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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Sunday, 27 December 2020

Myanmar citizens abroad brought back home by relief flights



Myanmar returnees are seen at the Yangon International Airport on 26 December 2020. PHOTO: MNA

A total of 237 Myanmar citizens including seamen who were stranded in foreign countries – 125 from the Philippines and 112 from Singapore – because of the suspension of commercial flights returned home by relief flights yesterday.

The Myanmar Embassy in Manila organized the relief flight of Myanmar National Airlines to repatriate 125 My-

anmar nationals from the Philippines. The flight landed at Yangon International Airport in the evening.

The Myanmar Embassy in Singapore organized the third relief flight of Myanmar National Airlines to bring back 112 Myanmar seamen home from Singapore. The flight landed at Yangon International Airport in the evening.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Yangon Region government provided them with proper medical tests and arranged 7-day quarantine at specific places or designated hotels, followed by the 7-day home quarantine.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been working with

Myanmar embassies in foreign countries and local ministries concerned to bring back citizens stranded abroad due to the suspension of international commercial flights, in accordance with the guidance of the National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19.

—MNA (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

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Gangaw grows sunflowers as winter crops



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Thai-Myanmar border trade running normally despite infection spike in Thailand

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Winter crop production likely to fall this year



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MTE expects to earn K28.216 billion and USD76.3 million from selling sawn timber in 2020-2021FY

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EXTRA WHITENING



FDA Certificate -1907 PC 0040

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Health and Sports
Order 155/2020
12th Waxing of Nadaw, 1382 ME
(26 December 2020)

THE Ministry of Health and Sports has issued this order in line with provisions stipulated in Section 21-(b) of the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law.

1. The ministry is working around the clock for the prevention of the acute respiratory disease Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and had previously issued the Stay-at-Home Order 107/2020 dated 20-9-2020 for related townships including all townships in Yangon Region (excluding Cocogyun Township).
2. Some townships in Yangon Region now show considerable improvement in COVID-19 prevention measures, and new cases found in the townships in past 14 days considerably decreased.
3. Therefore, it is hereby announced that the Stay-at-Home order issued for the townships in Yangon Region (excluding the wards/villages in Seikkyi/Khanaungto, Twantay and Kungyangon townships in Yangon Region) ended at 8 am on 27-12-2020.

Dr Myint Htwe
(Union Minister)

Stay-at-Home Order is still in effect in the following wards and village-tracts of the three townships in Yangon Region.
(time and date: 8:00 am, 27 December 2020)

Sr	Township	Ward/village-tract
1	Seikkyi/Khanaungto Township	1 Seikkyi Ward (east)
		2 Seikkyi Ward (west)
		3 Khanaungto Ward (east)
		4 Khanaungto Ward (west)
		5 Samarduwar Ward
		6 U Tun Oh Ward

2	Twantay Township	1 Kyuntaw Ward
		2 Kyunbet Village-tract
		3 Kwangyan Ward
		4 Kathabaung Village-tract
		5 Kalartan Village-tract
		6 Khayanwa Village-tract
		7 Hsanywa Village-tract
		8 Tamangyi Village-tract
		9 Tamartakaw Village-tract
		10 Taloathaw Village-tract
		11 Htawthoe Village-tract
		12 Phayargyi Village-tract
		13 Mangay Alae Village-tract
		14 Minpaing Ward
		15 Shwesantaw Ward
		16 Thawuntaw Village-tract
		17 Ahlaechaung Village-tract
		18 Ohnpinsu Ward
3	Kwangyangon Township	1 Sanpya Ward
		2 Kantmalar Village-tract
		3 Hnetgyidaung Village-tract
		4 Tawkhayanlay Village-tract
		5 Tawpyar Village-tract
		6 Tawlan Village-tract
		7 Pilakhat Village-tract
		8 Mayan Village-tract
		9 Hmawby Village-tract
		10 Yaytein Village-tract
		11 Latkhonkon Village-tract

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Health and Sports
Order 156/2020
12th Waxing of Nadaw, 1382 ME
(26 December 2020)

THE Ministry of Health and Sports has issued this order in line with provisions stipulated in Section 21-(b) of the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law.

1. The ministry is working around the clock for the prevention of the acute respiratory disease Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and had previously issued the Stay-at-Home Order 110/2020 dated 25-9-2020 for related townships including Mawlamyine and Bilin townships in Mon State.

2. Mawlamyine and Bilin townships in Mon State now show considerable improvement in COVID-19 prevention measures, and new cases found in the townships in past 14 days considerably decreased.

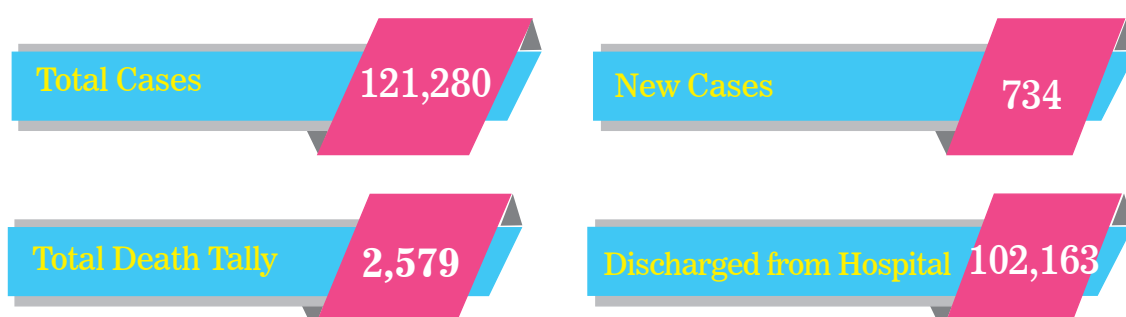
3. Therefore, it is hereby announced that the Stay-at-Home order issued for Mawlamyine and Bilin townships in Mon State ended at 8 am on 27-12-2020.

Dr Myint Htwe
(Union Minister)

734 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 26 December, total figure rises to **121,280**

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **121,280** after **734** new cases were reported on 26 December according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these **121,280** confirmed cases, **2,579** died, **102,163** have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 26 December 2020



Daily death toll until 8 pm 26-12-2020



Build a Union with a diversity of strength

The word Union is such a beautiful word. It is imbued with grace. It is very important for all of us to value, love and cherish this word. A Union means something which has been established collectively. A country which has been established collectively, a great country which has been established collectively is not the same as those countries which have not been established collectively. We will be able to establish a Union only after transforming our diversity and differences into strength.

(Extract from a Message of Greetings delivered by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on 15 January 2020 at the ceremony to celebrate Kayah State Day)



Myanmar Folk Dance - U Shwe Yoe and Daw Moe. PHOTO: ZAW MG MG OO (SANDAKU)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Health and Sports Order 157/2020 12th Waxing of Nadaw, 1382 ME (26 December 2020)

THE Ministry of Health and Sports has issued this order in line with provisions stipulated in Section 21-(b) of the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law.

1. The ministry is working around the clock for the prevention of the acute respiratory disease Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and had previously issued the Stay-at-Home Order 110/2020 dated 25-9-2020 for related townships including Mahaaungmye, Chanayethazan and Amarapura townships in Mandalay Region.
2. Amarapura Township in Mandalay Region now shows considerable improvement in COVID-19 prevention measures, and new cases found in the townships in past 14 days considerably decreased.
3. Therefore, it is hereby announced that the Stay-at-Home order issued for Amarapura Township (excluding the wards/villages shown in the table) in Mandalay Region ended at 8 am on 27-12-2020.

*Dr Myint Htwe
(Union Minister)*

Stay-at-Home Order is still in effect in the following wards and villages in Amarapura Township, Mandalay Region

(time and: date 8:00 am, 27 December 2020)

Sr	Township	Ward/village	
1	Amarapura	1	Taunggyi Ward
		2	Kyantaw Ward
		3	Hmantaw Ward
		4	Zaycho Ward
		5	Shwegwanhtoke Ward
		6	Laysu Ward
		7	Ohetaw Ward
		8	Hsinsweput Ward
		9	Myitnge Ward
		10	Shankalaykyun Village
		11	Yintaw Village
		12	Hintha Village
		13	Panbe Village (north)
		14	Panbe Village (south)
		15	East Latthamar Village
		16	Tatkyee Village
		17	Bhonetawnainggan Village
		18	Myintaw Village
		19	Chaunggya Village
		20	Parapet Village
		21	Mayangyan Village
		22	Shwelun Village

	23	Thalayswa Village
	24	Yanpyan Village (east)
	25	Bontaungnesu Village
	26	Ohebo Village
	27	Htantaw Village
	28	Yelunkyaw Village (east)
	29	Hsin Village
	30	Thabyayouk Village
	31	Thungetaw Village
	32	Waryonepin Village
	33	Ngeto Village
	34	Yetkantaw Village
	35	Myitlaung Village
	36	Myittu Village
	37	Ouyintaw Village
	38	Thayargon Village
	39	Dhanon Village
	40	Htonebotaung Village
	41	Tamotesoe Village
	42	Kanyoe Village
	43	Natyekan Village
	44	Phyautseikkon Village
	45	Monepalae Village
	46	Sartoe Village
	47	Myopyingyi Village
	48	Pyilonkyaw Village

We will enforce the rules

Despite the spread of the disease, we have relaxed some restrictions in the areas which are not included under stay-at-home orders and in some sectors as we are trying for the situation to return to normal quickly. For example, we are working for the resumption of domestic flights in line with healthcare rules and guidelines. We will enforce the rules.

