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Sunday, 10 January 2021

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Office of the President

Message of Greetings sent by President U Win Myint on occasion of 73rd Anniversary Kachin State Day celebration (10 January 2021)

Dear esteemed ethnic national brothers and sisters residing in Kachin State,

Today, the 10th of January marks the 73rd anniversary of Kachin State Day filled with auspiciousness for all ethnic national brothers and sisters residing in Kachin State. I wish to extend my greetings and good wishes to all Kachin racial groups and Union born ethnic nationals to be blessed with auspiciousness and free from the dangers of COVID-19.

At the first meeting of the Kachin State Council held on 10 January 1948, shortly after independence, to honour the establishment of the Kachin State Government, the 10th of January was designated as "Kachin State Day". Since then, Kachin State Day celebrations have been held every year, and now we have reached the 73rd anniversary.

The Union Government has been exerting strenuous efforts for the all-round development of Kachin State and has been implementing programmes in areas such

as transportation, education, health, human resources development, the supply of electricity, development of the socio-economic life of the people, and upgrading of healthcare services.

However, Kachin State which is blessed with such natural beauty and natural resources, due to the fact that armed conflicts have not yet ceased, has not been able to enjoy its natural beauty fully nor has it been able to effectively utilize its natural resources in the state development projects. In the implementation of development projects, regional peace and stability and the rule of law are essential for the success and effectiveness of these projects. Ethnic nationals who have already understood and enjoyed the fruits of peace are yearning for peace wholeheartedly and I believe that they would all want to achieve durable peace very quickly.

SEE PAGE-3

Myanmar nationals abroad brought back home by relief flight

THE 5th relief flight of Myanmar National Airlines (MNA) organized by the Myanmar Embassy in Singapore landed at Yangon International Airport bringing back a total of 141 Myanmar nationals, who were stranded in Singapore due to the suspension of international flights, yesterday 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 TTN)



Myanmar returnees from Singapore are seen at the Yangon International Airport on 9 January 2021. PHOTO: MNA

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“People are the key”

MSWRR holds coord meeting of National Disaster Management Working Committee, Fundraising Working Committee

MINISTRY of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement held a coordination meeting of the National Disaster Management Working Committee and Fundraising Working Committee via virtual system on 8 January in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the virtual meeting, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Working Committees, said the systematic management of the funds in accordance with the National Disaster Management Fund Law amended in 2017.

He highlighted the importance of the effective use of the fund in disaster management works by selecting the necessary preparation works and prioritizing them effectively; the need to report to the National Committee systematically and to draw up the necessary action plans in the annual budget request for the disaster management preparation and urgent response activities.

The Union Minister called for participation in the discussion to implement the most effective natural disaster



National Disaster Management Working Committee and Fundraising Working Committee hold the coordination meeting 1/2021 via videoconferencing on 8 January 2021. PHOTO: MNA

preparedness and preventive measures, to draw up master plans for each region and state to make spending more efficient and effective and to draw up one-year and long-term plans and prepare in advance.

Afterwards, Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry U Maung Maung Win, in his capacity as the Deputy

Chairperson of the Fundraising Working Committee, discussed the disbursement of funds for disaster management activities, availability of emergency funds, implementation of Southeast Asia Disaster Risk Insurance Facility (SEADRIF) fundraising activities and rules and regulations in spending the fund and audit issues.

After the members of the working committees, had discussed the implementation of the disaster management activities, operational status on Internally Displaced Persons, budgeting, water scarcity, cyclone shelter construction and the status of funding by the respective states and regions, the Union Minister and

Deputy Ministers coordinated the meeting.

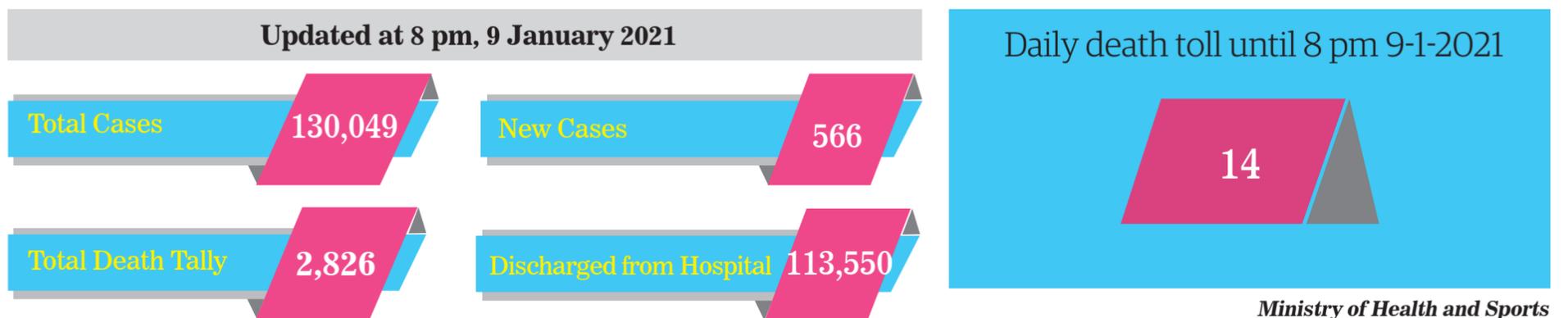
In his concluding speech, the Union Minister urged to manage the high risk factors and rapid disaster response and effective recovery process that may affect the socio-economic development of the country with the innovative use of required technologies, the advice based on the experience of experts, and with the systematic implementation of the standard guidelines on Disaster Management Law, strategies and by managing the government’s limited funds without a waste. He urged the Union Government, Nay Pyi Taw Council and the respective states and regions and people to work together and cooperate.

The meeting was also attended by the Ministers for Security and Border Affairs, Ministers for Planning, Finance Industry from Nay Pyi Taw Council and respective states and regions, Permanent Secretaries and Directors-General from Union Ministries.—MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

566 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 9 January, total figure rises to 130,049

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 130,049 after 566 new cases were reported on 9 January 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 130,049 confirmed cases, 2,826 died, 113,550 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA



COVID-19 Call Centre opens daily

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

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



Amendment of the State Constitution

Amendment of the State Constitution is absolutely necessary for the emergence of a democratic federal system which is the goal of our peacemaking efforts. We must strive with might and main for the emergence of the Constitution aligned with the peace agreements, the long-term needs of the country and the expectation of our people. There are only two years left for the 75th anniversary of Myanmar's Independence. A top priority of the government is to shape the country for our posterity. It is also the task for the people.

(Excerpt from Chairperson of National Reconciliation and Peace Centre and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's speech on New Year, on 2 January 2021)

Message of Greetings sent by President U Win Myint on occasion of 73rd Anniversary Kachin State Day celebration

FROM PAGE-1

At this time, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is on the path of democratic transition. For our nascent democracy to become stronger and mature and at the same time for it to be sustainable, peace and development are very important. That is why the Union Government has been exerting efforts for national reconciliation, Union peace and development as priority tasks.

For the resettlement of internally displaced persons due to armed conflicts, we are implementing that national strategy on the resettlement of IDPs and closure of IDP camps. In order to permit the IDPs in Kachin State to return to their homes in accordance with international standards in safety and confidence, "the Working Group for the resettlement of IDPs in Kachin State" which was formed by the NRPC – National Reconciliation and Peace Centre, is working in cooperation with the "Committee to assist IDPs in Kachin State".

Our Union Government was able to convene the meetings of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong, up to the Fourth Session successfully; this is because we wanted to tackle the fundamental problem of the ongoing armed conflicts which is to solve political problems through political dialogues and negotiations, because we want to achieve durable peace which has been the aspiration of our ethnic nationals for so many years; and also because we want to establish the Democratic Federal Union which is acceptable to our ethnic national brothers and sisters. Not only were we able to reach

common agreements, we were able to reach agreements also on the various step-by-step action plans and also the implementations which needed to be done step-by-step in the post-2020 period relating to the establishment of the Democratic Federal Union.

The cooperation and participation of all ethnic nationals are extremely important in building the new Democratic Federal Union. Now is the opportune time for all Union born ethnic nationals to take lessons from history and strive with unity as brothers and sisters, for the total cessation of armed conflicts to achieve peace which is genuine and durable. It is also necessary for ethnic armed organizations within Kachin State to participate and cooperate fully in the Union peace process.

