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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VII, No. 258, 1st Waning of Nadaw 1382 ME

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

Wednesday, 30 December 2020

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Announcement of National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19

15th Waxing of Nadaw, 1382 ME
(29 December 2020)

IT is announced that public statements, orders, notifications, and directives (excluding eased restrictions) of the Union-level organizations and the Union ministries effective until 31 December 2020 for protection, control and prevention of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) will be extended to 31 January 2021 as it is required to continue containment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Yangon-Magway-Sittway inland flights to resume in mid-January

YANGON-Magway-Sittway inland flights halted for 90 days in the second wave of COVID-19 are scheduled to resume in mid-January 2021, according to the Myanmar National Airlines (MNA) Magway Agent.

The COVID-19 rules and regulations are also set up for the arrival and departure flight passengers in the Magway Region.

Those passengers who will visit Magway Region from the declared stay-at-home townships need to be home quarantined for seven days. The flight passengers from Magway Region need to undergo COVID-19 detection at COVID testing camp near Magyikan village, Magway town from 8 am to 12 pm two days ahead of travel schedules. Those who get 36-hour lasting COVID-19 negative certificates will be allowed to board the plane.

“We have submitted to the regional government regarding the tour. The regional government also allowed it after consultation with the Public Health Department.



A Myanmar National Airlines (MNA) aircraft is seen at the Magway airport. PHOTO: ZAYYATU (MAGWAY)

ment. We have already reported on the condition for MNA head office to take necessary action. We will check the arrival and departure passengers under the rules and regulations,” said U San

Htwe, an MNA Magway Agent.

Those passengers, who will board the plane with a go-and-show system in an urgent situation, need to arrive at the airport three hours ahead to have the

COVID-19 test using RDT. Those passengers who are COVID negative will be allowed to board the plane. For MNA to contact them in case, the passengers need to fill up the phone number and address

accurately in immigration arrival form.

“There will be no charges to undergo COVID-19 test for the government staff. For regular flight passengers, they need to pay K10,000 for an RDT test. The passengers reaching the Magway Region are required to be home quarantined. Those who are sick in the home quarantine period need to check a swab test in the National Health Laboratory (NHL), and it will cost about K50,000 per test. There are also some restrictions for foreigners and some NGOs/INGOs staff,” he elaborated.

Earlier, the flight ran three days a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Now, we haven't got any instructions for the flight schedules yet. The regular Yangon-Magway round trips carry about 20 passengers while Magway-An-Sittway trips carry about 30 passengers on board, according to the MNA Magway Agent.—Zayyatu (Magway)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

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View camps for cloud sea are under preparation in Nawngkhio Township in Shan State . PHOTO: MNA

Cloud Sea night camps prepared for services in Nawngkhio

CLOUD Sea night camps in Nawngkhio, Shan State are under preparation to be opened accordance with the health-care guidelines after lifting restrictions during COVID-19 period.

“Only people with health certificates from near Nawngkhio Township can visit there in accordance with the health-care guidelines. Visitors from Mandalay Region can only be allowed to stay when they can pass the medical checkpoints after they have permission to travel, and the tents are 20 feet

apart from each other for the permission period to open,” said Ma Yu Nandar Hmine, the owner of Cloudy Villa.

She added that each tent could accommodate 4, 8 to 12 people and has an ensuite bathroom. There are also 5 villas for 12 people, and 5 villas for 4 people. The old cars have been redesigned to be used as villas to stay and the guests will be served with local foods for breakfast.—Myat Su Mon

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Myanmar relief flight brings 87 citizens back home from abroad

THE 37th relief flight of Myanmar Airways International, organized by the Myanmar Embassy in Seoul, landed at Yangon International Airport with 87 citizens yesterday evening.

The group of returnees included 1 from Canada, 2 from Cambodia, 1 from France, 1 from Germany, 6 from South Africa, 3 from Switzerland, 13 from the United States, and 60 from the Republic of Korea.

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

To bring back the Myanmar seamen and citizens in accordance with the instructions from National-Level Central Committee on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs is working together with the relevant ministries, Myanmar embassies from respective countries and shipping companies.—MNA

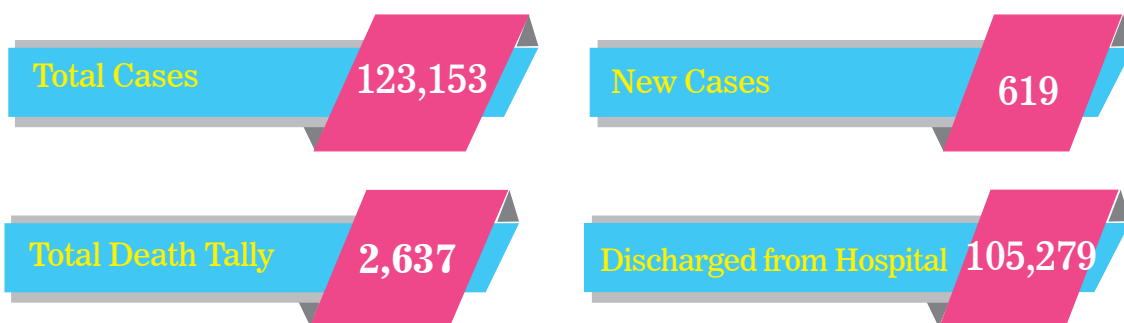
Myanmar returnees are queuing at immigration counter in Yangon International Airport on 29 December. PHOTO: MNA



619 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 29 December, total figure rises to 123,153

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 123,153 after 619 new cases were reported on 29 December according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 123,153 confirmed cases, 2,637 died, 105,279 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 29 December 2020



Daily death toll until 8 pm 29-12-2020



Ministry of Health and Sports

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

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)

MoLIP releases core reports of 2019 Interim Census



Union Minister U Thein Swe makes a speech at the launching ceremony of core reports of the 2019 Interim Census on 29 December. PHOTO: MNA

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population released its core reports of the 2019 Interim Census at its headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Union Minister U Thein Swe, in his capacity of Chairper-

son of the census taking central committee, Deputy Minister U Myint Kyaing, the Permanent Secretary and Directors-General attended the ceremony in line with COVID-19 related guidelines.

UNFPA Representative

for Myanmar Mr Ramanathan Balakrishnan and other officials from UN organizations, NGOs, and INGOs also participated in the ceremony via videoconferencing.

During the ceremony, the Union Minister said that the pre-

liminary results were announced on 31 August 2020 after the interim census, and it was conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Demographic and socio-economic data were included in 110 questions in taking the census, and it was aimed at supporting the National Indicator Framework to monitor and assess progress in implementing the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan.

In the Interim Census, drinking water quality surveys were widely carried out for the first time in Myanmar to collect reliable statistics in implementing development works of the country. The central committee tried to improve the quality of the 2019 Interim Census because solid statistical data are needed in drafting national development

policies and carrying out development projects.

He said that the Interim Census covers only the population of normal households; it does not cover the homeless population.

During the ceremony, UNFPA Representative Mr Ramanathan Balakrishnan, via Zoom application, explained their support for the Interim Census.

The Interim Census covered 132,092 households, and a total of 548,553 people were surveyed. Drinking water quality surveys were also conducted in 19,077 households. Following the release of the core reports, detailed research papers and policy recommendations will be further developed.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

Local NGO launches online training to promote community-based ecotourism

THE Fauna & Flora International - Myanmar Programme launched the Zoom Online Training starting from 7 December to promote community-based ecotourism in Indawgyi Lake and nearby areas.

“The online training is conducted under three programmes,” said U Zaw Min Tun, the Field Coordinator from FFI.

A total of 12 participants

from the members of the community-based tourism from Lone San village, Lae Pone Lay village and Tone San Ka village, the surrounding villages of Indawgyi Town, and Inn lover social development and ecotourism group attended the first two programmes.

“The training was given in Nant Mon and Indawgyi. The first programme is only in theory.

In the second programme, the people were divided into three groups to develop the tour itinerary, the duration of the tour, expenses and biodiversity near Sin Khaung mountain, Shwe Myitzu pagoda and Lwe Mon, and the third programme is practical,” he added.—Kyaw Kyaw Htwe (IPRD)

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)



A training course of FFI- Myanmar Programme is in progress. PHOTO: KYAW KYAW HTWE (IPRD)

Ministries discuss preparations for school reopening plans



Discussion between Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health and Sports is in progress to prepare for school reopening plans depending on the situation of COVID-19 outbreak. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Sports held a coordination meeting on preparations for reopening schools depending on the COVID-19 situation yesterday.

Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe, the deputy minister, the permanent secretary, directors-general, deputy directors-general, directors and other officials attended the meeting.

Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi said that the 2020 matriculation examination was successfully held in March before the country reported its first case of COVID-19 and the first semester exams of all universities were postponed in accordance with the decision of education officials when the first

case occurred on 23 March 2020.

He also talked about the announcement of matriculation exam results in July as the answer papers were checked in May and June in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Health and Sports and preparations for announcing the exam marks and university application processes.

He also said the Ministry of Education established Myanmar Digital Education Platform (MDEP) and arranged 5-day online and 5-day classroom learning system for all teachers using MDEP for new curriculums of Grade-4, 7 and 10 with the permission of National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19. He also talked about online courses

for university level.

He then added a total of 6,526 high schools out of 7,173 schools were reopened in accordance with the health guidelines from 21 July to 27 August based on the 80 facts in the assessment of Ministry of Union Government Office, Ministry of Health and Sports, Ministry of Education, parents and ethnic people. All the schools were closed on 28 August due to the high local transmission rate.

He also discussed broadcasting of school curriculums of primary schools through TV channels such as Myanmar Education Channel and MRTV including FM Radio twice a day, arrangements to download the school curriculums and digital lessons on MDEP, technical and vocational training and management system

for teachers of higher education and training programmes for new syllabus of Grade 6, 9 and 11.

He then highlighted the cooperation work for distribution of university application forms for the students who passed the 2020 matriculation examination and the application processes for 2021 matriculation exam.

There are 70 government technical high schools, and the Department of Technical and Vocational Education and Training launched Learning Management System (LMS) via MDEP on 17 December. He also discussed exam results from universities of distance education, arrangements for admission and teaching aids, trainings for university teachers, compiling of digital lessons, online computer courses, online law courses, online business management courses, online English classes and working for the establishment of National Open University.

He also stressed the cooperation works between the Ministry of Education and other officials of relevant departments and ethnic people in conducting assessment on 50,529 primary, middle and high schools (including monastic and private schools), 70 GTHS, 25 Education Degree Colleges, 2 PPTT and Education University, 15 universities including the University of Computer Sciences, Technological Universities and the University of Yangon, Arts

and Science Universities and Distance Universities to be ready to reopen. Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe then said the reopening of schools and universities depends on the obeying of COVID-19 health rules and the people should not be careless although the infection rate declines in the country. All the parents must follow the COVID-19 health rules to reopen the schools across the nation for the children and youths not to lose their rights to learn.

The ministry will conduct an assessment to reopen the schools step by step depending on the infection rate and population with the permission of COVID-19 committee. He also discussed the spread of SARS-CoV-2 in the UK and European countries, lab tests of Medical Research Department of Mandalay Region, duty assignment for a checklist when the schools are reopened and further support of the ministry in the future.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe and Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi concluded the meeting by saying the facts such as efforts to be made to be "COVID-19 free schools", decisions to be made timely depending on the situation rather than procedure, reforms based on the latest findings and cooperation works between the two ministries to make preparations to get ready for school reopening.—MNA (Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

MoSWRR discusses regular food assistance to IDPs in Rakhine State

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement organized a virtual meeting to provide food aid to internally displaced persons in Rakhine State on 28 December. Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye and his deputy minister made discussions with Rakhine State Security and Border Affairs Minister, the Permanent Secretary, the Director-General and other officials of Rakhine State government.

At the meeting, the Union Minister talked about the current ration of rice for the IDPs in a monthly basis and providing relief assistance transparently.

Rakhine State Security and Border Affairs Minister briefed the efforts of state government to avoid food shortage problems for IDPs, difficulties in collecting list of IDPs due to some security concerns, misunderstanding among the IDPs who were not present when the rice was distributed at

the temporary shelters, cooperation work with relevant departments and media expressions.

Officials at the meeting also discussed the facts including cooperation work with regional organizations in collecting data of IDPs, response to media reports by using accurate information, report on the lists of IDPs by the heads of camps and village administrators, support of international organizations and contracts with Rakhine State Chambers of Commerce and Industry to purchase quality rice. The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has been providing food aids and other assistance to IDPs in Rakhine State in cooperation with the state government since December 2018. The ministry has spent K6 billion, including K5.739 billion for rice and over K245 million for other relief items until December 2020.—MNA (Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye holds talks with local authorities on providing relief foods to people at IDP camps in Rakhine State. **PHOTO: MNA**



The infection could occur also after 90 days

Some people have the wrong notion that those who have recovered from this disease will not be infected again. Let me remind you that it is not like that. I understand that experts have confirmed that the disease will not infect almost entirely to the former cases again in 90 days or around three months. However, the infection could occur also after 90 days. So, it should not be considered that they will not be at risk to the infection again. Repeated infection would have an impact on the basic health conditions and impose a burden on the family and the country.

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

Basic education, TVET teachers discuss NESP (2021-2030)

UNION Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi held an online meeting with teachers from the basic education, and the technological and vocational education sectors for drafting the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) (2021-2030) yesterday morning.

The meeting was also joined by the Deputy Minister, the Permanent Secretary, Directors-General, Deputy Directors-General, teachers and relevant officials.

During the meeting, the Union Minister said that the conventional education system is based on rote learning and focuses only on exam scores. He continued that the "New Normal Education System", with the advancement of technology, focusses on various technologies including artificial intelligence.

He said that the implementation period of NESP 2 (2021-2030) had been set to be 10 years in order to be in line with the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP), the 17 goals of the Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs (2016-2030), and OECD's Future of Education and Skills 2030.

He pointed out that universities and schools need to cooperate with societies, factories and businesses. He added that the curriculum designs need to focus on 21st-century knowledge and skills.

He said that there should be no discrimination in the implementation of NESP (2016-2021). The education system should encourage students to have humanitarian spirit, to perform tasks responsibly and to innovate.

He stressed that appointments of teachers and promotion procedures are based on the Teacher Competency Standards Framework, Career Pathways and Qualification Sheet for ensuring equal opportunities for every teacher.

He said that infrastructures; including staff housing, technological infrastructures and buildings; must be enhanced in schools in ethnic areas.

Speaking on the progress in primary learning outcomes in Myanmar, he said that Myanmar had ranked third out of six Southeast Asian nations in the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Matrix (SEA-PLM).

The Union Minister also

highlighted the importance of the English language and ICT not only for students but also for teachers.

The Union Minister also reiterated UNESCO's "Nine ideas for public action": (1) Commit to strengthening education as a common good (2) Expand the definition of the right to education so that it addresses the importance of connectivity and access to knowledge and infor-

mation (3) Value the teaching profession and teacher collaboration (4) Promote students, youth and children's participation and rights (5) Protect the social spaces provided by schools as we transform education (6) Make free and open source technologies available to teachers and students (7) Ensure scientific literacy within the curriculum (8) Protect domestic and international financing of public

education and (9) Advance global solidarity to end current levels of inequality. He urged all stakeholders to work together for the reform of education effectively. The Permanent Secretary, the Director-General of the Department of Basic Education, and other participants also made explanations, discussions and suggestions in the meeting. —MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)



Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi holds a virtual meeting with teachers from basic education and the technological and vocational education sectors on 29 December. PHOTO: MNA

China gives COVID vaccines to over 40 Myanmar truckers in Ruili

By Nyein Nyein

MORE than 40 Myanmar truck drivers, who are practising driver substitution system in border trade, have been injected coronavirus vaccines by China, said U Min Thein, vice-chair of Muse rice wholesale centre.

"Chinese government gave COVID-19 vaccinations in Ruili on 28 December 2020, covering

41 Myanmar truckers. They are preparing to administer the second dose of coronavirus vaccines in three weeks later," he added.

Last 28 December, 18 drivers from Muse-Kyalgaung border checkpoint and 23 from Kyinsankyawt border are injected the first vaccine dose.

Those truckers under driver substitution system will receive

the second dose of coronavirus vaccines after 21 days.

"There are about 50 truck drivers under this substitution system between Myanmar and China border. However, six of 29 are under intoxication and did not receive vaccines at Kyinsankyawt crossing, he said.

China's Ministry of Health notified that vaccinations do not

include persons with underlying conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, severe heart conditions, alcohol addiction, regular drug use.

In a bid to contain the spread of coronavirus in the border, China banned border crossing, and shortly after that, about 50 drivers are allowed to pass the border. Those drivers are, however, test-

ed every three days. As a result of this, China included them in the vaccination programme. U Min Thein affirmed that those 41 drivers are recorded as the first Myanmar nationals to receive coronavirus vaccines.

The vaccines given to drivers are developed by China, traders said. *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

“People are the key”

MoHT holds meeting on tourism recovery roadmap

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism held a videoconference with the Myanmar Tourism Federation and its 11 associate members yesterday.

Union Minister U Ohn Maung made discussions at the virtual meeting which was participated by Deputy Minister U Tin Latt, the directors-general, officials, chairpersons and secretaries of 11 associate members.