(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's report on COVID-19 containment measures, on 12 December 2020)



Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Health and Sports
Order 158/2020
12th Waxing of Nadaw, 1382 ME
(26 December 2020)

THE Ministry of Health and Sports has issued this order in line with provisions stipulated in Section 21-(b) of the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law.

1. The ministry is working around the clock for the prevention of the acute respiratory disease Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and had previously issued the Stay-at-Home Order 110/2020 dated 25-9-2020 for related townships including Kawa, Bago and Thanatpin townships in Bago Region.
2. Some townships in Bago Region now show considerable improvement in COVID-19 prevention measures, and new cases found in the townships in past 14 days considerably decreased.
3. Therefore, it is hereby announced that the Stay-at-Home order issued for Kawa and Thanatpin townships in Bago Region ended at 8 am on 27-12-2020.

Dr Myint Htwe
(Union Minister)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Health and Sports
Order 159/2020
12th Waxing of Nadaw, 1382 ME
(26 December 2020)

THE Ministry of Health and Sports has issued this order in line with provisions stipulated in Section 21-(b) of the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law.

1. The ministry is working around the clock for the prevention of the acute respiratory disease Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and had previously issued the Stay-at-Home Order 110/2020 dated 25-9-2020 for related townships including Pathein, Pyapon and Maubin townships in Ayeyawady Region.
2. Some townships in Ayeyawady Region now show considerable improvement in COVID-19 prevention measures, and new cases found in the townships in past 14 days considerably decreased.
3. Therefore, it is hereby announced that the Stay-at-Home order issued for Pyapon and Maubin townships in Ayeyawady Region ended at 8 am on 27-12-2020.

Dr Myint Htwe
(Union Minister)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Health and Sports
Order 160/2020
12th Waxing of Nadaw, 1382 ME
(26 December 2020)

THE Ministry of Health and Sports has issued this order in line with provisions stipulated in Section 21-(b) of the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law.

1. The ministry is working around the clock for the prevention of the acute respiratory disease Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and had previously issued the Stay-at-Home Order 129/2020 dated 19-10-2020 for related townships including Phakant and Mohnyin townships in the Kachin State.
2. Phakant and Mohnyin townships in the Kachin State now show considerable improvement in COVID-19 prevention measures, and new cases found in the townships in past 14 days considerably decreased.
3. Therefore, it is hereby announced that the Stay-at-Home order issued for Phakant and Mohnyin townships in the Kachin State (excluding the wards/villages shown in the table) ended at 8 am on 27-12-2020.

Dr Myint Htwe
(Union Minister)

Stay-at-Home Order is still in effect in the following wards and village-tracts in Phakant Township, Kachin State.
(time and: date 8:00 am, 27 December 2020)

Sr	Townships	Wards/Villages
1.	Phakant Township	1 Mawone Ward
		2 Myoma Ward
		3 Ngapyawtaw Ward
		4 Mashikahtaung Ward
		5 Ayemyathaya Ward
		6 Lonekhin Village-tract
		7 Seikmu Village-tract
		8 Namaphit Village-tract

“People are the key”

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Health and Sports
Order 161/2020
12th Waxing of Nadaw, 1382 ME
(26 December 2020)

THE Ministry of Health and Sports has issued this order in exercise of the rights contained in Section 21(b) of the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law.

1. The Ministry of Health and Sports is carrying out preventive measures against (Coronavirus Disease 2019 – COVID-19) in real-time. Due to the increasing number of positive cases with COVID-19 patients in Mandalay Region, people residing in some townships of the Mandalay Region are required for “Stay-at-Home” in order to effectively control the spread of the disease.
 2. It is hereby announced that people residing in the following townships in the Mandalay Region are included in the Stay-at-Home programme:
 - (a) Aungmyethazan Township
 - (b) Chanmyathazi Township
 - (c) Pyigyidagon Township
 - (d) Patheingyi Township
 3. People from the above-mentioned four townships, who are included in the Stay-at-Home programme shall follow the following rules:
 - (a) Stay only at home.
 - (1) Relating to the stay-at-home order (for government departments in accordance with Letter No. 2354/264/COVID-19/Committee(2020) issued on 14-9-2020 by the National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Containment and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), to follow the directive for civil servants to rotate on a 2-week for office attendance and 2-week on work-from-home basis.
 - (2) In private sector, those who are working in banking and financial services, filling stations, food productions, cold-storage facilities for meat and fish, production and distribution of medicines, medical supplies and drinking water, factories of daily personal hygiene products and related businesses are excluded.
 - (3) Those who are working at private-run ports which are providing services for cargo vessels at the Port, representative offices of shipping lines, freight forwarder companies, Customs services agencies, container-carrying vehicles, trucks for export/import goods at the port, vessels, inland container depots and dry ports are also excluded.
 - (4) Those who are working in communications businesses such as post office services, landline and mobile phone communication services, internet services (not including the vendors of selling mobile phones and internet data), and services for tower and fibre networks are also excluded.
 - (b) Mandalay Region government is to make decisions on opening or closing of the cut-make-pack (CMP) factories and workplaces depending on the inspection of the factories and workplaces whether they are in line with COVID-19 guidelines, especially whether they are adhering to the guidelines set for factories and workplaces, issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports.
 - (c) Organizations and companies are to work from home.
 - (d) Only one person per household can go outside to purchase essentials.
 - (e) Only two persons per household may go outside for hospital or clinical visits.
 - (f) Always wear facemasks/masks when going outside.
 - (g) Allow only vehicles transporting working people and permitted vehicles may enter any township.
 - (h) Within the ward, only the driver and one other person are permitted to go shopping and only the driver and two other persons are permitted to go to the hospital.
 - (i) For flowing goods smoothly, to follow Standard Operating Procedure for operating vehicles which are carrying goods.
 - (a) Stay only at home.
 - (1) Relating to the stay-at-home order (for government departments in accordance with Letter No. 2354/264/COVID-19/Committee(2020) issued on 14-9-2020 by the National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Containment and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), to follow the directive for civil servants to rotate on a 2-week for office attendance and 2-week on work-from-home basis.
 - (2) In private sector, those who are working in banking and financial services, filling stations, food productions, cold-storage facilities for meat and fish, production and distribution of medicines, medical supplies and drinking water, factories of daily personal hygiene products and related businesses are excluded.
 - (3) Those who are working at private-run ports which are providing services for cargo vessels at the Port, representative offices of shipping lines, freight forwarder companies, Customs services agencies, container-carrying vehicles, trucks for export/import goods at the port, vessels, inland container depots and dry ports are also excluded.
 - (4) Those who are working in communications businesses such as post office services, landline and mobile phone communication services, internet services (not including the vendors of selling mobile phones and internet data), and services for tower and fibre networks are also excluded.
 - (b) Mandalay Region government is to make decisions on opening or closing of the cut-make-pack (CMP) factories and workplaces depending on the inspection of the factories and workplaces whether they are in line with COVID-19 guidelines, especially whether they are adhering to the guidelines set for factories and workplaces, issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports.
 - (c) Organizations and companies are to work from home.
 - (d) Only one person per household can go outside to purchase essentials.
 - (e) Only two persons per household may go outside for hospital or clinical visits.
 - (f) Always wear facemasks/masks when going outside.
 - (g) Allow only vehicles transporting working people and permitted vehicles may enter any township.
 - (h) Within the ward, only the driver and one other person are permitted to go shopping and only the driver and two other persons are permitted to go to the hospital.
 - (i) For flowing goods smoothly, to follow Standard Operating Procedure for operating vehicles which are carrying goods.
4. If the number of people exceeds the limitations mentioned in Paragraph 3-(d), (e) and (h), or for any other emergency reasons, prior notice should be given to the relevant ward administrator and they in turn must only permit the people going from and returning to the ward and not allow people from outside the ward to enter or other people within the ward to leave.
5. Failure to comply with this order will have action taken in accordance with existing laws.
6. This order takes effect as of 8 am on 27-12-2020.

Dr Myint Htwe
Union Minister

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.
 - (a) Paunglaung River Recreation Centre (Zeyathiri Township)
 - (b) Pazunzate Waterfall (Pinyinmana Township)
 - (c) Phalaung Waterfall (Pinyinmana Township)
 - (d) Awaiyar Dam (Pinyinmana Township)
 - (e) Myathida Waterfall (Pinyinmana Township)
 - (f) Kotit Springs (Pinyinmana)
 - (g) Mingala Lake (Zabuthiri Township)
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 (Pinyinmana 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

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

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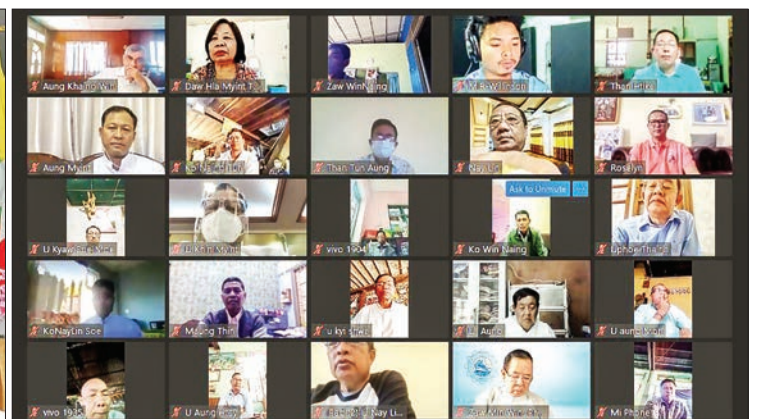


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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Myanmar Rice Federation organizes Annual Meeting, General Assembly



Union Minister Dr Than Myint delivers the video message to the Annual Meeting and General Assembly of the Myanmar Rice Federation on 26 December 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

MYANMAR Rice Federation held its Annual Meeting and General Assembly yesterday.