As I send this message of greetings, I take this opportunity to urge all ethnic national brothers and sisters to join hands and participate with unity, firm Union spirit and genuine patriotic spirit as we march towards the new Democratic Federal Union.

*Sd/-
(Win Myint)
President*

MoALI discusses Farmers Organization Bill

THE Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation organized the 2nd coordination meeting on the draft of Farmers Organization Bill yesterday.

The meeting was attended by Union Minister Dr Aung Thu, Deputy Minister U Hla Kyaw, Permanent Secretary U Kyaw Min Oo, the Directors-General, Deputy Directors-General and other officials of the relevant department.

The meeting mainly focussed on the emergence of law for farmers' organization

affairs according to the Law of Protection of the Farmer Rights and Enhancement of their Benefits stipulated in 2018.

It also discussed the main points to add in the draft version of the law, formation of farmer associations and certain organizations to assign duties and to ensure checks and balances on these associations. — MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



Union Minister Dr Aung Thu joins the 2nd meeting on the draft of Farmers Organization Bill on 9 January 2021. PHOTO: MNA

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CHIEF EDITORAungthu Ya
aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm**DEPUTY CHIEF EDITOR**Aye Min Soe
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com**SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT**

Kyaw Myaing

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Aung Khin

LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITORSYe Htut Tin
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Aung Htein
Tun Tun Naing**TRANSLATORS**Hay Mar Tin Win, Ei Myat Mon,
Kyaw Zin Lin, Kyaw Zin Tun,
Maung Maung Swe, Khine Thazin Han,
Ei Phyu Phyu Aung**REPORTER**

Nyein Nyein Ei,

PHOTOGRAPHERKyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar
Kyaw Zeya**COMPUTER TEAM**Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,
Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin,
Thein Htwe, Nyi Lin Thu**EDITORIAL SECTION**(+95) (01)8604529,
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Hotline - 09 974424848marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
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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.

Announcement on contribution of cash donation towards COVID Vaccination Fund

- THE people who want to contribute cash donation for the purchase of vaccines, can donate to the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund at Myanmar Currency Account No. OA 013733 of Myanma Economic Bank (Nay Pyi Taw) by using the following methods:
 - Cash contribution can be made at Myanma Economic Bank (Nay Pyi Taw), branches of State-owned banks and private banks.
 - Cash contribution can be made with the Account Transfer method from other saving accounts of state-owned banks and private banks.
 - The donation via Mobile Banking/ Mobile Wallet can be made through Mobile Apps of their respective service Provider/private banks.
 - The donation via MPU Card (ATM Card) can be made through MPU.
 - The further information will be announced later for the well-wishers to donate safely via Over-the-Counter which links with MPU Debit/Credit cards, local/foreign Visa/Master Credit cards at the Website of the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry.
- The people who want to contribute cash donation for the purchase of vaccines can donate to the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund at Foreign Currency Account No. EDC 600012 of Myanma Economic Bank (Nay Pyi Taw) by using the following methods:
 - Any type of foreign currency can be directly donated via all the branches of Myanma Economic banks which received MC and AD licences.
 - Cash contribution can be made with the Account Transfer method from foreign currency accounts opened at the branches of Myanma Economic Bank.
 - Cash contribution can be made via the private and foreign banks by using SWIFT Code-MYEBMMMY together with the expression of Donation to COVID-19 Vaccination Fund (Account EDC 600012) Myanma Economic Bank.
 - If there is no direct communication between Myanma Economic Bank and the foreign banks for cash contribution by using the above — mentioned SWIFT Code and Donation to COVID-19 Vaccination Fund (Account EDC 600012) Myanma Economic Bank, the cash contribution can be made via the following foreign bank partners of Myanma Economic Bank:

UOB Bank (Singapore)	OCBC Bank (Singapore)
DBS Bank (Singapore)	May Bank (Singapore/Kuala Lumpur)
Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp (Tokyo)	Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi UFJ (Tokyo)
Mizuho Bank (Tokyo)	Bangkok Bank (Bangkok)
Siam Commercial Bank (Bangkok)	Krung Thai Bank (Bangkok)
Thanachart Bank (Bangkok)	ICBC Bank (China)
OCBC Wing Hang Bank (Shanghai)	China Construction Bank (China)
Sonali Bank (Bangladesh)	AB Bank (Bangladesh)

- For the records, the donors should send their names, phone numbers and addresses in full and other pieces of evidence of cash contribution to the e-mail — treasury05@365mopfi.gov.mm, treasury10@365mopfi.gov.mm (or) Viber-09-251182042 and 09-420788851.
- Those who want to donate in person and in virtual system in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay can contact the following persons:

Nay Pyi Taw	Yangon	Mandalay
Daw Si Si Pyone Director-General Treasury Department 067-3410156 09-450455237	U Min Thu Managing Director Myanma Agricultural Development Bank 01-8391342 01-8391072	U Tun Tun Aung Director Internal Revenue Department 02-4035916
Daw Yi Yi Khaing Deputy Director- General Treasury Department 067-3410158 09-254558424		

- The cash donated to COVID-19 vaccination Fund is exempted from tax according to the Income Tax Law.

*Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry
(Translated by Khaing Thazin Han)*

Announcement on fund establishment to purchase COVID-19 vaccines

- The National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on 30-12-2020 formed a Fund Management Sub-committee on the Purchase of COVID-19 Vaccines. The sub-committee has opened the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund at the Myanma Economic Bank in Nay Pyi Taw as follows:
 - Fund for purchase of COVID-19 vaccines (Foreign Currency Account No. EDC 600012). The bank account will be initially deposited with USD250 million, equivalent to about K338 billion from State-funding.
 - Fund for purchase of COVID-19 vaccines (Myanmar Currency Account No. OA 013733). The bank account is initially deposited K1 billion (K1,000 million) from State-funding.
- Therefore, organizations and people (local/ foreign countries) who want to contribute cash donation for the purchase of vaccines, can donate any type of foreign currency to the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund (Foreign Currency Account No. EDC 600012) at the Myanma Economic Bank (Nay Pyi Taw), and can donate Myanmar Kyat to the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund (Myanmar Currency Account No. OA 013733).
- The potential well-wishers can contact the following phone numbers:

Director-General (067 3410156)
Treasury Department (067 3410158)

Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry

Newly-harvested onion entering Mandalay market

THE harvested fresh onions from the regions are entering and being traded at Mandalay market, according to Thiri Marlar Onion Wholesale Commodity depots.

“Now, the onions are entering from the regions. It is expected for the onion to arrive on 15 January. This year, the onions are highly cultivated, and thus there will be abundant supply,” said U Kyaw Htay from an onion trader depot.

Fifteen truckloads of onions are arriving daily at least the commodity depot. The trading of the onion is as usual. The onion price will not be high this year, like last year despite abundant supply.

“Last year, onion was priced

K1,000 per viss. But this year, the onion fetched only K500 per viss. The supply of onion is high, but the demand for domestic consumption is also on the decline,” onion trader U Than Hla explained.

The onion price has dropped because of the abundant supply of the onion this year. However, the onion price has not decreased because there is the demand from China and Viet Nam and Myawady Township in Myanmar.

The onion is usually grown in summer and monsoon in Myingyan, Myittha, Yesagyo, Monywa, Seikphyu, Pakokku and other regions. — Min Htet Aung (Man Sub-printing house)

(Translated by Hay Mar)



Workers sort onions at a wholesale outlet in Mandalay. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MAN SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)

NOW Available

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Myanmar exports four categories of ginger

ACCORDING to the ginger traders, Myanmar is exporting four ginger categories in the new ginger harvest season.

“The exporter companies stock the ginger and export it to foreign markets by buying through the local traders. When they export the ginger, they divide it into four categories, and the price of ginger is also different.

Now, Myanmar exports the ginger to China, Thailand, Malaysia and Japan. But Japan buys only a small volume of ginger and only after conducting the quality check,” said kitchen

crops traders.

Myanmar determines the ginger quality as first grade, second grade, third grade and lower grade. First-grade ginger is sold for K1,800 per viss when second grade one, K1,600 per viss, third grade, K1,400 per viss and lower grade ginger, K1,200 per viss respectively.

“The exported ginger is grown in Kalaw and Aungban. Hopang is one of the most popular places in Myanmar. Japan demands only the first-grade ginger, which can keep long-lasting moisture and is fungus free. Japan is also like-

ly to buy the ginger which is freshly dug,” he added.