At the meeting, the Union Minister said that the Myanmar Tourism Strategic Recovery Roadmap (MTSRR) 2021-2025 will be announced in the next meeting of the National Tourism Development Central Committee.

The roadmap was jointly proposed by the UN World Tourism Organization and the Lux Dev, the Luxembourg Aid and Development Agency, and it has been approved by the Union Government.

The Union Minister also quoted the passage from the speech of State Counsellor at the 1/2020 meeting of National Tourism Development Central

Committee to make preparations and give training in COVID Safe Service.

He added that the MoHT would issue the Enchanting Myanmar Health and Safety Protocol (HSP) in line with the directives of Ministry of Health and Sports and the rules of international tourism organizations such as UNWTO and the WTTC. The protocol has also been approved by the Union Government.

In coordination with the Ministry of Health and Sports, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population and the National Skills Standards Authority Myanmar, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism is conducting the COVID-19 Safe Service Master Trainer Course and the Inspector Training for Inspection course in Yangon and Mandalay.

The ministry will also allow the ‘Day Trip Flight to Ngapali’, the ‘Day Trip Flight to Bagan’ and the ‘Caravan Tour’ in line with the rules and directives of MoHS after discussions with the relevant ministries, local governments and tourism organizations,



MoHT holds virtual discussions on the tourism recovery roadmap. PHOTO: MNA

while searching new sites near Nay Pyi Taw for the rural tourism sector and other destinations under the Heritage & Cultural Tourism, the Nature-Based & Eco-Tourism, the Agriculture & Farming Tourism, the Coastal Inland Water Tourism, the River & Rail Tourism, the Adventure & Sports Tourism, the Gastronomy

Tourism, the Caravan Tourism, and the Urban & MICE Tourism.

The chairpersons and secretaries of MTF and 11 associate members reported on their cooperation in COVID-19 prevention Yellow Campaign, implementation of a floating market in Inlay area, the ongoing and future plans for Non-Landing Sightsee-

ing Flight and the River Cruise, the Agriculture & Farming Tourism and making video clips for Myanmar famous foods and loan programmes in this tourism industry.

The senior officials of MoHT also discussed the works of respective departments.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

WCS Myanmar Programme jointly conducts wild elephant conservation with Forest Department in Rakhine State



Nature and Wildlife Conservation Division of Forest Department conducted conservation measures in Thandwe and Gwa Townships of Thandwe District by cooperating with the officials of Rakhine Yoma Elephant Sanctuary in 2014. PHOTO: KO HTEIN (KPD)

THE Forest Department and Wildlife Conservation Society Myanmar Programme signed 6 MoUs since 1993 to enhance measures to conserve wild elephants in Rakhine State.

Nature and Wildlife Conser-

vation Division of Forest Department conducted conservation measures in Thandwe and Gwa Townships of Thandwe District by cooperating with the officials of Rakhine Yoma Elephant Sanctuary in 2014, according to U Htet

Arkar Aung, head of Wildlife Conservation Society Myanmar Programme.

The WCS-Myanmar provides technical and financial assistance and assigns the local youths who are interested in

conservation works as guards at elephant outposts to protect wild elephants.

The WCS-Myanmar also conducts public awareness programmes or provides materials to scare away the wild elephants for the people living in vicinity areas of Rakhine Yoma elephant camp with the funds of EU Partners Against Wildlife Crime by cooperating with Rakhine Coastal

Conservation Association (RCA).

It helps the villagers to inform the officials about illegal wildlife trade and wild elephant poaching in Rakhine Yoma.

It also supports the activities to implement the Myanmar Elephant Conservation Action Plan (2018-2027) which was drafted in 2018.—Ko Htein (KPD).

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



The WCS-Myanmar Programme conducts public awareness programmes and provides materials to scare away the wild elephants from the people living in vicinity areas of Rakhine Yoma elephant camp.

PHOTO: KO HTEIN (KPD)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Press Release 45/2020
14th Waxing of Nadaw 1382 ME
(28 December 2020)

Additional statistical bulletin on drug seizures, acting on information

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

Sr	Nature of report	Detail on seizure and legal action taken
1.	Information received of people in ward (4), Myawady Township, Kayin State, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 20 December 2020, police arrested Zaw Zaw Htike, 37, son of U Ohn Myint, who lives in ward (4) Myawady Township, on Maharsi road together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Myawady) MaYa (Pa) 175/2020 under the Section 19 (a) and 20 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Similarly, on 25 December, police arrested Khine Htoo (a) Nakhon Kwae, 32, son of U Hla Thein together with WY stimulant tablets on the same road. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Myawady) MaYa (Pa) 176/2020 under the Section 19 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
2	Information received of Aung Moe who lives in Lwingyi village, Phaungpyin Township, Sagaing Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 20 December 2020, police searched the house of Aung Moe, 34, son of U Tun Khin, who lives in Lwingyi village in Phaungpyin Township and arrested him together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Phaungpyin) MaYa (Pa) 207/2020 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
3	Information received of Hla Shwe who lives in Lwingyi village in Phaungpyin Township, Sagaing Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 24 December 2020, police searched the house of Hla Shwe, 50, son of U Aung Kyi, who lives in Lwingyi village in Phaungpyin Township and arrested him together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Phaungpyin) MaYa (Pa) 209/2020 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
4	Information received of Kyaut Saung who lives in Pe Kone village in Indaw Township, Sagaing Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 22 December 2020, police searched the house of Myat Lin (a) Kyaut Saung, 38, son of U Pho Ni, who lives in Pe Kone village in Indaw Township and arrested him together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Mawlu) MaYa (Pa) 92/2020 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
5	Information received of people on Abit- KHALAE Tagontine village road, in Mudon Township in Mon State, using, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	In recent weeks, a total of 28 cases have been identified and 48 male suspects were charged with the possession of illegal drugs. On 21 December 2020, on Abit-Khalae Tagontine village road near Abit village in Mudon Township, police arrested Thite Lari Htaw, 29, son of U Mya Maung and Maung Myint, 47, son of U Haung, who live in Yindane village in Ye Township, together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Kamarwut) MaYa (Pa) 59/2020 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
6	Information received of Kaung Lay (a) Myo Thein Htet, who lives in Magyitantaung east ward, Kyimyindine Township, Yangon Region, using, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 20 December 2020, police searched the house of Kaung Lay (a) Myo Thein Htet, 40, son of U Thein Naing, who lives in Magyitantaung east ward, Kyimyindine Township and arrested him together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Kyimyindine) MaYa (Pa) 10/2020 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
7	Information received of Pho Tote, who lives in (41) extended ward in Dagon Myothit Township (North), Yangon Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 20 December 2020, police arrested Ma Phyo Ei Kyaw (a) Phyo Tote (a) Pho Tote, 19, daughter of U Khin Maung Thein and Ma Win Mar Thin (a) Than Zin Saung, 19, daughter of U Lwin Myint Aung, who live in (41) extended ward in Dagon Myothit (North), together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Dagon North) MaYa (Pa) 44/2020 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. According to the further investigation, police arrested Maung Maung Oo, 24, son of U Than Zaw, who lives in Ananpin ward, Mingaladon Township, together with WY stimulant tablets, on U Wisara road, (41) extended ward. Although police didn't find any more illegal drugs in his house, a case has been opened against him MaMaSa (Dagon North) MaYa (Pa) 45/2020 under the Section 19 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

8	Information received of Daw Thwal Thwal Aye, who lives in Myohaung east ward in Thanlyin Township, Yangon Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 22 December 2020, police searched the house of Yan Naing Latt (a) Ayoe, 29, son of U Thaug Hla, who lives in ward 78, Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township and arrested him together with WY stimulant tablets and marijuana. According to the further investigation, police searched the house of Daw Thwal Thwal Aye (a) Aunty Gyi, 45, daughter of U Tun Aye, who lives in Myohaung east ward but didn't find anything related to the illegal drugs. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Dagon Seikkan) MaYa (Pa) 51/2020 under the Section 19 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
9	Information received of Daw Kathy Oo, who lives in ward 88 in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Yangon Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 26 December 2020, police searched the house of Daw Kathy Oo, 43, daughter of U Myint San, who lives in ward 88, Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township and arrested her and Ma Khine Zar Phyo, 19, daughter of U Moe Kyaw, together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Dagon Seikkan) MaYa (Pa) 53/2020 under the Section 19 (a), 20 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
10	Information received of illegal drugs users and drugs dealers in Phayaphyu ward, in Taunggyi Township in Southern Shan State.	In recent weeks, a total of 17 cases have been identified and 31 male suspects and 2 females were charged with the possession of illegal drugs. On 26 December 2020, according to a series of previous arrests, police arrested Ye Lin Htay, 19, son of U Than Aung, who lives Sao San Tun ward, in Taunggyi Township and Thae Lay, 19, son of U Thaug Phe and Khun Khan Kyaw, 19, son of U Khun Tun Aung, who live in Phatpone village in the same township and Win Maung, 19, son of U Aung Win, who lives in Naryaung village, together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Taunggyi) MaYa (Pa) 57/2020 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. According to the further investigation, police arrested Sai Lon, 31, son of U Aung San, who lives in Sao San Tun ward, Taunggyi, together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Taunggyi) MaYa (Pa) 58/2020 under the Section 19 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