Union Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint delivered a video message to the event.

In his video message, the Union Minister said that Myanmar is an agricultural nation, and rice is a major crop cultivated for staple food of the country and exporting if exceeded locally, stressing the importance of grasping opportunities for sustainable development of the agriculture sector despite COVID-19 pandemic challenges.

He also highlighted the need to develop the crop production

rate, to reduce the production costs, to provide the logistics system and production processes in order to produce competitive or quality products.

The Union Minister also said the government is making efforts to cooperate with the international countries, to achieve technical aids and foreign investment for the development of the country's economy. He also stressed the new market for farming products and crops in addition to rice via online platforms while rice is set as a priority sector in National Export Strategy (NES) 2020-2025.

The Union Minister said 43 Myanmar companies and 79 rice

mills received rice export licenses from General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC) in 2020.

The government donated 200 tonnes of rice to Wuhan of China at the beginning of COVID-19 outbreak and planned to donate another 200 tonnes to Bamko Hurricane victims of the Philippines. The Union Minister appreciated the efforts of the Myanmar Rice Federation to help the government in purchasing reserved rice to ease food security concerns and in selling the reserved rice at low prices amid COVID-19 pandemic.

He then urge the federation

to conduct research and developing programmes including educating activities for rice sector and to carry out closely with the farmers for the sustainable development. Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Thu and UM-FCCI President U Zaw Min Win also sent the video messages to the event. The Patrons and Central Executive Members of the federation, rice experts, the representatives of Myanmar Rice Traders Association and Myanmar Rice Millers Association and other officials joined the event online. —MNA (Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

MoHT minister visits Pyinmana for tourism development

UNION MINISTER for Hotels and Tourism U Ohn Maung, together with Deputy Minister U Tin Latt and responsible persons from the Nay Pyi Taw Council, made an observation tour to develop community-based tourism (CBT) in Nga Tae Su Village, Mae Pauk Village and upper Paunglaung dam in Pyinmana Township, Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory, yesterday morning.

During the tour to Nga Tae Su Village and Mae Pauk Village, he also met with local ethnic people in accordance with the directives of the Ministry of Health and Sports. He said the establishment of CBT has provided employment opportunities for local people and contributed significantly to regional development. The Ministry will invite some local people from the villages to be implemented the CBT to visit the thriving CBT villages and will support the necessary training for tourism services.

Mae Pauk Village is located



Union Minister U Ohn Maung makes a visit to Pyinmana for community-based tourism development on 26 December 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

about 24 miles from Pyinmana Township at an altitude of over 2,000 feet above sea level. The locals are engaged in farming based on agriculture and it is a suitable area for communi-

ty-based tourism because of its traditional ways of life and mountain scenery.

CBT is a booming tourism industry in Southeast Asia, and the Ministry of Hotels and Tour-

ism is launching new CBT tours in the states and regions as ethnic lifestyles and scenery are particularly suitable for CBT.—MNA (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Gangaw grows sunflowers as winter crops



Picture shows a sunflower plantation in Magway Region. PHOTO: SEIN KYAW

GANGAW township is growing sunflowers, which are oil crops on their farmlands as winter crops. The local farmers are growing the sunflowers on the fields separately and in a mixture with the butter bean farmlands, according to the sunflower growers from Gangaw township. Sunflower cultivation in Gangaw township has been introduced for 16 years. The local people are growing mostly Sanphola sunflowers.

“We have been growing the sunflowers for more than ten years. Earlier, we grew only the butterbean as winter crops. Now, we are growing the sunflowers on the butter bean farmland as a mixed crop. We are growing five butterbean rolls and one sunflower roll system. This system

won't drop the bean yield but will get extra sunflowers. Sunflower farmlands are put under cultivation only after paddy cultivation,” said a sunflower grower from Gangaw township.

The Gangaw Township grew 4,025 acres of sunflower farmland as winter crops in 2018, 4,484 acres in 2019 and 3,290 acres in 2020. After cultivation of monsoon paddy, the sunflower is grown continuously on monsoon farmlands.

The cultivation of sunflowers cost over K200,000 per acre. Each acre of sunflower yielded over 50 baskets. The grinding of sunflower can produce four visses of oil, and the sunflower oil is sold for K5,000 per viss. — Sein Kyaw
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Thai-Myanmar border trade running normally despite infection spike in Thailand

THE bilateral border trade with Thailand is running normally despite the rising number of COVID-19 infection in Thailand, according to the statement of the Border Merchant Association.

“Although the volume of the bilateral border trade between Myanmar and Thailand has plummeted significantly because of the pandemic, the border trading is running as usual,” said an

official from Myawady Border Merchant Association (MBMA).

Myanmar is carrying out border trade with Thailand, a neighbouring country, through seven border checkpoints -- Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Maese respectively. Among them, Hteekhee performed the most extensive trade with a bilateral border trade value of US\$2.8 mil-

lion, followed by Myawady with \$1.99 million.

“Currently, Thailand’s border authorities will not close the border area. If they close the border checkpoint, it can create difficulties for them,” said the official from MBMA.

At present, the border trade between the two countries includes foodstuffs and personal goods, he added.

The value of border trade with Thailand, which is Myanmar’s second-largest trade partner among the ASEAN states, has totalled \$615 million between 1 October and 18 December, a decrease by over \$302 million compared to the same period of last FY, according to the official statement of the Ministry of Commerce. The domestic transmission rate has been growing dur-

ing the second wave of COVID-19 in Myanmar. Although Thailand accepts the goods exported from Kawthoung border post, the Rannong province administration team does not allow the people to go to the jetty. The cargo vessel from the Myanmar side usually is operating. Myanmar also imports foodstuffs and personal goods from Thailand. —Aye Maung

(Translated by Hay Mar)

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Winter crop production likely to fall this year

ACCORDING to the local growers, winter crop production is expected to drop this year because Phaungpyin Township in Sagaing Region is flooded in this winter crop season.

There have been four floods in Phaungpyin township this year. The local growers are cultivating the crops yearly as usual,

and this year, the crops and paddy are destroyed by floods. The river water encroached the town in October, and some growers cultivated their winter crops in the third week of December. For lack of monthly rain, the crops have also been less successful. There has been no rain since the time of cultivation of the crops.

So, the plants are dying for lack of moisture.

The winter crops such as peanuts, soybeans and other variety beans are usually grown in early October. Other crops such as maize, sesame, sunflower, garlic and online are grown in moderation. —Ko Tun (Phaungpyin) (Translated by Hay Mar)



Farmers harvest sesame at a field. Winter crop yields this year in Phaungpyin Township are expected to decline due to the floods occurred in the region. PHOTO: KYAW SWAR

Steady focus needed for speedy recovery of economy

THE Covid-19 pandemic is still an on-going global crisis. The Union government is also working to adopt appropriate strategies for the economic recovery of the country in the post-COVID-19. The strategies are focussed on aligning with the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan.

Long-term economic development largely relies on macro-economic and financial stability for Myanmar.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has caused the biggest global economic downturn since the Great Depression of the 1930s, Myanmar was not exempted from this crisis including unemployment problems, loss of public finance, considerable decline in trade flows and investment.

The government is not only taking measures to liberate the country from the crisis, but also creating resilient mechanisms and institutions for the country. The COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP) is one of the strategies of the government to overcome challenges caused by the pandemic. Consisting of 7 Goals, 10 Strategies, 36 Action Plans and 76 Actions, the CERP has covered a wide range of extraordinary fiscal measures, which focusses on human resources and commonsense policy responses. In facing against the crisis, the CERP is seen as a living document.

Experts have remarked that swift and decisive government actions are necessary to address the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Myanmar needs to prepare for different types of crises, from addressing supply chain challenges to environmental outcomes, while policymakers should design different available policy alternatives, conduct a cost-benefit analysis, and adopt policy options that can minimize restrictions and distortions for the economic recovery of the country.

In accordance with the past crises, competition policy and its enforcement must be promoted to foster resilience in markets, the speedy recovery of an economy from a crisis and ensuring well-functioning markets after the crisis.

However, market competition should not turn into price increases. Enforcement actions must be taken in protecting consumers from unfair pricing practices as people have suffered severe losses in income.

The Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan has been developed to forge a common path for the country towards the emergence of a prosperous, peaceful and democratic nation.

All citizens should, therefore take part in striving for ensuring a brighter future for the country with a common vision for the wellbeing of our offspring.

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Snippets of Saya U Thein Naing's career and his treatise on Myanmar Sar

By Dr Myint Zan

National literary awards for the year 2019 were announced on 5 December 2020.