The ginger is dug. It needs to be refined. Then, the ginger skin is peeled and dried. After that, it needs to be stored in cold storage. Myanmar exports 68 per cent of ginger mostly to Thailand, Bangladesh, China, Sri Lanka and India.

Ginger are mostly grown in Kalaw, Aung Pan, Hopan, Pinlaung, Pindaya, Taunggyi and less grown in Chin State, Mandalay Region and Ayeyawady Region. —Zin Yaw Aye

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Over 22,000 truck drivers, helpers get COVID tested in 3 months

MORE than 22,000 truck drivers and helpers had COVID-19 detected with the use of rapid Antigen Testkit in three months from 4 October 2020 to 6 January 2021 to prevent delay of trade flow, according to the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI).

Yangon region government is conducting COVID-19 test on the drivers and their assistants to control the spreading of the COVID-19 through trade flow and ensure the smooth flow of

goods. The truck drivers and their helpers will be issued with the COVID-19 free health certificates, which will enable them to enter various states and regions.

On 2 October 2020, the officials from UMFCCI and States and Regions Chamber of Commerce and Industry negotiated through videoconferencing to detect truck drivers and conductors using the test kits. The federation also discussed having sufficient test kits to detect the truck drives and followers.

To ensure smooth transportation of the goods to another region, Myanmar has imported the test kits from South Korea to test COVID-19. The test kits can provide results within 30 minutes, according to UMFCCI.

Those who want to take a test must send their personal information to UMFCCI, and its federation will make announcements as to the number of people to take the test. — Aye Maung

(Translated by Hay Mar)

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Emergence of new peace architecture set in January

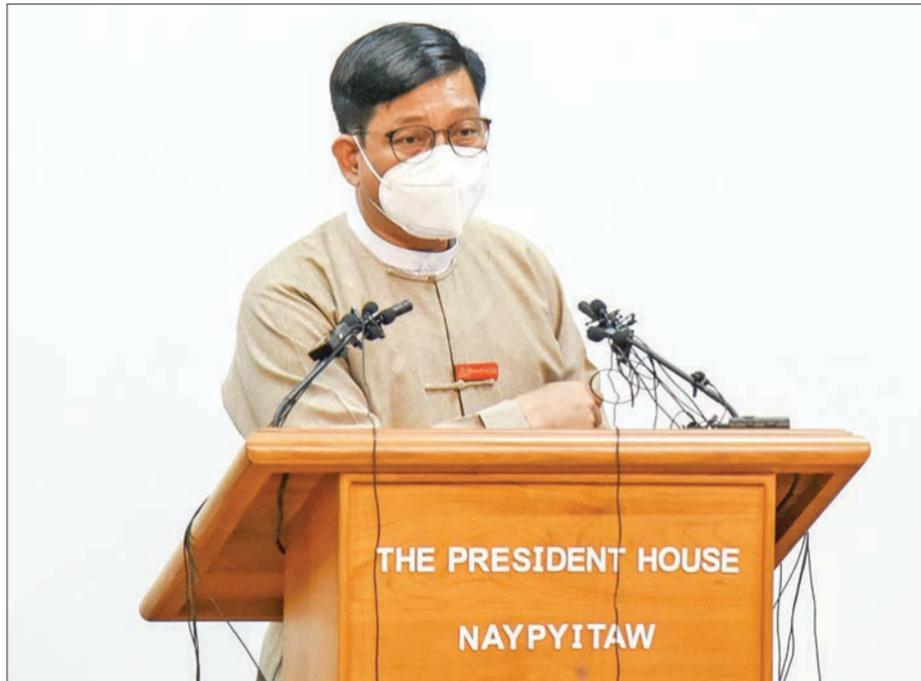
DIRECTOR-GENERAL U Zaw Htay of the Ministry of Office of State Counsellor met local and foreign media-persons at the Press Briefing Room of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw at 3 pm on 8 January in accord with the social distancing arrangement and explained the current situation of the nation.

At the press meet, Director-General U Zaw Htay explained the implementation of the post-2020 peace process with the involvement of NCA signatories and non-signatories through new approaches and efforts from all angles as the first point. In the second point, he assured serious consideration for the public role, which guarantees majority involvement. In the third point, he briefed on intense absorption in the new design of the peace process, which includes the policy guideline, necessary groupings and the adoption of the system and mechanism. In the fourth point, he explained the practical efforts to implement the sectors -- work program, designing and all-inclusiveness -- in the coming five years.

In explaining the fifth point, he said the new peace architecture beyond 2020 that will strike a balance between representation and effectiveness realization would be realized with added momentum, after comprehensively taking into account the review process in which participants from the main stakeholders to academics, management support groups, political parties, civil society organizations and the people can hold thorough discussions. As regards this part, the stakeholder groups are holding talks on the peace process, and because of Covid-19, they have been holding discussions for many times at zoom meetings, which is a continuous process.

The pros and cons of the peace process that started in 2016 were heard, and insight reviews and oversight reviews have been made in adopting the new method. We have listened to views of observers in addition to reviews of the participants of the process in compiling an insight review. Now, the work of collecting insight review and oversight review is in progress, and the adoption of the new peace architecture is based on it. Hence, the new peace architecture in a new design will appear this month, the DG said.

But there still remain many persons and organizations that will take part in the continuous dialogue. There will be coordination meetings in the coming week. The sixth point and the seventh point are important. The sixth point is the realization of the set goal for the advent of an encouraging stage from where the inclusive path to the goal of the Union can be seen vividly in 2022, which is the 75th anniversary or the diamond jubilee of the Panglong Agreement. The annual extent of progress beginning from 2021 must be set through coordination. The extent must be set and will try to reach its end through the dialogue between the government and the stakeholders, the DG said.



Director-General U Zaw Htay. PHOTO: AYE THAN

The seventh point is the diamond jubilee of Independence Day. The government will adopt a work program during the post-diamond jubilee to anticipate the type of the country on 4 January 2022, on which the 75th anniversary falls and to realize the way of living. These seven points are the main excerpts of the speech made by the State Counsellor in her New Year message.

There is a new post-2020 peace programme, which has three work programmes, and they have been already explained. Now I will explain their implementation and involvement. Political dialogue has proved its vitality in solving the core problems during the administrations of AFPFL, Revolutionary Council, Burma Socialist Programme Party, Tatmadaw, USDP and the NLD governments. Failure to reach the level of political dialogue has resulted in the continuation of the armed conflicts for many years. We have three work programs based on Part 3 of the Union Accord to lay the path towards this level. We have extracted these facts from the addresses of the State Counsellor at the sessions of the peace conference and the NCA anniversaries. So, the new peace architecture will be the foundation of our coming endeavours. We have now reached the Part 3 of the Union Accord in holding the dialogue with the 10 NCA signatories.

We have reached a Joint Statement with KNPP, a non-signatory. During the previous month, there was an online bilateral talk with KNPP, which expressed its desire it wishes to realize before signing the NCA. The date for another meeting has been set in this month.

The bilateral meeting has four participants -- Wa, Mongla, SSPP and KIA/KIO. Because of the continuous engagements with Tatmadaw troops, the bilateral meeting with KIA was almost cancelled. There are also three groups -- AA, TNLA and MNDAA. We have reached the level beyond the stage of issuing statements since we started discussions with them. Now, we are holding bilateral talks. We have

held thorough discussions on the path towards NCA. There was an informal meeting at the Kunming meeting, but there was a slight disagreement on the method of the process with them.

After holding a further discussion on the disagreement, we have reached a written consent with them on the process that has three stages. As the written consent has already been reached with the three groups, the government offered a dialogue with them in this month. We will hold talks with the three groups and KIA totalling four groups through the three-stage process. We expect to reach an NCA agreement with Wa, Mongla and SSPP. We have already realized three parts of Union Accord with NCA signatories. Part 3 of the Union Accord has three major sectors. The first is the framework agreement on the implementing of NCA.

The second is the post-2020 stage-wise work program and stage-wise implementations. We have reached accords in this sector. Part 3 is the basic principle in establishing a Union based on democracy and federal system. A small number of the points of Part 3 still need further discussions. Union Accord will go through a stage-wise implementation process. So, all the federal principles and democratic principles adopted at meetings will not be implemented together as expected earlier. When the step-by-step accords are reached through practical efforts, the way towards amending the 2008 Constitution will be sought, and sharing the constitutional rights to regions and states will be based on its results.