3. Out of the information sent to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department, so far a total of 1,479 cases have been opened files as of 26 December 2020. A total of 2,257 people, including 1,880 men and 377 women had been arrested with 11,134.2514 g of heroin, 1,490.92 g of ICE, 48,321.97886 g of opium, 1,418.96 g of low-quality opium, 54,934.40 g of speciosa powder, 558,597.32 g of speciosa, 2.5 litres of liquid speciosa, 703,080 stimulant tablets, 15,589.19 g of marijuana, 0.1 litres of opium tincture, 640.28 g of opium blocks, 60 g of poppy seeds, 60.15 g of crushed stimulant tablet powder, 0.001 g of crushed ecstasy powder, 30 firearms, different kinds of 698 cartridges and one grenade. Efforts for fighting the drug trafficking has been stepped up and the department will report on further exposed cases.
4. To seize further drugs and to arrest drugs dealers, people are urged to inform the Ministry of Home Affairs, region and state governments and to inform huge cases of drug trafficking and other suspicious cases directly to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department of the Office of the President via following contact numbers:

Contacts

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

Trade Mark Ads

Call
Thin Thin May,

09251022355,
09974424848

Prioritizing safe destinations, services a must to facilitate tourism recovery

WHILE our country's tourism sector is facing challenges from COVID-19, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism is taking a bold step forward by launching day trip flights to Ngapali, the popular beach in Rakhine State, to Bagan and caravan tours in line with the COVID-19 health guidelines.

The action comes after the resumption of domestic flights on 16 December, and operation of Non Landing Sightseeing Flight and River Cruise to turn the tide of this downturn in tourism.

Making the best use of the country's tourism resources, the ministry is taking measures to launch rural tourism tours to villages around Nay Pyi Taw.

... with safe and responsible COVID-19 services, we must send out the message that our country is safe.

Beyond the immediate pain of the pandemic, we must seize every opportunity possible to make full use of the pandemic.

To make the tourism sector a sustainable engine for economic growth and development, we must work to develop heritage and cultural tourism, nature based and eco tourism, agriculture and farming tourism, coastal inland water tourism, river and rail tourism, adventure and sports tourism, coastal inland water tourism, river and rail tourism, adventure and sports tourism, gastronomy tourism, caravan tourism and urban tourism in cooperation with all stake holders of the industry including the Myanmar Tourism Federation and its affiliated associations.

Typically, the tourism sector is among the first to be affected, and the last to recover during a health crisis.

Despite facing challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, we should not miss opportunities offered by the pandemic.

Ensuring safe, responsible behavior and discovering new natural destinations is a shared responsibility between visitors, residents, business owners, employees and local governments.

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The universities: breeding grounds for the future leaders

By Khin Maung Myint

AS the year 2020 marks the centenary of the founding of the Rangoon University (RU later YU), I intend to write an article as a tribute to my alma mater. While contemplating what I should write, I had some fruitful conversations with friends who had attended the RU in the nineteen fifties as I did.

During those conversations we reminisced fondly of how we were being treated as young adults and gentlemen, though we were still in our teens at the time. In fact the university life or its environs had gradually moulded us, or should I say, evolved us into ladies and gentlemen, and were being treated as such.

As varsity students we became gentlemen

I attended the RU for two academic years, 1955/56 and 56/57, before transferring to the Mandalay University College, which was an affiliate of the RU then. During those days and for quite sometime later, English was the main medium of teaching. The lecturers, tutors and demonstrators did the teaching of almost every subject, except the Burmese subject and the likes, in English.

Even when someone, may be a male or a female student, was seen attempting to copy from others during examinations, the tutor or the demonstrator overseeing the exam will warn by saying "Be gentleman" or "Act like gentleman" in English. That was enough to restrain a student from cheating in the exams. Here it should be noted that the term "gentleman" was used as a genderless word to apply to both genders.

In my opinion, I think such usage is peculiar and unique to our country. Because in our Burmese language the phrase "luu gyi luu kaung", is a genderless word that literally means and generally translated as "gentleman". Thus in the following passages I may be using the word "gentleman" as a genderless term where necessary or relevant and like to request the readers to understand that it represents both the genders.

Another "gentlemanly" behaviour we picked up at the university without anyone teaching us or imposing them on us was the table manners. Being a hostel student throughout my time at the university, I will be discussing this point from that perspective. Within a few days at the hostel most of us came



The University of Yangon, the first-ever university of Myanmar, is the greatest and most prestigious university in Myanmar's history. PHOTO:PHOE KHWAR.

to act like gentlemen in the dining halls. Apart for a very negligible few, I had never seen any greedy or selfish student who grabbed the larger portions of food or took more than their entitled share. If we happened to be the first ones at the dining table before others came, most of us took the smaller portion or even less than our share so as to leave more for those who came later for their meals.

I would like to attribute that behavior to peer influence. Such acts may seem not important enough to deserve mentioning here. However, those minor acts of consideration and sacrifice for others are great attributes of a good leader.

To understand and appreciate the above statement it would be necessary to know how the meals were served at the hostel dining halls in the olden days. Each dining table could seat four persons. The main dish, which usually was meat used to be served in a dish for either two or four persons (it differs from one hostel to another). So if the first comers took more than their shares or the larger portions, the late comers will get less to eat. Such things were never known to have happened.

No one told us to behave that way, but the habit came almost naturally. It was a decent trait of the university students that most old students may still remember and cherish those memories until today. While contemplating on

As dresses define a person, the university students of those days were quite distinguishable from other people by their attires.

writing about my university days, and when I told friends about my intentions they suggested that I should write about this trait that most of us acquired then.

Attires define a person

Also it is note-worthy to mention that when we became university students, our dressing styles gradually changed. This change could also be attributed to the peer influence too. Most students were observed to change visibly in the way they dress. Their dresses became more stylish and were of nice cuttings that were modern and elegant. Long sleeved shirts with stiff collars or collarless shirts were in vogue among the male students. Most RU male students prefer to wear silk "pasoes" or sarong, called "Bangkok pasoe". They may be somewhat expensive than the cotton ones, but more comfortable, cool and durable. In other words stiff-collared long-sleeved white shirt and Bangkok pasoe became the "collegian style" of those days. Some, but very few, wore Western

style trousers and coats to classes, but none were seen wearing jeans, except during their outings.

As dresses define a person, the university students of those days were quite distinguishable from other people by their attires. It's not an exaggeration, but we can differentiate the university students or the "collegians" from others. Although we may not know them before, if we met them in the downtown areas such as the movie theatres, bus stands, railway stations, and the night bazaars, etc, we can easily identify them as university students.

Concerning the attires, I would like to cite one very interesting incident while attending the Yankin College. During an English lesson class, the lady lecturing tutor was explaining a passage from the text book. It said peoples' background, such as whether they are city dwellers or are from the countryside can clearly be determined by the way they dress. She demonstrated that by saying to one

township, arts and culture, hobbies such as amateur radio construction (Spark), boat rowing, hiking and mountaineering, and some other associations, organizations or clubs. Almost every student got involved in one or the other, or some in more than one such group.

By getting involved in the various associations, organizations, clubs, S&R and the Student Union, the students were being instilled the good habits, behaviours, spirits of unity, loyalty, dedication, responsibility and the practice of cooperation and coordination since early on in life. It can be said that the hostel life or the university life trained and prepared young people to become well behaved and respectable leaders in the future. During our days at the university we were familiar with the remark: "Today's students are tomorrow's leaders."

Best training grounds for the future leaders

Thus, undoubtedly, the university is the best place to educate, train and breed well educated, cultured, disciplined, well behaved, respectable, responsible and matured leaders of the future. It's undeniable that at the universities all these good attributes were gently instilled into us, but not enforced upon us. Today, when we are seeing some people in high positions acting like uneducated, uncultured, badly behaved, unrespectable and immature persons, the more we realized that these attributes are the most important ones that a leader should possess.

Let's restore the glory of RU

Once upon a time our RU was recognized as the best university in the South East Asia region. I must admit I don't really know the exact world ranking of the RU then. However, the fact that in those days there were quite a number of exchange students from Japan, Singapore, South Asian continent and Africa, was a very clear indication of her fame.