The second revised edition of Saya ဝုဏ်ထူး Goandoo U Thein Naing's မြန်မာစာပေ Myanmar Sar Hti Kar was published in the late 2019 or early 2020, and therefore it is ineligible to be considered for the 2019 national literary prize. Moreover, the prize rules are such that only the first edition of books published in a particular year is eligible for the national literary award for that year.

The first edition of U Thein Naing's very significant contribution to the development of Myanmar Sar specifically (but not limited to) linguistics concerning our official language was first published in the year 1969. After a hiatus of more than 50 years, the republication of U Thein Naing's treatise is to be enthusiastically, gratefully welcomed.

Maung Thein Naing's Very Rare Distinction in the Matriculation Myanmar Sar Paper of 1955

Snippets of Saya U Thein Naing's short biography including some of his literary works can be read in the book itself. This section is only a brief, personalized 'glimpse'.

Maung Thein Naing was born in a village in Monywa district on 27 March 1936. He passed the Matriculation examination around June 1955. Saya told me that when the results of the exams were announced, he was 'in hiding' since he was afraid or at least concerned to hear about the Matriculation results. Maung Thein Naing (as he then was) apparently did not have access to a radio, and in those days of over six and a half decades ago the announcement of the Matriculation exam results was broadcast on radio. Maung Thein Naing's own teacher, the late ဘုတလင်ခွန်လေး Budalin Chit Lay, heard the results on the radio at a teashop somewhere in the Monywa district.

When the announcer read (apparently in English based on what U Thein Naing told me over 60 years later around 2018), 'Roll No... Maung Thein Naing distinction in Burmese' Maung Thein Naing's teacher Budalin Chit Lay jumped in joy, overturned the tables, broke the cups and saucers,

so he had to reimburse the tea shop owner. Perhaps only a day or so later Maung Thein Naing heard of his success.

Saya U Thein Naing also told me that during the year he matriculated there was one Burmese paper but two English papers perhaps of two hours' duration each and he obtained a total of 143 or 144 marks out of 200 and thus missing the distinction (150 marks out of 200) in English as well by six or seven marks.

Maung Thein Naing obtained 82 or 83 marks out of 100 in the matriculation Burmese paper of 1955 and even if he was not the sole holder of a distinction in Burmese during that year he certainly achieved the highest mark. A few months ago around August 2020, U Thein Naing told me that he might be the first matriculate in the post-War matriculation exams starting from 1948 (till 1954) to obtain a distinction in Burmese! That statement, in my humble opinion, needs to be verified- i.e. if there are archives or records of such results going back to over 70 years and if records of the Matriculation results can be accessed.

Incidentally, a personage slightly older than Saya U Thein Naing stated in his (that 'personage') brief 'self-prepared' CV of 1971 that he passed 'third standard', but in the CV of 1985, the same person claimed that he passed (without stating the year that he did) the Matriculation exam!

Usually, in the Matric papers for Burmese, there were three essay questions, and candidates have to choose one of the given essays and write about it. The essay question that Maung Thein Naing chose was အချိန်ကို လေးစားအပ်ကြောင်း ('We ought to respect time').

In one of the reproductions, in the year 1970, in the typed script or cyclostyle of his Burmese distinction winning essay of 1955 U Thein Naing reproduced his essay and reminded the students and (in his own words that he had used 'unnecessary rhymes and sort of doggerels' တာရံနုဘေထင်၍ according to the style of the 1950s and that နောက်လူအတွက် သင်ခန်းစာဖြစ်သင့်သည် 'the previous generation's mistake should be taken note by subsequent ones'. One florid or arguably pompous expression Maung Thein Naing used was အချိန်ကို လေးစား၍ ယင်းအချိန်ကိုတို့

ဝုဏ်ထူး ဝုဏ်ထူး သာ ဝုဏ်ထူး ဝုဏ်ထူး ဝုဏ်ထူး ဝုဏ်ထူး (If you respect time but spend it on unwholesome deeds then until the water of Ganges river boils you would have to play hide and seek').

According to Saya U Thein Naing the late မြန်မာစာပေဝေဘဉ္ဇီးမောင် Burmese professor U E Maung (1905-1985) (not to be confused with တရားဝန်ကြီး ဦးမောင် the Supreme Court Justice E Maung, 1898-1977; both names are spelt exactly the same way in both Burmese and English) was the Professor of the Burmese Department at the University of Rangoon. In those days, generally, matriculation papers that are to be awarded distinctions had to be approved by the Professor or Head of the concerned Department. U Thein Naing told me (perhaps he heard through the grapevine?) a Lecturer in Burmese had to ကန်တော့ give obeisance to Professor U E Maung almost beseeching him to have a look at the paper of Maung Thein Naing so that he could see it was worthy of a distinction in Burmese. And Professor U E Maung did award Maung Thein Naing a distinction in Burmese.

Subsequent Career in Teaching Myanmar Sar

After his matriculation Maung Thein Naing had to postpone his University studies for about a year due to his financial situation. After graduation from the University of Mandalay with distinctions in Myanmar Sar each of the University years, Saya U Thein Naing taught Myanmar Sar at the Institute of Medicine, Mandalay and the University of Agriculture in Mandalay before resigning from government posts in 1970. Since then Saya U Thein Naing has his own Myanmar Sar classes in Mandalay and around 1976 in Rangoon.

Even during this Covid period, Saya continued to teach through Zoom or video conferencing until around mid-November 2020 when he fell and broke parts of his leg and hip and is (as of 26 December 2020) recuperating after an operation in a Yangon hospital.

'History of Burmese Literature' and 'A Commentary on Myanmar Sar'

In 1938 the book မြန်မာစာပေသမို



း Myanmar Sarpay Thamaing ('History of Burmese Literature' (the first few editions did have English sub-titles) (mainly) authored by the late Sayagyi ('revered teacher') U Pe Maung Tin (24 April 1888-22 March 1973) was published. I have had the chance to read, in its entirety, Sayagyi's U Pe Maung Tin's treatise twice while abroad: first in Los Angeles in the United States in December 1983 and the second time in Port Vila, Vanuatu (a country in the South Pacific) in August 2004.

Sayagyi U Pe Maung Tin's work can be said to be a study of Burmese literature starting from the Pagan (Bagan) period.

Saya U Thein Naing's book can be considered a historical, linguistic and philological study of the Burmese language going back (as stated in the first Chapter of Myanmar Sar Hti Kar) to ancient India of Gautama Buddha's time.

Snippets of Chapters in A Commentary on Myanmar Sar

The very first sentence of the first Chapter indeed of the book မောင်သိန်းနိုင် (မြန်မာစာ) Maung Thein Naing (Myanmar Sar) stated that (in my own translation) 'all paleographers unanimously accept that all the Myanmar alphabets originated and are derived solely from the Indian alphabets' (page 40) and the Chapter traces not only the genesis (so to speak) of the Myanmar script or alphabet but those of the Pyus (page 47), Rakhine (page 49). The lithic inscriptions that are reproduced of ancient Mon scripts, as well as part Pali scripts pages 63 to 64 (as well as in other pages), are of great value. Saya U Thein Naing

also acknowledged the sources from which the photos were reproduced.

The first and second Chapters (on the naming and usage of Myanmar alphabets) is quite technical and intricate (in the complimentary sense of the words). To most readers, including myself, as a dilettante, it can be quite heavy reading.

Parts of Chapter 3 မြန်မာစာပေဝေဘဉ္ဇီးမောင် (The system of writing correct spellings in Myanmar) and Chapter 12, မှားတတ်သော မြန်မာစာပေများ (Spelling and Structural Errors when writing in Myanmar) (pages 181 to 194) can be read with great benefit, especially by (but not limited to) journalists and writers.

The early Chapters are very technical, linguistic, philological studies regarding the Burmese script of old. The shorter Chapters mentioned above would be easier to understand. Other not-so-technical Chapters of possible interest to general readers would be Chapter 16, 'Mon words in the Myanmar language' (pages 225-34); Chapter 17, 'Shan words in the Myanmar language (pages 235-36); Chapter 19, Sanskrit words in the Myanmar language (pages 241-46); Chapter 20 Pali words in the Myanmar language (pages 347-78; Pali apparently is the most impactful 'other' language on Myanmar) and of course Chapter 21, English words in the Myanmar language (pages 279 to 288).

One of the Chapters which this writer is particularly interested is relatively quite short. It is Chapter 25 (pages 311-14) မြန်မာဝါကျမှန်တည်ဆောက်မှု regarding 'Construction of Correct Myanmar sentence structures'. From the Matriculation exams held in 1969 to (perhaps) about 1986, there were compulsory matriculation questions to rewrite infelicitous, awkward in fact ungrammatical Myanmar sentences.

I recall that 50 years ago in 1969 in his tuition classes Saya U Thein Naing gave excerpts of the examples from the writings of eminent Burmese writers such as Theikpan Maung Wa (U Sein Tin) (5 June 1899-6 June 1942) and (U) Thein Pe Myint (10 July 1914-15 January 1978) who made such (shall we say) awkward sentence structures. In his book, U Thein Naing does not reproduce the ex-

amples he gave 50 years ago in his classes which can be discerned in the writings of such literati.

Perhaps two examples excerpted from a speech or statement made by two personages in recent years can be given here.