Power-sharing process of the 2008 Constitution includes the Union legislative list and the region/state legislative list. The way to designate joint powers between the Union and region/state will be sought, and at present, some of the issues the government is facing are concerned with both the Union and region/state. So, there will be in-depth discussions on power sharing. As a practicable way will be realized, the new process will be much different from the current trend.

As we must make a significant transformation, the functions of the conference, UPDJC, work committee and National Dialogue will also change. So, the new model, new approach, and the new process will emerge soon.

Peace-building is separated from the Union Accord. Peace-building is the first process, and efforts will be made to restore ceasefire. We will try to reach a ceasefire agreement with the non-signatories, and cement the existing ceasefire. We have further work to cement ceasefire through the monitoring process, and at the same time, we still have to lay down development programmes and IDP return programmes at the areas where a ceasefire is in force. So, we have set up different steps for the peace process. Another thing is the state-building. We wish to strengthen the regions and states. In other words, we will enhance their powers. So, we must further strengthen the administrative, legislative and judicial mechanisms and do more power-sharing.

All these undertakings can be designated as State-Building. The final stage is the nation-building which is the realization of the characteristics of the Union. We had earlier discussions for nation-building. But we cannot take a single identity as some big countries do. We have over 100 ethnic races. The inclusive agreement to the collective identity is called the Nation Building. There are two stages to implement the task, and they are the political sector and the military sector. The political sector has the implementation process of the Union Accord. There is also the reconciliation process from the security point of view that must be realized in accord with the para 30 of NCA. The two processes must go in parallel, and they need a mechanism. Here, I would like to say that after realizing the political sector and the military sector in parallel, we will reach the Democratic Federal Union. Another is the temporary ceasefire agreement with the four groups of the northern alliance. We have already sent the draft ceasefire agreement to them.

The discussion will be held depending on the northern alliance's attitude of four ethnic armed groups, and it is offered to conduct the discussion at Myitkyina or Kengtung. For the second phase, the Bilateral Ceasefire Agreement will be carried out one by one, including other IDPs affairs and development programmes. For example, it will include the areas where the election was not held.

He continued to say that they will discuss the main facts to gain effective ceasefire and avoid engagement between two groups. The conflict resolution will also be discussed how to manage if one side violates the agreements.

He then added the troop deployments would also be negotiated not to occur fighting.

Three and four organizations in the northern alliance and seven members of FPNCC welcomed the election results. It

can be seen their willingness to cooperate with the new government in peace processes. So, the discussion format can be different from the former ones in the coming talks. Discussions are being made to achieve a common position among the government, Hluttaw and Tatmadaw. The government is ready to discuss with the four northern alliance members. The government waits for a reply from them.

The Director-General then replied to the questions of media on the issue of writ application against State President to Union Supreme Court, purchase of COVID-19 vaccines, time to receive vaccines and cash contribution, attitude of government for the Tatmadaw's request to hold elections in the regions where the polls could not be held, political prisoner affairs, Myanmar seamen seized in Iran, arrangements for Shwe Kokko region of Kayin State, whether U Ye Min Oo participates in business field after he took governmental responsibility, performance of the Ministry of Home Affairs in arresting the fugitives whom the government wants, appointment of housing doctors, investigation of the Ministry of Home Affairs for the shooting incident of Ko Swe Win from Myanmar Now, prosecution against teachers who served as heads of polling booths, the current condition of relation between civilian and military, border fencing between China and Myanmar, different law sections for the same cases of KTVs which violated law during COVID-19 pandemic, investigation for the death case of Hluttaw MP U Htike Zaw, visit of Chinese Foreign Minister, performance of government for the fighting between KNU and Tatmadaw, reopening of primary schools, resettlement of Myaing Gyi Ngu IDPs, reshuffle of ward/villages administrators and the misuse of COVID-19 fund.

Regarding the writ application against President to Union Supreme Court, the Director-General explained with three facts.

He said he wants to say in accordance with law for the first fact. The Union Government Law was signed by Senior General Than Shwe, the Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council on 21 October 2010.

The sub-section (a) of Section 6 states the Union Government shall be formed with the following persons (i) President of the Union, (ii) Vice Presidents of the Union, (iii) Union Ministers, (iv) Attorney-General of the Union.

The sub-section (b) of Section (6)

states the Director-General of the Office of the Union Government shall be the Union Government's ex-officio secretary. The sub-section (b) of Section (7) states the same things such as shall, in carrying out under sub-section (a), have the right to carry out the party organizing works and constituency organizing works if it conforms with the provisions contained in sections 120 and 121 of the Constitution, commencing from the day of the declaration by the Union Election Commission to hold the election so that a citizen shall not lose the right to be elected as conferred under sub-section (a) of section 38 of the Constitution if the said person is a member of any political party, individual candidate or a citizen specifically appointed and assigned duty and if he will contest in the forthcoming general election.

The main word in that stipulation is that "if he will contest in the forthcoming general election".

The President and State Counsellor are the ones who contest in 2020 multiparty general election as Pyithu Hluttaw representatives. So it can be clearly seen that they have rights right to carry out the party organizing works and constituency organizing works, and it also conforms to the law.

He continued the second fact that the announcements of two Union Election Commissions led by Chairmen U Tin Aye and U Hla Thein.

If we look at the notification no (31/2015) of U Tin Aye's commission released on 8 July 2015 and notification no (117/2020) of U Hla Thein's commission released on 1 July 2020, we can see the different notification numbers and dates. The first paragraph's difference is that the dates for elections, party organizing works, and constituency organizing works. The second paragraph is also different from the dates for elections, election campaigns and constituency organizing works. The final parts also are distinguishable only with the sign, letter numbers and dates.

So, It is clear that the Union Election Commission led by U Hla Thein carried out the same measures in the 2020 general election just like the Union Election Commission led by 2015 general election.

For the third fact, U Zaw Weik applied the Writ of Quo Warranto against four officials, including the President to Union Supreme Court.

According to the Application of Writ Law and Rules, the Director-General will have to open case full documents

and grant order applications. The initial hearing group formed with three Justices of Union Supreme Court can order initial order or deny by their attitude or hearing the petitioners. The Supreme Court summoned to hear via videoconferencing on 29 January.

The four respondents do not need to come to the tribunal, and it is not true that the Supreme Court accepts the case.

According to Section 215 of the Constitution and Section 43 of the Union Government Law, it is stated: "The President shall not be answerable to either any Hluttaw or court for the exercise of these powers and functions in accord with the Constitution or any law."

He continued that the President and the State Counsellor performed in accordance with the law and didn't do anything against the law. He said the people themselves know that despite the various criticisms of those who couldn't accept the election defeat. He added the overwhelming victory of NLD in 1990 and 2015 election and the steady support of the people since 1990 to 2020 and therefore the false criticisms will just lead to political suicide.

Regarding the spreading of news on social media about the appointment of trainee doctors, the Union Minister of the Union Government Office and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry made the decision without presenting to the State Counsellor, it was fake news. There are processes to submit any case to the relevant department or ministry, and the direction has been issued on 22 April 2020 to Union Level Organization, Union Minister Offices, Nay Pyi Taw Council and all states and regions governments not to give information to irrelevant persons and if so, there will be charges. He said it was a matter of misunderstanding and the unwanted attacks were caused by the posting of unnecessary information on social media.

Regarding the Government's response to the resumption of fighting between the KNU and the Tatmadaw, he said when the fight began at the bottom, the KNU sent a letter to the Lt-Gen Yar Pyae in the Tatmadaw and only a copy was sent to the NRPC chairperson. The KNU was explained for the sending of the copy. Due to the nature of the letter, the government couldn't take responsibility since a copy was sent to the NRPC and therefore, to send to the Government if they want the Government to take responsibility.

He said although the Government know the reason for the fight, it can't take any action since the letter wasn't sent to the Government. Therefore, the KNU sent a letter to the Chairperson of the NRPC, the State Counsellor. The reply letter was sent to the KNU after the non-official discussion with Tatmadaw since before the Christmas, and it's still impossible to meet due to the holiday period. He said the Government has sent the agenda to discuss to the KNU and waiting for the meeting to be held as soon as possible.