I am sure the present government will endeavor to bring back the old glories of our beloved RU (now YU) that it had enjoyed in the past. Even now the world ranking of the YU had climbed astonishingly in leaps and bounds during the past five years. I am quite confident the government will spare no effort to push the YU further up the ranking scale and it will regain its rightful place that it once held with pride in the region. Hopefully that day is not very far away and God willing, I may live to see that day.

A friend of mine, who used to be an EC member of the S&R and also of his district association told me that when he was elected, he tried to fit in to his position by behaving properly and dressing respectfully to be worthy of those positions. Besides the S&R, there were many other associations and organizations, that every university student unavoidably got involved. There were the district or

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.

Appointment of US Ambassador to Myanmar agreed on

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of Mr Thomas Laszlo Vajda as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Mr Thomas Laszlo Vajda was born in June 1966, in Phoenix, Arizona, the United States of America. He holds a Bachelor's Degree from Stanford University and a Master's Degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. He joined the Foreign Service in 1991. He has served overseas at the Embassies and Consular Offices in Germany, Albania, Myanmar and India. From August 2019 to May 2020, he served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Department of State with responsibility for India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and Maldives. He also speaks German. He is married with two children.—MNA

Myanmar Daily Weather Report
(Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 29 December, 2020)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 30 December, 2020: Weather will be partly cloudy in Yangon, Taninthayi Regions and 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 (4-6) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT: Likelihood of decrease of night temperatures in Taninthayi Region and Kayah, Kayin, Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30 December, 2020: Fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30 December, 2020: Generally fair weather.

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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.
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MADB to provide K6 bln loans to agriculture and livestock farmers in Mandalay Region

MYANMA Agricultural Development Bank (MADB) in Mandalay Region will provide K6 billion loans to agricultural and livestock farmers in Mandalay Region under MEB two-step loan programme, according to a statement of MADB in Mandalay Region.

Now, the loans are being delivered through MADB in Mandalay Region. So far, about K417.16 million loans have been provided to the local farmers and breeders.

The Myanmar Economic Bank (MEB)'s loan programme provides loans to the farmers from 23 townships in Mandalay Region based on agricultural and livestock businesses if they could show substantial document and assurance. Currently, the bank has already allocated K417.16 million to 50 farmers. The bank



The Myanmar Economic Bank (MEB) provides the loan to local farmers from 23 townships in Mandalay Region annually, through MADB. **PHOTO: THAN ZAW MIN (IPRD)**

provided the loans to enable the farmers to buy the agricultural machines and set up other businesses as well, said Daw Yin Nwe, the regional manager of MADB in Mandalay.

She also added that the local farmers received the loans from MEB through our MADB for buying the agricultural machines. People can also apply for the loans to set up other

businesses under this loan programme. We are providing loans for the benefit of the farmers in some way. The loan period is arranged from a minimum of three years to a maximum of five years. However, the agricultural and livestock farmers need to apply for the loans with the presentation of the strong evidence.

The MEB provides the loan to the local farmers from 23 townships in Mandalay Region annually. Those 23 townships are Chanayethazan, Amara-pura, Patheingyi, PyinOoLwin, Madaya, Singu, Thabeikkyin, Singaing, Tada-U, Myittha, Kyaukse, Meiktila, Thazi, Wundwin, Mahlaing, Yamethin, Pyawbwe, Myingyan, Natogyi, Taungtha, Ngazun, Nyaung-U and Kyaukpadaung townships.—Than Zaw Min (IPRD)
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Construction of Thanlyin Bridge-3 completed almost 83% on Thakayta side

THE construction of Thanlyin Bridge-3 connecting between Thanlyin and Thakayta townships in Yangon Region and crossing the Bago River is about 83 per cent complete on Thakayta side (Package-3), and the construction works in the remaining Package 1 and 2 are being carried out.

Upon completing the bridge, it will help facilitate the trade flow in Thilawa Special Economic Zone (SEZ), the Bridge Department stated.

"This Bago River bridge will help speed up trade flow from Thilawa SEZ. It is the fastest shortcut route to link Yangon urban areas. The trade flow in Thilawa SEZ will tremendously grow in 20 to 30 years. As a result of this, Thanlyin Bridge-3 is being implemented. The bridge is constructed with the help of the Japan government's loan under three phases. Package 3 of the project located in Thakayta land area is nearly finished. The construction work is suspended for a while amid the stay-at-home order. Yet, the construction of Package 3 is completed more than we expected. Package 1 and 2 are located in the river, and the project is temporarily halted due to technical difficulty when Japanese experts cannot come yet amid the pandem-



Thanlyin Bridge-3 connecting between Thanlyin and Thakayta townships in Yangon Region is seen under 83 per cent completion. **PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG KYAW**

ic. The construction works will restart once the coronavirus cases are stable," said U Tun Lin, Chief Engineer of Bago River Crossing Bridge project under the Bridge Department of the Ministry of Construction.

The construction started in May 2019. Package 1 includes PC Box Girder Bridge and Steel Box Girder Bridge in Thanlyin side and Steel Cable-Stayed Bridge in middle of the river. The foundation of bridge construction in Thanlyin land area has been finished. The approach slabs are also under construction. Package 1

is 1312-metre-long and 49 per cent complete.

Package 2 have Steel Cable-Stayed Bridge, Steel box Girder Bridge and PC Box Girder Bridge and embankment toll gate in Thakayta side. At present, the bridge piers from No.6 in water to 22 in Thakayta side are being constructed with Japanese Technology. Package 2 is 1363-metre-long and is over 50 per cent finished.

Package 1 and 2 are constructed by Sumitomo Mitsui Construction and Yokogawa Bridge Construction JV. The project term is from June 2019

to February 2022. The overpass can be seen in Thakayta side as Package 3, having an 825-metre length, is almost completed. Tokyu Construction has constructed this part since May 2019. It is slated to end in May 2021.

Thanlyin Bridge 3 is 3500-metre-long, including approach slabs. The bridge-3 is 125 metres away from the existing Thanlyin Bridge. This four-lane bridge is constructed spending 31 billion Yen from Japan International Cooperation Agency.—Myint Maung Kyaw
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Squid fishing business in Kawthoung helps villagers earn for living amid COVID-19 crisis

SQUID catching business using old-fashioned fishing techniques allows the families in fishing villages of Kawthoung Township to do well amid the employment difficulties triggered by the coronavirus pandemic.

The fishermen held the licence for catching, and they sell their squids to the small businesspersons. The squid is popular street food in Thailand market, and so, they are sent to neighbouring Thailand through legitimate trade. The families in fishing villages, Kawthoung Township are increasing their income amid the pandemic.

The villagers use an old fashioned technique using snail shell bait. That fishing method is

commonly used by fishermen of Maputay and Chanphan villages.

The fishing rope positioned with snail shell baits is placed in the sea at night and pull back again in the morning to collect the squid inside the shells.

That old technique is eco-friendlier than poisoning and electrofishing. It helps conserve the aquatic resources, according to the Fisheries Department.

The squids are mostly caught in winter. About 150 fishing boats from Maputay village can collect 2,600 kilogrammes of squids. A kilo of squid fetches K4,700 in the village market, a dealer said.—Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung)

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



About 150 fishing boats from Maputay village can collect 2,600 kilogrammes of squids.
PHOTO: KYAW SOE (KAWTHOUNG)

Magway farmers worry loss to expand growing onions as prices drop

ONION growers are worried about a possible loss to expand growing acres in Minbu Township, Magway Region, as the prices remain low.

The onion prices stood at K1,800-2,500 per viss (a viss equals 1.6kg) during a year-ago period. The prices fell below K450-500 per viss in the wholesale market and K800-900 per viss in the retail market. The drastic fall of price raised the growers' financial concerns.

"The growers are hoping for the market recovery when the transportation difficulties are eased. We can get a healthy profit only if the price climbs up. Now, we are burdened by high input cost," said U Myint Shwe, a grower from Minbu Township.

Onion fetched around K1,000 per viss in the previous months on the back of demand by neigh-

bouring countries. At present, the growers are suffering losses as the onion price plunged to K150 per viss in recent days in Monywa Township, Sagaing Region. Moreover, those tenant farmers are severely battered, said a grower from Monywa Township.

The prices of onions sharply dropped due to the bulk supply and the western border's closure amid the coronavirus resurgence.

Earlier, onions were highly demanded by Bangladesh, India and China. "Now, the trade with Bangladesh and India is halted to contain the spread of the coronavirus. Therefore, the price is on the decline, said wholesale dealer of onion from Mandalay.

This year, the onion growers and traders are experiencing market fallouts due to the

surging COVID-19 cases. As a result of this, workers engaged in onion depots are suffering financial hardships, said a depot owner from Mandalay.