One example is တစ်ခဲနက်မြန်မာ အသင်းကို အားပေးတဲ့အား ('thunderous support for the Myanmar football team') which could be rewritten as မြန်မာတောလုံးအသင်းကို တစ်ခဲနက်အားပေးတဲ့အား since the first phrase can indicate that the name of the Myanmar football team is ('thunderous support') the adverb ကြံယာဝိသေသန should precede the verb 'support' and rather than the noun Myanmar football team.

Another phrase used in a speech by another personage was ဒီမိုကရေစီဆိုတာ နိုင်ငံတို့ အစဉ်အမြဲ အုပ်ချုပ်ဖို့မဟုတ်ဘူး ('Democracy is not that only one organization governs the country forever or continuously') should be ဒီမိုကရေစီဆိုတာ နိုင်ငံတို့ အစဉ်အမြဲ အုပ်ချုပ်ဖို့မဟုတ်ဘူး. Here also the phrase အစဉ် အမြဲ (continuously) should qualify or precede the verb အုပ်ချုပ်ဖို့ (govern) not (country).

On 27 August 1962 then Chief Court Judge (as he then was) Dr Maung Maung (31 January 1925-2 July 1994) in the case of မောင်ထွန်းစိန် (အယုတ်စာရေးလို့နှင့် နိုင်ငံတော်အစိုးရ) (အယုတ်စာရေးခံ) Maung Tun Sein (appellant) and the State (respondent) written in Burmese 1962 Burma Law Reports, (Chief Court) page 337 at 338 states: In the phrase, အကြောင်းမဲ့ သက်သက်ထ၍ ခါးနှင့် ဦးခေါင်းနှင်လက်တို့ကို ခုတ်သတ် the phrase အကြောင်းမဲ့သက်သက် ('without cause') should qualify the phrase ခုတ်သတ် 'cutting' (verb) and not 'stand up' ထ၍ since 'without a cause' is not to qualify the standing up but the hitting of the nearby persons by the defendant-appellant without any cause or provocation. Hence a better sentence structure would be... ထ၍... ခါးနှင့် ဦးခေါင်းနှင်လက်တို့ကို အကြောင်းမဲ့သက်သက် ခုတ်သတ်

It might be 'protested' that in all the above three examples, the meaning or the intent of the speakers or writers were (and are) clear enough to most readers. Still, as stated above, over a million matriculation candidates for about 15 years were asked in their exam answers to correct infelicitous, ungrammatical Burmese sentence structures.

SEE PAGE-10

73rd Independence Day Anniversary (2021)

National Objectives

- 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.
- 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.
- To strive towards the amendment of the Constitution for the emergence of a genuine Democratic Federal Union.
- To build a modern developed Democratic Federal Union by nurturing Union spirit for the perpetuation of the Union.
- 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 Saturday 26 December 2020)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 27 December 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Taninthayi Region. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady regions and Kachin, Kayin, Mon states and generally fair in the remaining regions and states.

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT: Slight increase of night temperatures in Nay Pyi Taw, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady regions and Kayah, Kayin, Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27 December 2020: Fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27 December 2020: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27 December 2020: Fair weather.

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Snippets of Saya U Thein Naing's career and his treatise on Myanmar Sar

FROM PAGE-9 U Thein Naing also discussed with examples in a Chapter albeit only briefly. This writer has ventured to provide further examples above.

For those who write, on a regular basis, for newspapers, magazines and journals it is strongly recommended that if they do not have the time or the inclination to read any other Chapters, then they should at least read Chapter 11 မြန်မာစာလုံးပေါင်းရေးထုံး (Writing correct Myanmar

spelling) the written language) (pages 171-180) and Chapter 25 မြန်မာဝါကျမှန်တည်ဆောက်ရေး (On constructing correct sentence structures) (pages 311-14).

Best Wishes for Saya U Thein Naing

As stated above, as of 8 December 2020, Saya Goandoo U Thein Naing is recuperating in a Yangon hospital, after an operation.

This contribution is a 'note of appreciation' and only a glimpse



of Maung Thein Naing (Myanmar Sar)'s landmark work. I hope that Saya will fully recover. I also wish him well for his health and longevity.

The photo was taken in June 2018 of (left to right) Goandoo U Thein Naing (Burmese distinction, Matriculation exam 1955), Daw Khin Win Yee (Burmese distinction, Matriculation exam, 1974) and Dr Myint Zan (Burmese distinction, Matriculation exam, 1970)



DUBIOUS CLAIM

Turkmenistan president claims licorice can cure Covid



Well-known for his baffling botanical pronouncements, Turkmenistan's President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov claimed Saturday that licorice could cure coronavirus, the latest supposed miracle cure in a country still claiming zero cases. PHOTO: AFP

Well-known for his baffling botanical pronouncements, Turkmenistan's President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov claimed Saturday that licorice could cure coronavirus, the latest supposed miracle cure in a country still claiming zero cases.

"Scientists from every country are looking for effective cures, running various studies, and one of them could be licorice root," the leader of the authoritarian ex-Soviet country told ministers.

Without citing any scientific evidence, former dentist Berdymukhamedov claimed that "licorice stops the coronavirus from developing" and "even a weak concentration of a water-based extract has a neutralising effect."

Turkmenistan has "sufficient reserves" of licorice, he added, ordering the national academy of sciences to study the plant's supposed health effects.

Berdymukhamedov had already in March recommend-

ed that people "systematically" burn wild rue, a strong-smelling plant believed to have medicinal properties, to combat the coronavirus, sending prices skyrocketing.

The leader has a long history of moves aimed at boosting his country's fauna and flora.

While global health authorities have long recommended wearing masks, social distancing and regular hand-washing to slow the spread of the virus,

it took a July visit from a World Health Organization delegation for Turkmenistan to adopt the measures.

But the government still justifies mask-wearing as protection against "dust" and unspecified "pathogens", rather than coronavirus.

Non-food shops and restaurants have been closed since summer and bus and train timetables trimmed back.

SOURCE: AFP

DESPITE TRAVEL BAN

France confirms first case on its soil of British virus variant

FRANCE has confirmed the first case of a new coronavirus variant that recently emerged in Britain, its health ministry said.

The new strain of the virus, which experts fear is more contagious, has prompted more than 50 countries to impose travel restrictions on the UK.

The first French case -- found in a citizen living in Britain who arrived from London on December 19 -- is asymptomatic and self-isolating at home in Tours in central France, the ministry said late Friday.

They were tested in a hospital on December 21, and later found positive for the strain.

Health authorities have carried out contact-tracing for the health professionals taking care of the patient, the ministry said in a statement.

Any of their contacts that

were seen as vulnerable would similarly be isolated, it said.

In addition to this first case, several other positive samples that "may suggest the VOC 202012/01 variant are being sequenced" by the specialist laboratories of the national Pasteur Institute, the statement added.

Borders closed

On Monday, France's health minister Olivier Veran had admitted that it was possible the newly discovered strain was already in the country.

Italian authorities have detected the new strain in a patient in Rome, while the World Health Organization reported that nine cases have been detected in Denmark and one each in the Netherlands and Australia.

SOURCE: AFP

"EXTREMELY EXTRAORDINARY" SUCCESS

China hails its 'extraordinary' success curbing virus ahead of WHO probe

China's ruling Communist Party leaders have congratulated themselves on their "extremely extraordinary" success in handling the Covid-19 outbreak domestically, ahead of a World Health Organization probe into the disease's origins.

China faced a barrage of criticism at home and abroad over its initial handling of the virus, which emerged in the central city of Wuhan last December.

China's Politburo, the top decision-making body of the Communist Party, said late Friday that the party leadership "played a decisive role in leading ... China in prevailing over the rare risks and challenges this year."

"At the critical moment ... the Party Central Committee took a long-term view ... achieving an extremely extraordinary glory in this extremely unusual year," state news agency Xinhua reported, citing a statement issued after the two-day meeting.



A worker guides passengers to line up for security check in a subway station, March 9, 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA

China has largely curbed the spread of the virus, and was one of the only major economies to report growth this year. But it has been accused of covering up the initial outbreak, and so contributing to the virus' spread internationally.

At home, Beijing has attempted to stifle criticism by punishing at least eight whistleblowers. A Chinese citizen jour-

nalist who reported on Wuhan's outbreak, Zhang Zhan, has been detained since May and is expected to go on trial on Monday.

Zhang is a former lawyer who travelled to the city in February to report on the chaotic initial stages of the outbreak, through livestreams and critical essays widely shared on social media platforms banned in China.

SOURCE: AFP

BREXIT

Britain and EU release full text of post-Brexit trade deal



Prime Minister Boris Johnson of Britain and the European Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, in Brussels on Wednesday. In a subtle sign of progress, Ms. von der Leyen delivered her statement in English after speaking to Mr Johnson on Sunday. **PHOTO: AFP**

BRITAIN and the European Union on Saturday published the full text of the post-Brexit trade agreement aimed at governing their relationship when the UK definitively leaves the bloc's single market in just five days.

The document, which is more than 1,200 pages long, lays out detail on trade, law enforcement and dispute settlement among other arrangements after the UK leaves the single market and customs union on 31 December.

David Frost, the UK's chief negotiator, told reporters on Saturday the deal was "one of the biggest and broadest agreements ever covering not just trading goods, but services,

aviation, road transport, Social Security, health cooperation, law enforcement".