The Government has discussed with the officials from the Electricity Department about the Bogali hydro-power project in advance in order to discuss with the KNU. In addition, there are proposals proposed by the KNU and the discussion has been made how to deal with these proposals.

Regarding the re-election of ward/village administrators, he said ward/village administration is important as it is the bottom of the administrative machinery. He added the election of ward/village administrators would be held all over the country and new administrators will be appointed nationwide on April 1.

There are three procedures for appointing administrators. Once the process of appointing administrators is completed, they will be provided with on-the-job training. The duties of an administrator have been issued under the current government.

During the COVID-19 period, there was controversy over the role of ward village administrators in supporting families with no regular income. Therefore, he said he wants the people to be interested in the selection of ward village administrators.

The amended law is more transparent than the previous one, and the selection process can be carried out more systematically. During the COVID-19 period, the WAs / VAs were in charge of Census; These are the groups that have to do practical work such as maintaining discipline. Therefore, he said the Government is planning to make them more systematic and qualified.

For those who want to serve as Administrator, the necessary information will be disseminated. He wished all the people to be interested in the ward/village administrator election process as it is a personal right and opportunity to select.— Myo Min Naing

(Translated by TMT, Khine Thazin Han and Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Police wipe out opium field in southern Shan State

OFFICIALS led by Shan State Police Chief destroyed fifty acres of illegally cultivated poppy fields near Yee Win village, Sa Haung Village Tract of Pang Lon, Loilem Township, southern Shan State yesterday, according to the Myanmar Police Force (MPF).

Shan State Police Chief Tin Ko Ko, District Police Commander Lieutenant Colonel Zeyar Kyaw, Commander of Rocket Tactical Command, No. 2 Missile Command Colonel Than Tun Aung, Commander of No. 2 Anti-Drug Squad Lieutenant Colonel Lin Htut

Myint, Commander of No. 26 Security Police Force Lieutenant Colonel Nyi Nyi Tun, Loilem Township Police Chief Moe Kyaw Hein and members of the Tatmadaw and Police Force together participated in destroying the poppy fields.

Next, the Shan State Police Chief handed over essential foodstuffs worth of K1,773,000 to the Tatmadaw men and Police Force, according to the MPF statement.—Loilem IPRD

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

AHEAD OF BIDEN INAUGURATION

North Korea's Kim calls US 'principal enemy'



North Korea has also completed plans for a nuclear-powered submarine, Kim said - something that would change the strategic balance. **PHOTO: KCNA VIA KNS/AFP**

NORTH Korean leader Kim Jong Un said the United States is his nuclear-armed nation's "principal enemy", state media reported Saturday, as he threw down the diplomatic gauntlet to

the incoming administration of Joe Biden.

The declaration comes less than two weeks ahead of the new US president's inauguration and after a tumultuous relationship between Kim and the outgoing leader Donald Trump.

Kim and Trump first engaged in a war of words and mutual threats, before an extraordinary diplomatic bromance that featured headline-grabbing summits and declarations of love by the US president.

But little substantive progress was made, with the process deadlocked after their February 2019 meeting in Hanoi broke down over sanctions relief

and what Pyongyang would be willing to give up in return.

The North should focus on "containing and subduing the US, the fundamental obstacle to the development of our revolution and our foremost principal enemy", Kim told the five-yearly congress of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea, the official KCNA news agency reported.

"The real intention of its policy toward the DPRK will never change, whoever comes into power in the US," it quoted him as saying, using the initials of the North's official name but without specifically mentioning Biden.

SOURCE: AFP

AN "UNHINGED" PRESIDENT

Pelosi says spoke with military chief on preventing Trump nuclear strike

US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Friday she spoke with the nation's top military leader about ensuring that an "unhinged" President Donald Trump does not launch a nuclear attack in his final days in office.

The top Democrat in Congress said she talked with Joint Chiefs Chairman Mark Milley "to discuss available precautions for preventing an unstable president from initiating military hostilities or accessing the launch codes and ordering a nuclear strike".

The extraordinary acknowledgement that Pelosi has spoken with military brass about restricting the president's powers

enshrined in the US Constitution came in a letter to her Democratic colleagues, and highlight the tensions in Washington over Trump's remaining days in the White House. "The situation of this unhinged president could not be more dangerous, and we must do everything that we can to protect the American people from his unbalanced assault on our country and our democracy," she wrote. A Milley spokesman, Colonel Dave Butler, said Pelosi did call the joint chiefs chairman but would not provide specifics other than to say Milly "answered her questions regarding the process of nuclear command authority".



Mark Alexander Milley, a United States Army general and the 20th chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. **PHOTO: MICHAEL REYNOLDS/POOL/AFP**

Pelosi in her letter also said she is prepared to launch impeachment proceedings against Trump if he does not voluntarily resign or if Vice President Mike

Pence does not begin a process laid out in the 25th Amendment that allows him and the cabinet to remove the president.

"If the president does not leave office imminently and willingly, the Congress will proceed with our action," she said.

Articles of impeachment have been drafted but they have yet to be introduced.

Momentum is growing among Democrats on Capitol Hill for ousting Trump after his supporters stormed the US Capitol seeking to prevent lawmakers from certifying Democrat Joe Biden's November election win.

SOURCE: AFP

LANDMARK DEAL

Qatar-Saudi border reopens after thaw

Qatar and Saudi Arabia reopened their land border Saturday, Qatari sources told AFP, as they restore ties following a landmark deal to end a three and a half year rift.

Saudi shut its side of Qatar's only land border in June 2017 as part of a package of sanctions it said was a response to Doha's backing for radical Islamist groups and closeness to Iran.

Qatar always denied the charges.

"Yes, the border is open," said one Qatari source, while another confirmed that traffic at the Abu Samrah crossing,

120 kilometres (75 miles) south of Doha, resumed around 0700 GMT.

Saudi Arabia, along with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt which also imposed an embargo on travel and trade, agreed to lift the restrictions at a Gulf Cooperation Council summit in the kingdom on Tuesday.

On January 4, Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah announced on state television that a deal had been agreed to "open the airspace and land and sea borders between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the State of Qatar".



A file photo taken on June 23, 2017, shows a general view of the Qatari side of the Abu Samrah border crossing with Saudi Arabia. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

"They are letting them go from the Qatar side," said a witness at the border on Saturday.

SOURCE: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

India detains Chinese soldier at flashpoint border

Indian forces have detained a Chinese soldier on the disputed Himalayan frontier where the world's two most populous countries fought a deadly battle last year, the military said Saturday. It is the second detention on the high altitude border since the pitched battles in June in which 20 Indian soldiers and an unknown number of Chinese troops were killed.

Both sides have since poured tens of thousands of troops and heavy weaponry into the tension zone in the Ladakh region, currently in the grip of freezing winter temperatures. The Indian army said in a statement that the People's Liberation Army soldier was "apprehended" on the Indian side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC), as the border is known, in the early hours of Friday and taken into custody.

SOURCE: AFP

'Post-9/11 era is over': Mob attack to haunt Biden on world stage

President-elect Joe Biden has vowed to restore a global leadership role for the United States, but he will be haunted by a final act of his predecessor -- inciting a mob to trash the US Capitol.

Allied democracies voiced shock, and authoritarian states alleged US hypocrisy after Donald Trump's supporters stormed and defiled the seat of US democracy to disrupt a ceremonial session that certified Biden's victory.

A number of lawmakers, scholars and activists said that Biden -- known for his strong interest in foreign affairs -- will be obliged to focus inward and confront the reality that perhaps millions of Americans believe Trump's unfounded conspiracy theories of electoral fraud. "The post-9/11 era is over. The single greatest national security threat right now is our internal division," said Elissa Slotkin, a Democratic congresswoman who was previously a CIA analyst.

SOURCE: AFP

CRIMINAL CASE OPENED

Avalanche kills three at Russian Arctic ski resort

THREE people were killed after an avalanche swept through a ski resort outside the Arctic city of Norilsk overnight, Russian investigators said Saturday.

The Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said it was notified at 00:30 local time (1730 GMT) that an avalanche had buried four buildings under snow at the Otdelnaya Gora ski complex in the town of Talnakh, 25 kilometres (16 miles) north of Norilsk.

Rescuers had recovered the bodies of a 38-year-old woman, her 18-month-old child and 45-year-old husband. A 14-year-old was found alive and "taken to the hospital with serious injuries".