According to the Mandalay commodity depot, last year, Bangladesh's demand for Myanmar's onions coupled with high demand in the local market hiked up prices, soaring up to K4,000 per viss on 15 November 2019.

The high demand by foreign markets and a remarkable price rise prompted the growers to expand the onion cultivation this year.

The prices of domestic onions exceeded K3,000 per viss in 2015, 2018, and 2019.

The onions are primarily grown in Mandalay, Magway and Yangon regions, Nay Pyi Taw and Shan State.—Zeyar Htet, Ko Htet
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



The prices of onions sharply dropped due to the bulk supply and the western border's closure amid the coronavirus resurgence. PHOTO: ZEYAR HTET (MINBU)

External trade dives by \$2 bln as of 18 December

MYANMAR'S external trade between 1 October and 18 December in the current financial year 2020-2021 touched a low of US\$6.14 billion, a sharp drop of \$2.065 billion compared with the corresponding period of the FY2019-2020, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

According to the ministry data during the same period in the previous FY, trade stood at \$8.2 billion.

As of 18 December 2020, Myanmar's export was worth \$2.87 billion, which plunged from \$4.1 billion registered a year-ago period. Meanwhile, the country's import was valued \$3.27 billion, showing a decrease of \$824 million compared with the last FY.

Both sea trade and border trade dropped amid the coronavirus impacts. The neighbouring countries tightened border security and limited the trading time to contain the spread of the virus. Moreover, the severe container shortage has become the biggest disrupter in shipping amid the coronavirus impacts, on the back of robust demand on the Asia-Europe and transpacific trade. Container shipping costs are drastically surging. Pandemic-induced container shortage pushed up the freight rates to almost triple in Myanmar, causing delays for traders.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, and

finished industrial goods. At the same time, it imports capital goods, raw industrial materials, and consumer goods.

The country's export sector relies more on the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. The government is trying to reduce the trade deficit by screening luxury import items and boosting exports.

Myanmar's foreign trade has shown a 10-per-cent increase, year over year, under the incumbent government. Myanmar has already surpassed the total trade value target of \$34 billion for the last FY, said an official from the ministry.

Last FY2019-2020, Myanmar's external trade reflected an increase of \$1.5 billion compared with the FY2018-2019 as it increased from over \$35 billion to \$36.6 billion.

Under the National Planning Law for the Financial Year 2020-2021, Myanmar intends to reach an export target at US\$16 billion and import at \$18 billion.

The Ministry of Commerce is focusing on export promotion and market diversification. Since 2011, the Ministry of Commerce has adhered to its reform policy. A series of moves to liberalize and open the economy have been introduced through policy development to improve the trade environment. — Ko Khant

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

PROUD BOYS AND MORE

Trump backers look to last-stand protest on January 6

PRESIDENT Donald Trump is urging supporters to amass in Washington on January 6 for a last-ditch rally to pressure Congress to not certify Joe Biden's election victory.

Thousands of supporters from around the country, from the Women for America First group, to StopTheSteal, to the violent Proud Boys, are expected to descend on the US capital pressing Trump's unsupported claim that massive voter fraud was behind his defeat in the November 3 election.

Trump tweeted twice this weekend urging supporters to attend, labelling the election "the biggest SCAM in our nation's history".

"See you in Washington, DC, on January 6th. Don't miss it," he wrote Sunday.

The rally raised fears of fresh violence after the previous pro-Trump protest that included the Proud Boys on December 12 saw several people stabbed and dozens arrested.

Trump appears to hope that



Members of the violent Proud Boys group are expected to attend a last-ditch rally for US President Donald Trump in Washington on January 6. PHOTO: AFP

the protestors could pressure Congress to reject the final count of state-based electors and reverse his election loss.

"We the People must take to the US Capitol lawn and steps and tell Congress #DoNotCertify," StopTheSteal declared online.

"Congress cannot certify this fraudulent Electoral College," they said.

On January 6 Vice President Mike Pence is to lead Congress in certifying the Electoral College votes submitted by each state, which represent the results of

the popular vote.

In the joint session of the House of Representatives and the Senate, Pence is to open and read the certificates reporting elector tallies from each state, and then declare the victor.

SOURCE: AFP

THE PERSIAN GULF

Iran warns Israel not to cross Gulf 'red lines'

IRAN warned Israel yesterday not to cross its "red lines" in the Gulf in the final days of Donald Trump's presidency and following a reported Israeli submarine deployment. Foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh stressed the Islamic republic would defend itself against any American military "adventure" in the run-up to the Jan 20 handover of power in Washington.

The statement came a week after the US Navy announced a nuclear submarine was being deployed to the Gulf, in a new show of force directed at Iran.

Media in Israel have since reported that an Israeli submarine has crossed the Suez Canal also headed for the Gulf, a report that has not been officially confirmed or denied. "Everyone knows what the Persian Gulf sig-

nifies for Iran," Khatibzadeh told an online news conference.

"Everyone knows the policies (of Tehran) regarding security and national security... Everyone knows very well how high the risk is raised if the red lines of Iran are crossed."

Tehran accuses its regional foe Israel of responsibility for several anti-Iranian operations, including the assassination last

month of nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhriadeh.

The United States, for its part, has accused Iran of involvement in a rocket attack last week near its Baghdad embassy, as Tehran prepares to mark the first anniversary of the killing of top Iranian commander Qasem Soleimani in a US drone strike in January.

SOURCE: AFP

REPERCUSSIONS OF THE COVID-19



DUBAI: A man rides his bicycle past a giant sculpture representing an old radio-cassette recorder on Jumairah Street on Dec 24, 2020. PHOTO: AFP

Dubai cuts 2021 budget as COVID hits economy

DUBAI said yesterday it expects to cut its budget to \$15.5 billion in 2021 after its economy was impacted by a plunge in tourism and other sectors amid the novel coronavirus pandemic. The emirate, one of the seven that make up the United Arab Emirates, had posted a record \$18.1 billion budget for 2020. "The newly-announced budget takes into account the exceptional economic conditions of the fiscal year 2020 and the repercussions of the

COVID-19 pandemic on the global economy," said a statement by the Dubai Media Office.

Dubai foresees a deficit for the fifth year in a row, of \$1.3 billion in 2021. In 2019, it had forecast a \$700 million deficit for this year. The emirate, which depends heavily on tourism and retail services, closed its border for several months due to the pandemic, resulting in a 10.8 per cent GDP plunge in the first half of the year.

SOURCE: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

BARRING EVICTIONS

New York state passes tough new anti-eviction bill

NEW York's state assembly on Monday passed tough laws to protect renters from eviction during the coronavirus pandemic, as rising unemployment and a weakened US economy make it difficult for many tenants to make rent.

The new laws, passed in a special session of the state legislature, came just days before existing bans on evictions were due to expire at the end of the year.

The latest measures bar most landlords from evicting tenants who are unable to pay their rent for at least another 60 days, the New York Times reported. They will also protect many small landlords from the risk of foreclosure due to lost rental income.

SOURCE: AFP

ON NATIONAL SECURITY GROUNDS

Trump administration appeals court ruling blocking US TikTok ban

THE Trump administration on Monday appealed a federal court ruling which allows TikTok to keep operating in the United States despite a move to block the popular social media application on national security grounds.

The Justice Department filed the appeal seeking to enforce a ban on TikTok by President Donald Trump, who has argued that the app's Chinese parent company may use TikTok for espionage and to spread disinformation.

The filing did not include arguments for enforcing the ban, which had been rejected earlier this month by US District Judge Carl Nichols and in a parallel case filed in Pennsylvania.

Nichols said TikTok's lawyers had demonstrated that the Commerce Department likely overstepped its authority by seeking to ban the popular social media app and "acted in an arbitrary and capricious manner by failing to consider obvious alternatives."

SOURCE: AFP

CRUDE MILESTONE

Cambodia's Hun Sen hails extraction of country's 'first drop of oil'

CAMBODIAN premier Hun Sen announced Tuesday that the kingdom had extracted its first drop of crude oil from its waters, a long-awaited milestone for one of Southeast Asia's poorest nations.

The Gulf of Thailand boasts significant oil deposits, with Chevron first finding proven reserves off Cambodia in 2005.

But production stalled as the government and the US giant failed to reach a revenue-sharing agreement, leading the firm to sell its stake to Singapore's KrisEnergy in 2014.

Hun Sen hailed the first extraction of crude as "a new achievement for Cambodia's economy".

"The first drop of oil has been produced."

"The year 2021 is coming... and we have received a huge gift for our nation – the first oil production in our territory," he said in a Facebook post.

The crude was taken from an area off the southwestern coast of Sihanoukville.

Chevron's discovery of the reserves led the kingdom to be feted as the region's next potential petro-state, with the government estimating hundreds of millions of barrels of crude were beneath its waters.