"This should be the beginning of a moment of national renewal for us," Frost said, reiterating that the agreement allowed Britain to leave the single market and the customs union without aligning to the EU and the European Court of Justice.

In the foreword to the copy of the text published by the UK government, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said the agreement had been "carefully judged to benefit everyone" and preserve "free trade for millions of people in the United Kingdom and across Europe".

"While we made our fair share of compromises during

the negotiations, we never wavered from the goal of restoring national sovereignty," he wrote.

Senior UK government minister Michael Gove wrote in *The Times* newspaper that the deal would allow Britain to bring "innovation and investment to parts of the country that have endured economic decline".

He added there were still "significant changes" to be prepared for by businesses in the short term.

To ratify the deal, Britain's parliament has been recalled to sit on December 30. A vote in favour is virtually assured after the UK's main opposition Labour Party said its MPs would back it.

SOURCE: AFP

A V-SHAPED RECOVERY

China to hold annual national congress in March next year: media

CHINA has decided to convene its annual national congress in Beijing on March 5 next year, state-run media reported Saturday, signaling its confidence that the novel coronavirus outbreak has already been brought under control at home.

The decision was adopted at the National People's Congress Standing Committee, China's top legislative body, according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

Lawmakers are expected to discuss a new five-year economic plan, covering between 2021 and 2025, and long-term goals through 2035, as the ruling party has pledged to uphold a "dual circulation" strategy to bolster domestic demand while trying to boost exports.

The long-term goals include commitments to making a breakthrough in the high-tech field and improving the modernization of supply chains for the coming 15 years, as the United States has been attempting to exclude China from the global trade network.

Every year, an annual ses-

session of China's parliament takes place for around 10 days from March 5 in Beijing, but it was postponed this year to May 22 in the wake of the spread of the virus, first detected in the central city of Wuhan late last year.

Although China usually sets its gross domestic product growth target at a parliamentary session, it abandoned doing so in 2020, with the epidemic significantly blurring the economic outlook.

Since the increase in new infections apparently peaked in late February, the world's second-biggest economy has shown signs of a V-shaped recovery as business activities have intensified and retail sales have been recuperating.

China's economy grew 4.9 percent from a year earlier during the July-September period, marking the second straight quarter of expansion, after shrinking 6.8 percent in the first three months of 2020, when the virus raged in the country.

SOURCE: KYODO



Since the increase in new infections apparently peaked in late February, the world's second-biggest economy has shown signs of a V-shaped recovery. Workers check a production line at Lianyungang Economic and Technological Development Area in Lianyungang, east China's Jiangsu Province, July 16, 2020. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

A FAMOUS "MOLE"

British Cold War double agent George Blake dies in Moscow



This file picture taken on June 28, 2001, shows George Blake, a former MI6 officer who worked as a double agent for the Soviet Union, walking in Moscow. **PHOTO: AFP**

GEORGE BLAKE, a famous "mole" in British intelligence who spied for the Soviet KGB during the 1950s before fleeing across the Iron Curtain, has died aged 98, Russian news agencies reported Saturday.

"The legendary intelligence officer George Blake has passed away today," the spokesman for Russia's SVR foreign intelligence service Sergei Ivanov told the TASS state news agency.

"He sincerely loved our country and admired our people's achievements during World War II," Ivanov added.

A former member of the Dutch resistance during World War II then an agent of

the British foreign intelligence service MI6, Blake offered his services to the Soviets in the 1950s after witnessing US bombings against the civilian population during the Korean War.

He provided the names of hundreds of MI6 agents to the KGB and revealed the existence of a secret tunnel in East Berlin that was used to spy on the Soviets.

In 1961, Blake was discovered as a double agent and was sentenced to a record 42 years of imprisonment in England.

Five years later, he broke out of prison using a rope ladder with the help of three cellmates.

SOURCE: AFP

SPACE STATION MODULE

China to launch core module of space station in first half of 2021

CHINA will launch the core module of the country's first space station in the first half of 2021, Zhou Jianping, chief designer of China's manned space project, said on Friday.

The space station is expected to be completed around 2022. All testing of its core module has been completed, and the Long March 5B rocket, a heavy-lift launch vehicle that made its maiden flight in May, is also in its final stages of testing, he said.

After the core module enters into orbit, China will launch the cargo spacecraft Tianzhou 2 and manned spacecraft Shenzhou XII. The astronaut crew will remain in space for several months before the launch of



Zhang Xiaoguang, an astronaut on the 2013 flight of Shenzhou X, unveiled the mission's reentry capsule at a ceremony in Shaoshan, Hunan province, at which the capsule was given to the provincial government for permanent exhibition at the Mao Zedong Memorial Museum. **PHOTO: CHINA NEWS SERVICE/XINHUA**

Tianzhou 3 and Shenzhou XIII, into space, Zhou added. "During this period, we will

carry out comprehensive verification of the new technologies of the space station, including astronaut spacewalks, robotic arms and energy technologies," he said.

When all the verification work is finished, the researchers will be able to begin construction work on key technological components, during which two more cargo spacecraft and two more manned ones will be sent into space.

"All this work will last for about two years, so the entire Chinese space station is expected to be completed around 2022. After that, it will enter operation and we will be able to use it to engage in space science research," he said, adding that

a lot of very important scientific results can be expected.

Zhou unveiled details of the space station during a ceremony in which the reentry capsule of China's manned spacecraft Shenzhou X was given to the Hunan provincial government. It will be permanently exhibited at the Mao Zedong Memorial Museum in Shaoshan, Chairman Mao's birthplace.

Zhou said exhibition of the Shenzhou X reentry capsule is meant to honor the forerunners of China's aerospace industry and integrate the spirit of space exploration into the revolutionary culture of Chairman Mao's hometown.

SOURCE: Xinhua

DELIBERATE ACT

Major blast hits Nashville after chilling bomb warning



A Christmas Day explosion caused massive damage on a street in downtown Nashville. **PHOTO: METRO NASHVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT/AFP**

A huge blast tore through a section of downtown Nashville early Friday, after police responding to reports of gunfire discovered a parked motorhome blaring a

warning that it carried a bomb. The powerful explosion shattered windows and ripped apart trees, wounding several people when it detonated at 6:30 am (1230

GMT) in a section of the southern US city that was largely deserted due the early hour and the Christmas Day holiday.

Police chief John Drake told reporters there were no confirmed fatalities, but authorities were examining tissue found at the blast site that they believe could be human remains. He added the city -- known as a hub for American country music -- had not received any threats, and a possible motive for the attack was unknown. The explosion could be felt miles away and damaged dozens of businesses -- scattering glass, debris and bricks as well as provoking the collapse of one building in an area with numerous bars, restaurants and shops.

SOURCE: AFP

"HEAT OF THE MOMENT"

Russian historian sentenced to 12.5 years for butchering lover

A Russian historian and Napoleon enthusiast was sentenced to 12-and-a-half-years in prison for murdering and dismembering his young lover last year.

The Saint Petersburg trial, which spurred activists to voice growing anger over domestic abuse in Russia, began in June af-

ter delays due to the coronavirus pandemic. Oleg Sokolov, 64, had admitted murdering 24-year-old Anastasia Yeshchenko but said he committed the crime against his former student and lover in the heat of the moment during an argument. He was arrested in November last year after he

was found drunk and carrying a backpack containing a woman's arms. Judge Yulia Maximenko sentenced Sokolov on Friday to "12 years and six months in a strict regime penal colony" on charges of murder and the illegal possession of firearms.

SOURCE: AFP

NEW YEAR

Fewer Japan travellers returning to hometowns for New Year holidays

JAPANESE airports and train stations on Saturday started seeing some lines of travellers heading to their hometowns or other places for the year-end and New Year holidays, but there was less crowding than usual because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Given that the government has decided to suspend its travel subsidy programme and requested people to stay at home as much as possible to prevent the further spread of the novel coronavirus, reservations for the festive season are at low levels, according to airlines and train operators.

Still, there were many travellers going through security checks at Tokyo's Haneda airport, with announcements reminding passengers to take precautions against the virus.

"I haven't seen this many people since the spread of the virus began, although it's still a fraction of what it was in other years," said a woman working at a souvenir shop in a departure hall. "We will spend some quiet time in my hometown," said Takako Kamata, a resident of Tsukuba near Tokyo, who was on her way to visit relatives in the southern Japan island prefecture of Okinawa. "Our kids are also excited because they could not go back there this summer."

The area for domestic flights at Kansai International Airport in Osaka Prefecture was filled with travelers wearing face masks, in stark contrast with its departure lobby for international flights, which remained very quiet.

SOURCE: Kyodo



Travellers walk through a departure hall in Tokyo's Haneda airport on Dec. 26, 2020. **PHOTO: KYODO**

STATE-OWNED
ENTERPRISES

China's central SOEs assets to near 69 trln yuan: regulator

CHINA'S centrally-administered state-owned enterprises (SOEs) will see their total assets reach nearly 69 trillion yuan (about 10.56 trillion U.S. dollars) at the end of 2020, representing an increase of 45 per cent compared with the end of 2015, the country's top state assets regulator has said.

During the 13th Five-Year-Plan (2015-2020) period, SOEs have competently coped with complex and grim situations while their economic efficiency steadily improved, with annualized operating revenue, net profits and labor productivity up 5.6 per cent, 8.9 per cent and 7.8 per cent, respectively, according to a recent meeting held by the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC).