The Investigative Committee added that it had opened a criminal case into deaths by negligence as a result of safety violations. Video published by the emergencies ministry showed rescuers shovelling snow off a building packed to its roof during the night.

On Instagram Saturday morning the emergencies ministry branch in Siberia's Krasnoyarsk region, which includes Norilsk, said all of the missing people had been found and it was ending the search and rescue mission.

Rescue volunteer Maxim Inikhov told journalists all of the buildings were unoccupied at the time of the avalanche except for one housing the director of the resort's ski lift, Vlad Popov, his wife and their two children.

SOURCE: AFP

SHAKE UP COOPERATION

US-Mexico drug war ripe for rethink under Biden, experts say



Mexico deployed the military in the war on drugs in 2006 but the move failed to rein in powerful cartels. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

PRESIDENT-ELECT Joe Biden's arrival in the White House is expected to bring a shake-up of US-Mexican cooperation in a bloody war on drugs that has failed to rein in powerful cartels, experts say. Mexico has seen more than 300,000 murders since deploying the military in

the anti-narcotics fight in 2006, most of them blamed on criminal gangs, while drugs continue to flood across its northern border.

Outgoing US President Donald Trump has been a staunch supporter of tough action against the drug lords, calling for a "war" on the cartels. Biden's Demo-

crats, however, "are more concerned about militarizing the cooperation and the human rights violations that often result," said Michael Shifter, president of the Washington-based think tank Inter-American Dialogue.

He believes that Biden will focus not only on tackling drug trafficking but also on a new approach to contain illegal migration from Central America and Mexico. The International Crisis Group (ICG) think tank argues that Washington must stop pushing Mexico to unleash ever more military force against criminal gangs. The United States should change course and recognize that "reliance on iron-fist militarization has proven a failure," it said in a report ahead of the November election won by Biden.

SOURCE: AFP

SRIWIJAYA AIR FLIGHT #SJ182

Sriwijaya Air jet feared crashed after losing contact

AN Indonesian budget airline plane with 62 people on board is suspected to have crashed into the sea shortly after the Boeing 737 took off from Jakarta airport on Saturday, authorities said.

Flight tracking data showed the Sriwijaya Air Boeing 737-500 plunged into a steep dive about four minutes after it left Soekarno-Hatta international airport.

Sixty-two passengers and crew were on board, including 10 children, the nation's transport minister, Budi Karya Sumadi, told reporters.

The suspected crash site is near tourist islands just off the coast of Indonesia's



Indonesia's Sriwijaya Air lost contact with one of its passenger planes shortly after take-off from the capital Jakarta, the country's transport ministry said Saturday. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

sprawling capital.

The plane took off on Saturday afternoon and a search

and rescue operation began with no official results available on Saturday night.

SOURCE: AFP

"We deployed our team, boats and sea riders to the location suspected to be where it went down after losing contact," Bambang Suryo Aji, a senior official at the agency, told reporters after nightfall.

Sriwijaya Air flight SJ182 was bound for Pontianak on Indonesia's section of Borneo island, about 90 minutes flying time over the Java Sea.

"I have four family members on the flight -- my wife and my three children," Yaman Zai said as he sobbed at Pontianak airport.

"They haven't arrived. They're not here," he was heard saying as he spoke on his mobile phone.

NEWS IN BRIEF

HEART-WRENCHING TRAGEDY

10 babies killed in India hospital fire

TEN babies were killed in a maternity unit in the Indian state of Maharashtra early Saturday when fire tore through a major hospital, a doctor said.

Staff rescued seven of the newborn infants at the Bhandara district hospital but were beaten back before they could get to the 10 others, Pramod Khandate, a senior doctor, told AFP.

All of those who died were aged between a few days and three months, according to reports.

"The cause of the fire is not known yet but our staff extinguished the fire as soon as they could. The smoke led to the babies suffocating," Khandate said.

Nurses on duty noticed a fire coming from the hospital's neonatal unit and raised the alarm.

The fire brigade stopped the blaze from spreading to other parts of the hospital and other patients were moved to safety.

SOURCE: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

HEALING POWERS

Devotees flock to Philippine church for miracle from Catholic icon

THOUSANDS of devotees thronged a church in the Philippine capital Saturday for a glimpse of a centuries-old statue of Jesus Christ believed to have miraculous healing powers, after an annual parade was cancelled due to Covid-19. Ignoring official pleas to stay home because of the virus threat, Catholics wearing masks and face shields gathered along an avenue outside the Quiapo Church in Manila where the first of 15 masses for the feast of the Black Nazarene began before dawn.

People patiently waited to enter the church or watched the back-

to-back masses broadcast live on large screens outside.

The orderly scenes were in contrast to the normal frenzied procession involving hundreds of thousands of pilgrims risking life and limb to touch the icon in the belief it can heal the sick. The life-sized statue -- brought to the Philippines in the early 1600s when the country was a Spanish colony -- is traditionally pulled through the packed streets of the capital on a float in one of the world's biggest displays of Catholic devotion.

SOURCE: AFP

A RISE IN HOME-WORKING

UK company survey shows home-working to quintuple by 2025

WORKING from home in Britain is expected to quintuple by 2025, intensifying a trend turbo-charged during the coronavirus pandemic, according to a study by consulting firm Deloitte published Friday.

After surveying 90 financial directors drawn from some of Britain's biggest companies, it found the global health crisis had "triggered fundamental and lasting changes in business".

As many as 98 per cent of those questioned predicted a rise in home-working in the coming years, while more than three-quarters expect the government's current order to work from home to continue through the first half of this year.

Almost 60 per cent expected the curbs on going to workplaces to be permanently lifted in the third quarter, as the country's Covid-19 mass-vaccination programme progresses.

The government imposed a third stay-at-home lockdown this week after a surge in infections linked to a new strain. It



Working from home in Britain is expected to quintuple by 2025, intensifying a trend turbo-charged during the coronavirus pandemic, according to a study by consulting firm Deloitte. PHOTO: AFP

intends to review the measures in mid-February.

Meanwhile, almost all chief financial officers (CFOs) surveyed expect personal taxes to increase, with nearly two-thirds predicting higher taxes on businesses and an increased state role following huge interventions to prop up the economy.

"By and large, this massive forced experiment in home-working has been very

successful," Ian Stewart, chief economist at Deloitte, told the Daily Telegraph.

"Sectors have been able to maintain quite a high degree of effectiveness operating from home." Deloitte UK chief Richard Houston said even after the pandemic, CFOs anticipate greater home-working, diversification of supply chains and investment in technology.

SOURCE: AFP

INCITING VIOLENCE

Google pulls Parler from app shop for 'egregious content'

GOOGLE said Friday it had pulled the Parler app from its mobile store for allowing "egregious content" that could incite deadly violence like that seen at the US Capitol. The Parler social network has become a haven for far-right personalities who say they have been censored by other social media platforms. "We're aware of continued posting in the Parler app that seeks to incite ongoing violence in the US," Google said in a response to an AFP inquiry.

"For us to distribute an app through Google Play, we do require that apps implement robust moderation for egregious content," the company added, referring to its shop for digital content tailored for Android-powered devices. Policies and enforcement practices that curb posts inciting violence are agreed to by app developers whose software is made available at Google Play, according to the Silicon Valley internet titan. "In light of this ongoing and urgent public safety threat, we are suspending the app's listings from the Play Store until it addresses these issues," Google said.

Apple has reportedly warned Parler that its software could be removed from the App Store if it doesn't take measures to prevent users from planning illegal, violent activities on the platform such as the deadly attack in Washington. SOURCE: AFP



MEDIA MOGUL

Murdoch empire calls time on Trump but tries to keep his base onside



Fox News host Tucker Carlson, the second most-watched TV presenter in the US, has accused Trump of "recklessly encouraging" the rioters in Washington with an inflammatory speech. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

THE storming of the US Capitol has triggered Rupert Murdoch's media empire to call time on Donald Trump, with The Wall Street Journal saying the president should resign and even acolytes on Fox News telling viewers he has reached the end of his shelf life.

Murdoch's right-wing outlets helped propel the property tycoon-turned re-

ality TV star to the White House in 2016, remaining steadfastly loyal for four years before cracks in the alliance began to appear on re-election day. Wednesday's rampage around the halls of Congress by a pro-Trump mob, leading to five deaths and worldwide uproar and condemnation, appears to have sounded the death knell for the rela-

tionship, although the outlets face a tricky balancing act keeping his supporters.

