King Mindon. As such, it was assumed that installation of machinery could not finish at the iron furnace.

### Malpractice of British

After Myanmar had lost her independence in 1885, British sold factories and workshops including Sagaing iron furnace in Yadanabon era. Arrangements were made to sell machinery which were not yet to install yet to England. Although transport charge might be high, British expected such machinery in

good conditions stockpiled on bank of Ayeyawady River would be sold in England easily. But, they assumed buyers would be from India, the procurement might be better. As such, they inserted advertisement for sales in the dailies and engineering magazines issued in India.

Parts of machinery from Sagaing iron furnace was assessed as K35,240 and arranged to be sold in Mandalay but British got lower prices for the parts. Although anyone did not know how British sold Sagaing iron smelting furnace, there remain some parts of machinery and the furnace till today.

Whatever it maybe, endeavours of Myanmar in the past remain historical evidences, showing Sagaing iron smelting furnace as a significant proof.

*(Translated by Than Tun Aung)*



### References:

Last endeavours of Konbaung Dynasty (Ma Kyan)  
Diary on journey to London (Kinwun Mingyi)



## Salah is happy at Liverpool, says Klopp

LIVERPOOL coach Jurgen Klopp moved to dismiss speculation over Egypt forward Mohamed Salah's future saying on Thursday he is happy at the Premier League champions.

The 28-year-old gave an interview in Spain last week in which he said Barcelona and Real Madrid were top clubs and 'who knows what will happen in the future'.

This led to speculation over whether he was seeking a new longer-term contract beyond 2023 or he was upset Trent Alexander-Arnold had been given the captain's armband for the Champions League group match with Midtjylland.

'We do not speak about deals – well, not with you (the media). Why should we start now?' said Klopp at his press conference ahead of Sunday's game with struggling West Brom.

'Mo is in a good mood, always a good moment. He is in really good shape and that is the most important thing for me.

'We did not have pictures (from the training ground) this morning but if we did you would have seen him laughing, he enjoyed the session.

'All the rest is nice for all of you to write about but internally, no, nothing really.'—AFP ■

## AFC guaranteed six direct slots for 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup

KUALA LUMPUR —Members from the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) will have six direct slots for the 32-team 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup which will be held in Australia and New Zealand.

World football governing body FIFA on Thursday revealed the plan for the allocation of slots for the tournament.

UEFA (Europe) will get the largest share of the total 29 direct slots with 11, while CAF (Africa) and CONCACAF (North, Central American and Caribbean) both have four, followed by CONMEBOL (South America) with three and OFC (Oceania) one.

The two host countries, Australia and New Zealand will automatically qualify, and their slots have been taken directly from the quotas allocated to their confederations, namely the AFC and the OFC respectively.

Thus, China will compete with other Asian teams for the remaining five direct tickets to the event.—Xinhua ■



Members from the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) will have six direct slots for the 32-team 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup which will be held in Australia and New Zealand. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

## Drawing ceremony of AFC tournaments to be held in January 2021



AFC tournaments are the highest level of competitions at the Asian level. Two Myanmar football teams: Shan United and Hanthawaddy United will join the AFC tournaments next year. **PHOTO: AFC**

THE drawing ceremony and workshop for the 2021 AFC Champions League (ACL) and AFC Cup (ACC) group stages will be held in January and February 2021 via video conferencing, according to an official statement with the AFC.

The Asian Football Confed-

eration (AFC) holds the ACL and ACC group stage drawing ceremony every year in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the headquarters of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC).

Owing to the global outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic this year, the group stages' drawing

ceremony will take place online on 27 January, and the workshop will take place virtually on 2 February.

The meeting will be chaired by the football authorities of the Asian Football Confederation. Media officers, marketing managers, and officials from Shan United and Hanthawaddy United of Myanmar, who are eligible to compete in the Asian Championships next season will join the online meeting.

Shan United, the champions of the 2020 MPT Myanmar National League, will have to compete in the ACL from the knockout stages, and if they win, they will be able to compete in the 2021 ACL from the group stage. If Shan United does not win the tournament, they will have to compete directly in the group stage of the 2021 ACC.

Hanthawaddy United have qualified for the 2021 AFC Cup from the knockout stages, and if Shan United wins the ACL, they will be eligible for the AFC Cup group stage.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)

## Aubameyang urges young Arsenal players to 'be patient'

LONDON — Captain Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang said the young players eager to establish themselves at struggling Arsenal must "be patient" in their wait for first team action.

The Gunners have endured their worst start to a league campaign in almost half a century (the 1974/75 season) and last won a domestic match on Nov 1. Heading into Saturday's tricky home game with fifth-placed Chelsea they are just four points above the relegation zone.

Aubameyang's lack of goals is one of the reasons they are in such a predicament having scored just four times.

The form of other experienced players like Granit Xhaka and Willian has fallen away leading to calls for young players to be selected by coach Mikel Arteta. Folarin Balogun, Eddie Nketiah, Emile Smith Rowe and William Saliba, all under 21, are those most frequently mentioned.—AFP ■



Captain Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang said the young players eager to establish themselves at struggling Arsenal must "be patient" in their wait for first team action. Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang (Gabon) **PHOTO: AFP**