SOURCE: Xinhua

SEVEN YEARS IN THE MAKING

European businesses hopeful of China-EU investment deal



A China-Europe freight train bound for Madrid of Spain, which carries two containers of medical supplies as well as other goods, departs the city of Yiwu, east China's Zhejiang Province, March 21, 2020. PHOTO: GONG XIANMING/XINHUA

EUROPEAN businesses in China are hopeful of an EU-China investment deal by end of the year, the head of the European Chamber of Commerce in China said on Saturday, although Beijing has declined to commit to a deadline.

The China-EU Comprehensive Agreement on Investment has been in the works for seven years, and is expected to pave the way for European businesses to invest in financial services, telecommunications, electric vehicles and other sectors that are gradually being opened up for foreign investment in China.

But the deal is facing opposition from some European members of parliament and the incoming US administration of President-elect Joe Biden, who say it does not address concerns about the use of forced labour by Chinese manufacturers, especially in the restive northwestern region of Xinjiang.

"The next few days will be interesting. My sense is that there is a serious push to get this past the finishing line," Joerg Wuttke, head of the European Chamber of Commerce in China, told AFP.

SOURCE: AFP

"STRONGER TRANSATLANTIC TIES"

US ready for post-Brexit ties with UK, EU

US President Donald Trump's outgoing administration congratulated Britain and the EU on their post-Brexit trade deal, saying Washington was ready to build "stronger transatlantic ties." "Congrats to the UK and the EU for concluding a historic Brexit deal," read a message from the national security officials at White House posted on Twitter.

"The US stands ready to work with all to build even stronger transatlantic relations in the years ahead." British Brexit supporters have long promised a new and favorable trade



EU chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier speaks at the European Parliament on December 18. PHOTO: AFP

deal with the United States to compensate their exit from the EU. And Trump, who supported Brexit and has good ties with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, seemed like their natural ally. But the Brit-

ish will have to deal with Democrat Joe Biden, who becomes US president on January 20 and is set on strengthening multilateral cooperation, especially with the European Union.

SOURCE: AFP

PRECARIOUS SITUATION

Britain's farmers face double uncertainty with Brexit

DAVID Exwood's glossy, chestnut-brown Sussex cattle are brought in during the winter months and, apart from the bellowing that comes from their barns, his 1,000 hectare farm is quiet. But while the inaction on his farm, near Horsham, southeast England, is typical of many in the colder months, it belies tensions across British agriculture as the sector braces for the New Year. "Brexit is just all about damage limitation, really," Exwood told AFP, just days away from Britain's departure from the

European Union single market and customs union on December 31. "It's damaging our reputation as a country, our economy.

Now I've just got to try and prevent it damaging my business." Since Britons voted to leave the EU in 2016, farmers have had to contend with four years of uncertainty. Would tariffs be placed on goods exported to the bloc? What changes might be made to farming subsidies previously decided by Brussels through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

SOURCE: AFP

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Corner of Mahabandoola Road & Thein Phyu Road,

Botahtaung Tsp, Yangon,

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Dated 27th December 2020

hh@kcyangon.com



Embassy of India, Yangon Tender Notice

Sealed tenders are invited from the clearing firms / agents for packing, clearing and forwarding personal effects and other consignments of Embassy. Details is available in the website <https://embassyofindiayangon.gov.in/> Tender - Tender (Embassy's) and CPP Portal. Last date is 20 January, 2021.

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Dated 27th December 2020

hh@kcyangon.com



MTE expects to earn K28.216 billion and USD76.3 million from selling sawn timber in 2020-2021FY



An official from Forestry Department (right) checks spraying the lumbers with disinfectants amid COVID-19 outbreak.
FILE PHOTO

By Maung Moe Lwin (Forestry)
TRANSLATED BY HTUT HTUT (TWANTAY)

and states, the civil servants and the people every year. But the less distribution of the sawn timber could not meet the demand from the people.

According to the data released by the Department of Population in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 1 April 2019, Myanmar had a population of 54,101,253 with 10,877,832 households—3,049,433 households in the urban areas and 7,828,399 households in the rural areas. According to the report on the census and number of houses carried out in 2014, type of house and number of households were shown against separate urban and rural areas. There were a total of 4,482,384 households of wooden houses—1,141,465 urban households and 3,340,919 rural households.

Sawn timber is actually needed to be used in the regional development works in the villages from regions and states, and in the construction of religious structures and houses for the people. Regarding, the chief ministers of regions and states, ministers and Hluttaw representatives held discussions with relevant Union ministers at the parliamentary sessions.

Approvals from chief ministers of regions and states should be sought to fulfil annual sawn timber requirement

Greater coordination is needed between admin-

MYANMA Timber Enterprise (MTE) is a State-owned business making money from home and abroad by manufacturing and selling value-added wood products. The MTE has to carry out the felling of the selected trees or girdled teak trees within limits following the instructions in the National Code of Forest Harvesting Practices in line with the Myanmar Selection System as the Forest Department prescribes annual allowable cut on the basis of its inventory of trees and its growing stock.

Annual extraction of teak and hardwood

The report by FAO issued on 21 July 2020 revealed that Myanmar forest area coverage in 2020 accounts for 42.19% of the overall area of the country. According to the current forest area coverage, the government is placing emphasis on the balanced approach towards conservation and development in a sustainable manner and highlighting environmental and biodiversity conservation. With a reduction in the extraction of wood, the permission for felling the trees was granted under a certain allowable percentage annually. Apart from the timber extracted from the natural forests, priority is placed on the extraction of timber from the age-old timber plantations. The MTE ceased the timber extraction for one year in 2016-2017 financial years and continued the timber extraction annually from 2017-2018FY to 2019-2020 reducing the amount of the annual allowable cut. There are 9,269 teak trees and 476,191 hardwood trees in the natural forest ever year.

Serial number	Year	Teak	Hardwood
A	2017-2018	15000	350000
B	2018-2019	15000	330000

C	2019-2020	10000	285000
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MTE planned to extract 15,000 tonnes from 30 years and above old teak plantations and granted permission to extract 5,400 tonnes in 2018-2019FY. Plans were underway to extract 10,000 tonnes of teak in 2019-2020FY, but permission was granted to extract 5,000 tonnes of teak from 30 years and above old teak plantations and 5,000 tonnes of teak from the natural forest.

Permission has been granted to extract 8,000 tonnes of teak and 200,000 tonnes of hardwood in 2020-2021FY. 3,639 teak plants accounting for 39.3% and 95,695 for 20.2% will be annually extracted from the natural forest of the Department of Forest. There was a plan to extract 8,000 tonnes of teak and permission was granted to extract 4,000 tonnes of teak from 30 years and above old teak plantations and 4,000 tonnes of teak from the natural forest.

The logs from the extraction of 8,000 tonnes of teak and 200,000 tonnes of hardwood will be sold through the open tender system with a competitive bidding in 2020-2021FY, and sawn timber and value-added wood products will also be sold with the hope of earning K28.216 billion kyats and USD76.3 million during the same financial year.

To ensure continuous extraction and use of timber and other forest products and to fulfil the timber necessary for the public.

To improve wood-based industries minimizing the wastes in the extraction of forest resources.

Annual sales of sawn timber

The local marketing and milling department under the control of the Myanmar Timber Enterprise manufactures and sells sawn timber of teak and other hardwood to the construction projects in the regions





Myat Zaw and Young Brothers Value-Added Wooden Products Production.

istrative bodies at the different levels of village, village-tract, township, district from regions and states and relevant departments in order to calculate how many tonnes of timber are required for a year and then approvals from chief ministers of regions and states should be sought to fulfill annual sawn timber requirement. If Union Territory and 15 regions and states need about 50,000 tonnes of sawn timber, the MTE will mill 100,000 logs and then distribute them wherever necessary.

The seizure of illegal timber and forest products from October to June in 2019-2020FY of Forest Department from regions and states carried in Mirror daily issued in August 2020 is to the following.

The total seizure included 8,294 tonnes of teak, 6,024 tonnes of hardwood, and 17,143 tonnes of other types of timber totalling 31,461 tonnes. The seizure amount of illegal timber and forest products amounted to 31,461 tonnes within nine months. A total of 48,681 tonnes of teak, hardwood and other types of timber were seized in 2017-2018FY. The most seizure was from Kachin state, Sagaing region, Bago region and Shan State (South).

The root cause of illegal extraction of timber was related to regional socio-economic status and those who were engaged in illegal trade. With regard to the regional socio-economic situation, local people don't have access to the official use of timber, firewood and charcoal for livelihood purpose and it is one of the root causes of illegal extraction of timber. Less investment

and much profit are also one of the root causes of the occurrence of illegal extraction of timber.

Timber in much demand

In connection with the situation of those who were involved in the illegal trade, illegal extraction of timber occurred as there was much demand from home and neighbouring countries.

The Forest Department, under the control of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation is in the process of implementing environmental conservation and forest functions upholding 11 objectives. The No 5 objective states that efforts must be made to ensure sustainable use and extraction of timber and other forest products and to sell timber enough for the public to build houses. Among the objectives laid down by the MTE, the No 2 objective also states that illegal extraction of timber will be able to be reduced if the MTE is able to sell the timber enough for the citizens of the country to build houses.