"Trump's no longer going to be President of the United States and the odds of him getting back to that position someday keep decreasing. So as his power decreases there's a logic that says, 'Let him go, cut him loose,'" New York University journalism profes-

sor Mitchell Stephens told AFP. On Thursday, The Wall Street Journal's editorial board did just that, calling on the 74-year-old Trump to step down before being impeached. "This week has probably finished him as a serious political figure," said the column, adding: "It is best for everyone, himself included, if he goes away quietly." SOURCE: AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ALS SUMIRE VOY. NO. (1039W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ALS SUMIRE VOY. NO. (1039W/E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **10-1-2021** 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 OCEAN NETWORK EXPRESS (S'PORE)
PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MAGNUM POWER

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MAGNUM POWER VOY. NO. (20202)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **10-1-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIPL** 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: 2301928

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S GLOBAL MARS SHIPPING

FRAUD CHARGES

Deutsche Bank to pay \$130 mn to settle US probes

DEUTSCHE Bank will pay \$130 million to settle a foreign bribery probe and fraud charges in precious metals trading, US officials announced Friday.

The bribery case relates to illegal payments and to false reporting of those sums on the bank's books and records between 2009 and 2016, the Department of Justice said in a press release. The bank "knowingly and wilfully" kept false records after employees conspired with a Saudi consultant to facilitate bribe payments of over \$1 million to a decision maker, the DOJ said.

In another case, the bank paid more than \$3 million "without invoices" to an Abu Dhabi consultant "who lacked qualifications... other than his family relationship with the client decision maker," the DOJ said.

SOURCE: AFP

US TENSIONS WORSEN

China enacts rules to counter 'unjustified' foreign laws

CHINA on Saturday introduced new rules to counter "unjustified" laws and measures that other countries might apply to its companies and citizens, as tensions with the United States worsen. The rules aim at "protecting the legitimate rights and interests" of Chinese people and companies, and safeguarding the country's interests, said the commerce ministry. China's move comes as its firms face increasing pressure abroad, particularly from the US, which has placed restrictions on telecoms giant Huawei, blocking its access to vital American components. SOURCE: AFP

"UNEVEN IMPACT" OF THE VIRUS
U.S. loses 140,000 jobs in December as COVID-19 spikes stall labour market recovery

U.S. employers slashed 140,000 jobs in December, the first monthly decline in employment since April 2020, as recent COVID-19 spikes stall labor market recovery, the Labour Department reported Friday. "The decline in payroll employment reflects the recent increase in coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and efforts to contain the pandemic," the department's Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS) said in its monthly employment report. SOURCE: Xinhua

FAST RECOVERY FROM THE PANDEMIC

IMF projects China's economy to grow by 7.9 pct in 2021



China's economy is projected to expand by 7.9 per cent in 2021 following 1.9 per cent growth in 2020. PHOTO: AFP

CHINA'S economy is projected to expand by 7.9 per cent in 2021 following 1.9 per cent growth in 2020, as economic activity continues to normalize and domestic COVID-19 outbreaks remain under

control, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said Friday. "The Chinese economy continues its fast recovery from the pandemic, helped by a strong containment effort and swift

policy actions to mitigate the impact of the crisis," the executive board of the IMF said in a statement after concluding the annual Article IV review of the Chinese economy. "Policymakers have

provided financial relief and fiscal support to protect the most-affected firms while safeguarding financial stability," the IMF's executive board said, adding macroeconomic and financial policies have supported the economic recovery.

IMF executive directors called for a continuation of the "moderately supportive" fiscal and monetary policies until China's recovery is on solid ground. As the recovery takes hold, the temporary measures supporting the financial sector should be replaced with policies to address problem loans and strengthen regulatory and supervisory frameworks, said the executive directors. SOURCE: Xinhua

Invitation for Bids

Date: 05 January 2021
Loan Agreement No: MY-P20
IFB No: 1/ICB/MY-P20/MESC/2021
Reference Identification No: JICA(MY)12-28006 Dated on 28 December 2020

- The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received a loan from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) toward the cost of Power Distribution System Improvement Project in Major Cities. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the Contract for Procurement of Power Distribution System Improvement Project in Major Cities, Package 12 Introduction of Utility Vehicles.
- Bidding will be conducted through procedures in accordance with the applicable Guidelines for Procurement under Japanese ODA Loans, and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries, as defined in the Loan Agreement.
- The Mandalay Electricity Supply Corporation now invites sealed Bids from eligible and qualified Bidders for the procurement of Utility Vehicles ("the Goods").
 - Truck Mount Aerial Work Platform 2 Nos. to be delivered to designated place in Myanmar
 - Digger and Pole Erection Machine 2 Nos. to be delivered to designated place in Myanmar
- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the Bidding Documents at the office of Mandalay Electricity Supply Corporation (MESC), Ministry of Electricity and Energy (MOEE), 27th Street, Between 77 and 78 Street, Chan Aye Thar Zan Township, Mandalay, Myanmar.
- A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on the submission of a written application to the address above, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee: MMK 15,000 or 10 Dollar

As special measures in consideration with the restriction or constraint on moving to Mandalay City due to COVID-19, a complete set of Bidding Documents can be purchased by means of prepaying a fee by bank transfer and sending PDF files to an interested Bidder by e-mail. If requesting this method, an interested Bidder shall contact to the Purchaser. (Telephone numbers or e-mail addresses are shown below.)

- The provisions in the Instructions to Bidders and in the General Conditions of Contract are the provisions of the Standard Bidding Documents under Japanese ODA Loans for the Procurement of Goods.
- Bids must be delivered to the above address at or before 14:00 on 9 March 2021 and must be accompanied by a Bid Security of 20,000USD.
- Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 14:00 on 9 March 2021 at the office of
Mandalay Electricity Supply Corporation (MESC), Ministry of Electricity and Energy (MOEE)
Mr. Aung Kyaw Hein, General Manager Planning Department
27th Street, Between 77 and 78 Street, Chan Aye Thar Zan Township, Mandalay, Myanmar

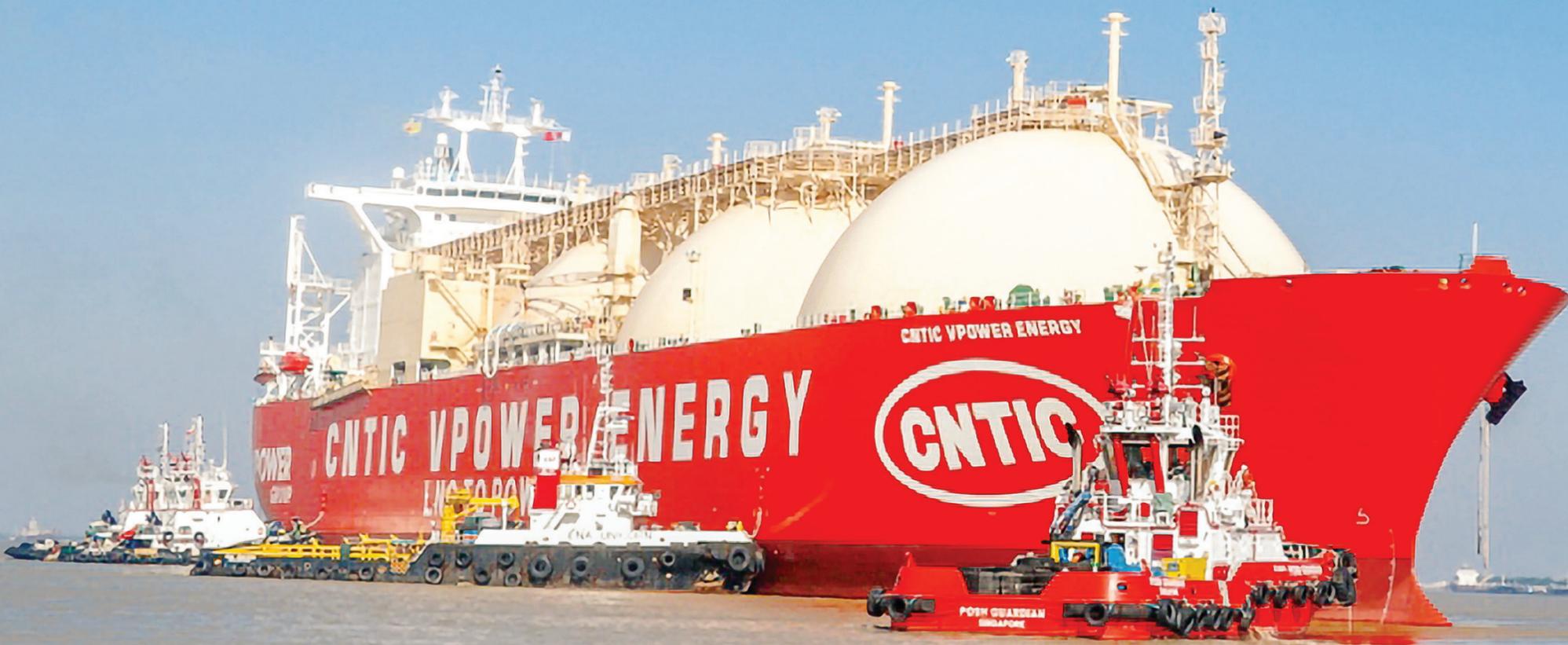
Telephone: 1) +95-2-4069121
2) +95-9-259116604
Facsimile number: 1) +95-2-4069121
2) +95-2-403488
Electronic mail address: 1) gmpm.mesc@moe.gov.mm
2) mescjica@gmail.com
3) mescmateplan@gmail.com