KrisEnergy currently holds a 95 per cent stake of the block where the oil



The Gulf of Thailand boasts significant oil deposits, with Chevron first finding proven reserves off Cambodia in 2005 **PHOTO: PIXABAY/AFP**

was taken from, while the government holds the rest.

Kelvin Tang, the CEO of KrisEnergy's Cambodia operations, said there has been a "steep learning curve" to launch the field

production during a global pandemic.

"The cross-border logistics of mobilizing personnel and equipment to execute this development safely during this time of

Covid-19 would not have been possible without [government support]," he said.

The company expects a peak production rate of 7,500 barrels a day once

the drilling programme is completed in February 2021 – a modest amount compared with Cambodia's oil-producing neighbours Vietnam and Thailand.

SOURCE: AFP

A MAJOR BOOST

EU clears way for China investment pact

EU member states gave political backing to Brussels' planned investment pact with China yesterday, clearing the way for a deal between the world's biggest economic blocs.

At a meeting of ambassadors, the German EU presidency noted no member had "raised a stop sign and the way for a political endorsement was thus cleared", a diplomat said.

The diplomats noted "recent positive developments" in negotiations, with China reportedly addressing concerns over the alleged use of forced labour on its farms.

This came after the Chinese foreign ministry said last week that "negotiations have entered the final stretch" – and a second EU diplomat said an agreement could now be formally announced this week.

"We have to be careful, but as long as China is in agreement, there could be an official announcement from Brussels and

Beijing by the end of the week," the senior envoy said.

The deal would be a major boost for both sides and strengthen economic ties between the giants before the arrival of US president-elect Joe Biden in the White House in January.

Outgoing US leader Donald Trump has engaged in a trade war with China but his successor has also expressed concern about the EU outreach, with his team urging Brussels to consult with Washington.

SOURCE: AFP



German cars arrive in Southwest China's Chongqing Municipality via the CR Express China-Europe cargo trains en masse on June 1. **PHOTO: VCG/XINHUA**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V BOX ENDEAVOUR VOY. NO. (052W/053E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BOX ENDEAVOUR VOY. NO. (052W/053E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **30-12-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** 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 SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BINTAN VOY. NO. (700 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SINAR BINTAN VOY. NO. (700 N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **30-12-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR BANDA VOY. NO. (0YA04S1NC)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SINAR BANDA VOY. NO. (0YA04S1NC)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **30-12-2020** 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 CMA-CGM SHIPPING LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY. NO. (1131 S/N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY. NO. (1131 S/N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **30-12-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** 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 LINES

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Myanmar ships 277,502 metric tons of rice and broken rice to foreign markets via sea in the current financial year. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Myanmar earns US\$176 million from rice shipment in two months

By Kyaw Htike Soe

MYANMAR made 467,020 metric tons of rice and broken rice shipment to 43 countries as of December 11 in the financial year 2020-2021, fetching 176 million US dollars, according to data updated by the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF). Myanmar's rice export via its border trade camps was 189,517 metric tons, accounting for almost 41 per cent of the total rice exports.

Myanmar's rice exports via the border gates generated US\$72 million in the current financial year. The country's maritime rice export accounted for 59 per cent of the total rice exports in the present

financial year, fetching an estimated income of US\$105 million, figures from the MRF shows. Myanmar freighted 277,502 metric tons of rice and broken rice to foreign countries via sea routes during the same period. Myanmar surpassed its rice export target of 2.5 million tonnes in 2019-2020FY, the MRF said. China is the main buyer of Myanmar rice, followed by Malaysia and the Philippines. Poland is the fourth-largest buyer and Vietnam, the fifth-largest buyer of Myanmar rice. China accounts for over 77.81 per cent of total rice exports, while 12.12 per cent of Myanmar's rice export goes to European Union

countries.

ASEAN countries constitute 8.43 per cent of Myanmar's total rice exports. Myanmar has freighted broken rice mostly to China, followed by Belgium, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Netherlands. The Southeast Asian country aims to export 4 million tonnes of rice and broken rice in the current financial year, U Aung Than Oo, vice-president of the MRF told the media. Myanmar is looking to become one of the world's top three rice exporters in the next few years. Myanmar cannot practise price reduction strategies based on competition to cover the production and logistic costs.

All export procedures and port costs should be revised with a view to improving the competitiveness of Myanmar rice. The issue of high transportation costs, which cause problems in the supply chain, is also being addressed so as to keep up with the countries in the region.

To boost rice production, the country is tackling the challenges of erratic weather, capacity and technical know-how to produce value-added products and dependence on foreign market demand. The Ministry of Commerce recently confirmed that ASEAN countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines express



Workers unloading sacks of rice from a cargo ship.

istry is trying utmost to help farmers deal with challenges such as high input costs, procurement of quality seeds, high cultivation costs, and erratic weather conditions. Myanmar exports many rice varieties, and not all are expensive high-quality varieties. Following the coronavirus resurgence in Myanmar, rice was highly demanded in the domestic market. Myanmar yearly produces 13 million metric tons of rice.

Rice accounts for more than 30 per cent of the value of all crops produced in Myanmar. More than 75 per cent of total rice production

is consumed in the country where over 70 per cent of the total populations reside in rural areas and 20 per cent of surplus rice is exported to foreign countries and 10 per cent is kept as a reserve. Thanks to the expansion of rice markets globally, Myanmar's rice exports have risen to the highest level in 55 years in the budget year 2017-18, with rice and broken rice exports to foreign countries increased to more than 3 million tonnes, earning US\$ 949 million and 1.39 million tonnes of rice worth US\$406 million was shipped by sea, the ministry said.

Myanmar exported 1.4 million metric tons of rice and broken rice in 2015-2016 FY, 1.7 million metric tons in 2016-2017FY, about 3.6 million metric tons in 2017-2018FY, over 2.35 million metric tons in 2018-2019FY, and 2.586 metric tons in 2019-2020FY. The Southeast Asian nation earned some US\$618 million from rice export in the financial year 2015-2016, US\$405 million in 2016-2017FY, US\$1.356 billion in 2017-2018FY, US\$710 million in 2018-2019FY, and US\$795 million in 2019-2020FY.



Workers carry rice bags onto a vehicle in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR



go ship at Botahtaung Jetty in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Useful Information

JAPANESE CUISINE

AJISHIN

No.192, Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Myanmar Plaza, 4th Floor, Yankin Township, Yangon, Myanmar. Ph: 09-970890390, Time- 10:00 to 23:00 (Open Daily)

ANAIMO

No. 300, Mahabandula Park Street, Kyauktada Township, Yangon. Ph: 01-378022. Time- 11:30-14:00/ 17:30-22:00 (Saturday only evening and Sunday off)

BIKKURA SUSHI & SASHIMI JAPANESE RESTAURANT

No. 16, Natmauk Road, Tamwe Township, Yangon. Ph: 09-799566917, 09-36714873. 10:30-22:30 (Open Daily)

BUSHIDO

No. 75/ AB Boyar Nyunt Street, Dagon Township, Yangon. Ph: 09-260031197/ 09-420231330. 10:00-22:00 (Sunday Off)

CHO JAPANESE DINNING & BAR

Level (1), Garden Wing, Beside Lobby Lounge. (Inside Sedona Hotel), Yangon Ph: 09-258322223/ 09-261322223. Lunch 11:30-14:30/ Tea Time 14:30-18:00/ Dinner 18:00-23:00 (Open Daily)

DINNING FUKUROU

No. 37, Kabar Pagoda Road, Inside of Inya Lake Hotel, Yangon. Ph: 09-260031197 09-420231330. 11:00-22:00 (Open Daily)

EDOZUSHI

A-1, Star City, Kyaik Khaik Pagoda Road, Thanlyin Township, Yangon. Ph: 056-23150-53/ 056-23313-318 (Ext-1183)/ 09-2560-75020. 11:00-21:00 (Open Daily)

(3) YAKINIKU FUKAGAWA

A-1, Star City, Kyaik Khaik Pagoda Road, Thanlyin Township, Yangon. Ph: 056-23150-53/ 056-23313-318 (Ext-1183)/ 09-2560-75020. 11:00-21:00 (Open Daily)

FUJINOBO

(Cherry Hill Hotel) No. 520/4 A, Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Shwe Gone Daing, Bahan Township, Yangon. Ph: 09-450067052, 06:00-09:30/ 11:30-14:00/ 17:00-22:30 (Open Daily)

FURUSATO

No. 137, West Shwe Gone Daing, Bahan Township, Yangon. Ph: 01-556265/ 09-73081914. 11:00-14:00/ 17:00-22:00 (Open Daily)

GEKKO

535, Merchant Street, Kyauktada Township, 4th Quarter, Yangon. Ph: 01-386986, 09:00-23:00 (Open Daily)

HIMARI MYANMAR

Pearl Condo, Block D, Ground Floor, Units-G-10, Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon. Ph: 09-775330494. 11:30-14:00/ 14:00-22:00 (Open Daily)

HOKKAIDO JAPANESE RESTAURANT

No. 24/ 26, Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Golden Hill Tower (A), Bahan Township, Yangon. Ph: 09-250537315. 11:00-14:00/ 17:00-21:30 (Open Daily)

HOT POT KING and Hot pot and BBQ Buffet Restaurant

No - 26/27, Thitsar Road and Corner of Wai Za Yan Dar Road, South Okkalapa, Yangon. Tel - 09 777777 008, 09 09 777777 009, 09 777777 883.