References:

- (1) Website of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation: www.mon-erc.gov.mm
- (2) Website of Myanma Timber Enterprise: www.myanmatimber.com.mm
- (3) 70th-anniversary commemorative magazine of Myanma Timber Enterprise



OBITUARY

R. Purushotham Rao @ U Khin Mg Win(B.Sc), 68 years, No.282 , 8th floor, Merchant Street. Son of Late Mr R.Elliah (Retd ,Suptd, of Myanmar Customs)and Late. R. Lakshmi Amma, beloved son – in –law of Late Mr D.S.Rajan Pillai and Mrs Ambika Devi, beloved husband of Pushpa Rani (H.R. Manager Pioneer Eye Care), father of Rathana kumar, Madhuri (Kyay O Kyee Petroleum Products Co.LTD),and Sudhesh Kumar, younger brother of R.Narayan Rao @U Khin Mg+ (R. Dhamayanthi), R. Subhadra, R. Rajeswari +D. Prakash and elder brother of (Chandra Shekar) + Indra Devi Passed away peacefully to his heavenly home on 25th Dec 2020 at (12:15)am. The Funeral cottage will leave to Yay way Hindu Cemetery for cremation.

Please accept this is the only intimation.

Regret to Thank individually.

Bereaved Family.

Tetra Pak promotes importance of food safety and good nutrition for children in Myanmar

TETRA Pak, a processing and packaging solutions company, has shared recently its commitment to raise awareness on the importance of adequate nutrition and food safety for Myanmar children, specially amid COVID-19 pandemic. The company has kicked off an online educational campaign, in partnership with the renowned nutritionist Dr Win Win Myint, to help Myanmar parents unleash their children's full potential in life through a healthy diet with milk playing an important role. Through an online channel, parents can interact with the nutritionist and learn about topics concerning food safety and nutrition at their fingertips. In Myanmar, according to the World Food Programme (WFP), nearly one third of children under the age of five suffer from chronic malnutrition (stunting) due to poor access to safe food and clean water, among the main reasons. Bacteria-free and nutritious food are key to children's physical and cognitive development and help boost their immune system against diseases. By participating in this campaign, Myanmar parents are able to raise their questions to Dr Win Win Myint on the Tetra Pak Facebook page. She will address children's nutrition and food safety topics through regular educational videos and other engaging online content. Enabled by the UHT (Ultra High Temperature) technology, milk products in Tetra Pak cartons are safe and nutritious choice for Myanmar children. Processed with UHT technology and packed in Tetra Pak cartons, milk products are free of harmful bacteria. Ultra-high-temperature(UHT) pasteurisation involves heating milk or other contents to around 135 degree as brief as two to four seconds, It removes bacteria and retains all the nutrition without the need for preservatives, making them safe and full of flavour. With no need for refrigeration until opened and having a long shelf life, these UHT milk products are convenient for parents to store in their homes easily. "At a time when food safety and hygiene have become a pressing concern amid COVID-19 pandemic especially in developing countries, Tetra Pak aseptic cartons and UHT technology ensure that milk products are safe and free of harmful bacteria. As they have been sterilized at high temperature during a short treatment time, they retain all the goodness and full nutrients of milk products, essential in any children's diet. Milk consumption in Myanmar is still low and with this online campaign we aim to raise awareness about the benefits of UHT milk products packed.— GNLM

Youth player Nay Moe Naing joins Hantharwady United

IN preparation for the new 2021 Myanmar National League football season, Hantharwady United has agreed on a deal to sign former Magway FC and Myanmar U-23 player Nay Moe Naing, according to the team statement.

Midfielder Nay Moe Naing represented Mon State in the Under-20 State and Divisional Football Tournament in 2014 and then joined Ayeyawady United Youth Team in 2015.

In 2017, he was selected as a professional player in the senior team of the Ayeyawady United, and moved to Magway FC in 2019 till 2020 season of the Myanmar National League.

The youth player also played for Myanmar U-23 national football team to help secure the third prize (bronze medal) in the men's football tourney of the 2019 SEA Games in the Philippines.

Hantharwady United also recently signed Southern Myanmar FC's goalkeeper Pyae Phyto Aung and officials also planned to sign another Myanmar U-23 player Ye Yint Aung, the team has stated.

Pyae Phyto Aung has played for the Southern Myanmar FC since the start of the Professional League in 2009 and has been selected for the youth and Myanmar national teams.

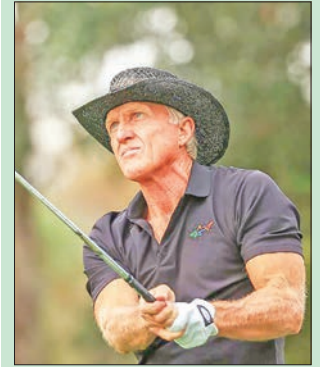
Ye Yint Aung has played in junior Myanmar national teams and has also been a member of the Myanmar U-23 team that won the bronze medal at the 2019 Philippines SEA Games.

Hantharwady United will compete in domestic competitions as well as AFC Cup in the 2021 season, and the team is building stronger with the talented players.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)



Myanmar U-23 player Nay Moe Naing who will play for Hantharwady United in the 2021 season of Myanmar National League. PHOTO: MNL

Golf: Australian great Greg Norman, 65, hospitalized with Covid-19



Greg Norman said he is quarantining in his Jupiter, Florida, home. PHOTO: AFP

MIAMI—Australian golf champion Greg Norman said Friday (Dec 25) he has been hospitalized with Covid-19 symptoms, posting an Instagram photo of himself in a hospital bed.

The 65-year-old Aussie, a former world No. 1 who won the 1986 and 1983 British Opens, had said Thursday he was suffering from virus symptoms despite testing negative on Tuesday and quarantining in his Jupiter, Florida, home.

On Christmas, Norman posted a photo of himself with medical equipment in the background, an NFL Pittsburgh Steelers mask over his lower face and the caption: "This sums it all up. My Christmas Day."

He posted that he wanted to "get this (virus) behind us never to experience it again."

Norman had said he was experiencing a mild fever, cough, aches and pains and a headache.

He competed in last week's PNC Championship at Orlando with his son Greg Jr., finishing in a share of ninth.—AFP ■

Barca loom for expected new PSG coach Pochettino



Christian Eriksen worked under Mauricio Pochettino for more than five years at Spurs. PHOTO: AFP/DANIEL LEAL-OLIVAS

PARIS—Mauricio Pochettino is widely reported to be Thomas Tuchel's successor as Paris Saint-Germain coach and the number one item on the Argentine's in-tray will be February's

date with Barcelona.

Tuchel was reportedly given his marching orders on Thursday, four months after guiding the Qatari-backed club to their first ever Champions League

final, August's 1-0 defeat to Bayern Munich. The German, whose dismissal has yet to be officially confirmed by the club, leaves the Parc des Princes having secured a last 16 Champions League clash with Barca and PSG sitting third in Ligue 1, a point shy of leaders Lyon. Pochettino's opening match in charge will be January 6's trip to Saint-Etienne on Ligue 1's resumption after the winter break.

Then, on February 16, the 48-year-old has his first massive test against his compatriot Lionel Messi's Catalans, with the return leg on March 6. Pochettino was let go after five and a half years at Spurs in the aftermath of leading the north London side to their first ever appearance in a

Champions League final against Liverpool in 2019.

Although he has yet to win any silverware the former PSG defender's stock is high in managerial circles. The Parisians will be keen to complete his signing and avoid missing their man who has been linked to the likes of Real Madrid, Manchester United and Barca in recent months.

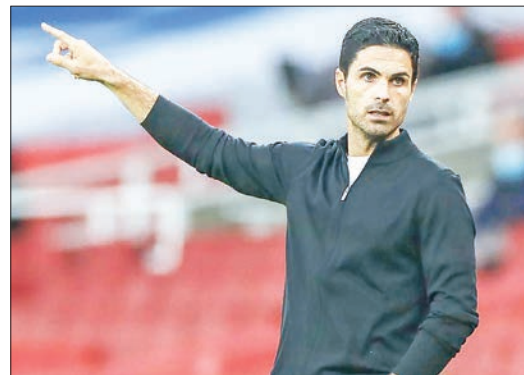
Pochettino is due to team up with Neymar, Kylian Mbappe and other well-heeled company at PSG's first post-Christmas training session on January 3.

While the club refrained from making any public comment about the abrupt change in personnel, France World Cup winner Mbappe took to Instagram to note Tuchel's departure.—AFP ■

Beating Chelsea can prove as "best medicine", says Arteta

LONDON—Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta has said that beating Chelsea on Boxing Day can prove as the best medicine for his side to get out of the form slump. Arteta has been under a lot of pressure in recent times as Arsenal has slipped to the 15th spot in the Premier League standings. The Gunners also crashed out of the Carabao Cup earlier this week after suffering a 4-1 against Manchester City. "The best medicine, better than anything that can happen outside of our facilities, is to win against Chelsea. I

think the next seven to eight days are going to be crucial to see where we are going to be heading in the Premier League," Goal.com quoted Arteta as saying. Arsenal is just four points above the relegation zone and a few more losses will mean the Gunners will be staring down the barrel and being relegated would be a realistic chance. The Gunners are without a win in seven top-flight matches, and the side has picked up just two points since beating Manchester United on November 1.—ANI ■



Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta. PHOTO: AFP