Hot Pot City 8 Miles

No(33), Kyaik Wine Pagoda Road (7.34 km) 095 Yangon. Ph: 09 797 799111, 11:00-22:00 (Open Daily)

101 Hot Pot & Sushi

No.141, West Shwegondaing Road, Bahan T/s. near Yuzana Hotel. (1.78 km), 11201 Yangon.

Get Directions

Highlights info row image, Ph: 09 777 799101. 4:00 PM to 10:00 PM

Little Sheep Hot Pot Myanmar

14/14B Kanbawza Street Golden Valley (1) Bahan Township (1.71 km), Yangon. Ph: 09443399701, 09443399702, 11:00-23:00

HOTEL

BELMOND GOVERNOR'S RESIDENCE

No. 35, Taw Win Road, Dagon Township, Yangon. Ph: 01-229860 01-229861.

CHATRIUM

No. 40, Natmauk Road, Tamwe Township, Yangon. Ph: 01-544500/ 01-544244.

CHERRY HILLS HOTEL

No. 520/4 A, Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Shwegon Daing, Bahan Township, Yangon. Ph: 01-559722.

HOTLE 51

No. 154/ 156, 51st. Upper Pazundaung Township, Yangon. Ph: 01-200823/ 09-429918554.

HOTEL KAN KAW

No.93(A), Hnin Si Gone Road, Ahlone Township, Yangon. Ph: 01-228566/ 01-2301700/ 01-1221731.

HOTLE SIDNEY

No. 8L/Mindhama Road, Between Kyaik Wine Pagoda Road and Parami Road, Mayangone Township. Ph: 01-655770/ 01-9669600-02.

INYA LAKE HOTEL

No.37, Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Yangon. Ph: 01-9662866/ 01-9662857-9.

LOTTEE HOTLES AND SERVICED APARTMENTS YANGON

No.82, Sin Phyu Shin Avenue, Pyay Road, 6 mile, Hlaing Township. Ph: 01-9351000.

MERCURE HOTEL

No.17, Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Yankin Township, Yangon. Ph: 01- 650933.

NOVOTEL YANGON MAX

No.459, Pyay Road, Kamayut Township, Yangon. Ph: 01-2305858.

PAN PACIFIC YANGON

No. Corner of Bogyoke Aung San Road and Shwedagon Pagoda Road, Yangon, Ph: 01-9253810.

PARK ROYAL

No.33, Alan Pya Phaya Road, Dagon Township, Yangon, Ph: 01-250388.

PULLMAN YANGON CENTREPOINT

No.65, Corner of Sule Pagoda Road and Merchant Street. Ph: 01-382687.

ROSE GARDEN HOTEL

No.171, Upper Pasodan Road, Yangon. Ph: 01-371992/09263440500.

SAVOY HOTEL

No.129, Corner of Dhammazed Road and Inya Road, Yangon. Ph: 01-526289/ 01-526298/ 01-526305.

SEDONA HOTEL

No. 1, Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Yankin Township, Yangon. Ph: 01-8605377.

SULE SHANGRI-LA

No. 223, Sule Pagoda Road, Kyauktada Township, Yangon. Ph: 01-242828.

SUMMIT PARKVIEW HOTEL

No. 350, Ahlone Road, Dagon Township, Yangon. Ph: 01-211888/ 01-211966.

SUPER HOTEL

No. 51/ D, Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, 10th Quarter, Mayangone Township, Yangon. Ph: 09-797109000/ 01-658210/ 01-658220.

Solskjaer keen to extend Cavani's time at Man Utd

LONDON — Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer believes Edinson Cavani still has years left as a top striker and is keen to extend the Uruguayan's contract at Old Trafford.

The 33-year-old Uruguayan signed a one-year deal in September after months without a club since leaving Paris Saint-Germain.

United have the option to extend Cavani's contract for another season and Solskjaer suggested he expects the club to do so.

"At the moment he looks like he has a few years left in

him so I wouldn't say anything else," said Solskjaer when asked if Cavani will remain for another season.

"He's been a great influence and has made a great impact since he's come here."

Cavani has scored four goals in 13 appearances for United and came off the bench to set up Bruno Fernandes's goal in Saturday's 2-2 draw at Leicester.

However, Solskjaer dismissed suggestions Cavani's role will be that of an impact substitute.

"He's definitely a starter. You don't classify a player of

that quality as anything else," added Solskjaer. "He'll probably start more games that he will not start."

"He's so meticulous and professional with his habits, everything about him shows why he's had the career he's had and, at the age he's now, he's still one of the fittest players we've got."

Cavani will be available for the visit of Wolves to Old Trafford on Tuesday, but could soon be back on the sidelines after being charged by the Football Association with misconduct for a social media post. —AFP ■



Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer wants to keep Edinson Cavani (right) at Old Trafford for another season. PHOTO: MIKE HEWITT POOL/AFP/FILE

Neymar in new controversy over New Year party rumours



Paris Saint-Germain's Brazilian forward Neymar poses as he arrives at his birthday party in Paris on February 4, 2019. PHOTO: AFP/THOMAS SAMSON

SAO PAULO — Brazil's star footballer Neymar is at the centre of a new controversy after several Brazilian media reported that he is organizing a huge New Year's Eve party despite the coronavirus pandemic, a claim his lawyers denied.

Acelmo Goes, a columnist for the O Globo newspaper, wrote that the Paris Saint-Germain forward is hosting 500 people for a week-long party at his luxury beachside mansion near Rio de Janeiro that started on Saturday and will last until New Year's Day.

Neymar, who is no stranger to controversies over his parties, allegedly even in-

stalled soundproofing equipment to try to avoid bothering his neighbours.

Leo Dias, a columnist for the Metropoles website who is renowned for his scoops on celebrities, even named the artists due to perform at Neymar's party, such as Ludmilla and Wesley Safadao.

Guests' mobile phones are allegedly due to be confiscated on the door to prevent any evidence finding its way onto social media.

Brazil has suffered the second-largest number of Covid-19 related deaths in the world with more than 191,000, while 7.4 million people have contracted the virus.—AFP ■

PSG confirm sacking of coach Thomas Tuchel

PARIS Saint-Germain on Tuesday confirmed the sacking of coach Thomas Tuchel, who had been at the club since July 2018, but did not name his successor.

"After an in-depth analysis of its sporting situation, Paris Saint-Germain decided to terminate Thomas Tuchel's contract," the French giants announced in

a statement.

Argentinian Mauricio Pochettino is widely reported to be the favourite to become the next PSG coach.

Tuchel, whose axing was widely reported but unconfirmed last week, managed PSG 127 times in all competitions, with 95 wins, 12 draws and 20 defeats.

His trophy haul featured two Ligue 1 titles (2019, 2020) as well as the French Cup and French League Cup in 2020.

The 47-year-old German also led the Parisian club to their first ever Champions League final last August, which they lost 1-0 to Bayern Munich. —AFP ■

Federer and Nadal re-elected to ATP players' council

LONDON — Tennis legends Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer, ranked second and fifth in the world respectively, have been re-elected to the ATP players' council, whose term runs until June 2022.

The council, as voted by ATP player members, also saw the re-election of Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime, Australian John Millman, South African Kevin Anderson, Briton Andy Murray and Brazilian Bruno Soares.

In addition, France's Gilles Simon returns to the council having served previous terms, while newcomers Pablo Andujar of Spain and New Zealander Marcus Daniell will serve their first term.

Briton Colin Dowdeswell and Venezuela's Daniel Vallverdu were elected as representatives of retired players and coaches respectively.

The council's president and vice-president will be elected at its first meeting in 2021.

It was presided over until

last year by world number one Novak Djokovic.

But the Serb broke away in August to establish a new players' association which he said would include women and was intended to bring players together

to give them a louder voice in decision-making.

Federer and Nadal both spoke out against the proposal when it was announced, calling for "unity, not separation". —AFP ■



Tennis legend Rafael Nadal has been re-elected to the ATP players' council, whose term runs until June 2022. PHOTO: AFP/FILE