Invitation for Bids

Date: 5 January 2021
Loan Agreement No: MY-P20
IFB No: 2/ICB/MY-P20/MESC/2021
Reference Identification No: JICA(MY)12-22008 dated on 22 Dec 2020

- The Government of Republic of the Union of Myanmar has received a loan from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) towards the cost of Power Distribution System Improvement Project in Major Cities. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the Contract for Package 11 Construction of New Five 33/11 kV Substation in Mandalay City.
- Bidding will be conducted through procedures in accordance with the applicable Guidelines for Procurement under Japanese ODA Loans, and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries, as defined in the Loan Agreement.
- The Mandalay Electricity Supply Corporation now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the design, execution and completion of Construction of New Five 33/11 kV Substations in Mandalay City ("the Works"). International Competitive Bidding will be conducted in accordance with JICA's Single-Stage Bidding Procedure.
- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the Bidding Documents at the office of the Mandalay Electricity Supply Corporation (MESC), Ministry of Electricity and Energy (MOEE) Address: Between 26-27 and 77-78 Streets, Chan Aye Thar Zan Township, Mandalay Phone: +95-2-4069121, FAX: +95-2-4069121
- A complete set of the Bidding Documents may be purchased and inspected by interested Bidders on the submission of a written application to the address above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of MMK 50,000 or USD 40
- Bids must be delivered to the address above on or before 14:00 on 9 March 2021 and must be accompanied by a Bid Security of JPY13,500,000
- Bids will be opened in the presence of Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 14:00 on 9 March 2021 at the office of Mandalay Electricity Supply Corporation (MESC), Mandalay.

Mandalay Electricity Supply Corporation (MESC), Ministry of Electricity and Energy (MOEE)
Mr. Aung Kyaw Hein, General Manager Planning Department
27th Street, Between 77 and 78 Street, Chan Aye Thar Zan Township, Mandalay, Myanmar
Telephone: 1) +95-2-4069121
2) +95-9-259116604
Facsimile number: 1) +95-2-4069121
2) +95-2-4034889
Electronic mail address: 1) gmpm.mesc@moe.gov.mm
2) mescjica@gmail.com
3) mescmateplan@gmail.com



Thilawa, Thakayta and Thanlyin work together to implement first-ever LNG-to-Power project

By Maung Lwan Ne (Yesagyo)

TRANSLATED BY HTUT HTUT (TWANTAY)

THE breeze blowing through the Yangon River made me warm. A host of sea-going vessels are anchored in the wide river. A scene of a flock of birds slowly flying in the sky seems a flurry and the ships small and big navigating in the river looks like a moving painting.

On the bankside of Yangon River, Dolphin Jetty and Floating Storage Unit (FSU) and LNG Regasification Plant are as part of LNG-to-power project in Myanmar.

Power Generation Project

This site serves a historic location for the Ministry of Electricity and Energy that put the effort in the generation of power by using liquefied natural gas (LNG) for the first time in Myanmar. LNG will be changed into natural gas through the regasification plant, and it will be consumed to generate power after being supplied to local power plants. With the consumption of natural gas sent from the LNG-to-power project 350 MW, Thanlyin power plant and 400 MW Thakayta power plant began power generation and distributed it to where necessary during June in 2020.

The Ministry of Electricity and Energy has set up short-term, mid-term and long-term projects phase by phase for ensuring equitable development in the process

of generating, sending and distributing power so as to meet the increasing daily consumption of electricity. With the noticeable socio-economic developments in the country, there has been an enormous increase in the power demand of the people. For that reason, it is required to generate more power than previously expected in a short time.

Continuous efforts in generation power

With the effective use of resources capable of generating power in the country, the Ministry of Electricity and Energy is making every effort to enhance the role of power generation building power plants inviting investments from the private sector on the basis of independent power producer (IPP) system.

Electricity is currently generated with the use of different ways and means such as hydropower, natural gas, coal and solar. It is not easy to fulfil ongoing power demand in a short time as the construction of a hydro-power plant has to take time. There has been a gradual decrease in the local production of natural gas. It is impossible to fulfil power demand in a short period despite best efforts in the search for natural gas from on-shore and offshore oil and gas blocks.

For that reason, the Ministry of Electricity and Energy adopted strategies for undertaking the speedy generation of electricity in a short time in order to satisfy the power demand from the people. LNG-to-Power plants are to be built as soon as possible by boosting the capacity of department-owned machines producing electricity run with natural gas.

As stated by this strategy, the Ministry of Electricity

and Energy set up projects in seven places from regions and states in an effort to generate 1,166 MW during 2020. They are 400 MW Thakayta project, 350 MW Thanlyin project, 151.54 MW Ahlon project in Yangon Region, 70 MW Shwetaung project in Bago Region, 150 MW Kyaukphyu project in Rakhine State, and 66 MW Magway project and 21.54 MW Kyunchaung project in Magway Region.

Magway, Shwetaung, Kyunchaung and Ahlon projects can be operated by using locally-produced natural gas, but Thakayta, Thanlyin and Kyaukphyu projects by using the imported LNG. Among the seven projects, Magway power plant was commissioned into service on 13-12-2019, Ahlon power plant on 31-5-2020, Kyunchaung power plant on 3-6-2020, Thakayta power plant on 8-8-2020, Shwetaung power plant on 30-8-2020, and Thanlyin power plant on 8-10-2020. Now a total of 988 Mw of power can have been sent to the national grid, and the ministry continues trying to generate power from the remaining Kyaukphyu power plant by the summer in 2021.

Priority to be placed on power generation in use of fuel

It is true that Myanmar has a wealth of water sources and possesses advantages capable of generating power in use of renewable energy. Myanmar's current situation is to place a priority on the power negation by fuel in order to fulfil a power demand within a short time and help a continuous speedy flow of national grid. Therefore, LNG, a kind of fuel which is the least impact on the natural environment, has been opted for the generation of power and access to LNG on the market must be easy. LNG saw a high price in the past, but now it stands at a

reasonable price.

The Ministry of Electricity and Energy chose favourable locations where LNG power plants were built by taking advantages, thereby contributing to high demand for power, easy access to fuel and easy sending of power to the national grid.

The power consumption of Yangon makes up 1,608 MW, accounting for 42% of the nationwide consumption. The power necessary for Yangon is sent from the power plants in the northern and central parts of the country through the very long power lines. The construction of further LNG-to-power plants will ensure full and stable power along with the benefits such as a reduction in power breakdown and power waste and loss.

In addition to that, it will help to boost a low production of natural gas by the State, thereby contributing other industries with the use of basic facilities of the natural gas pipelines already built in the country. The gas-fired power plants already built in the country will be able to run at full capacity as well.

Yangon with a high population density needs to take a reduction in carbon emission into consideration. LNG-to-power plants ensure a reduction in carbon emission as it consumes clean fuel.

Transmission of power to national grid

Letter of Acceptance (L.O.A) was issued to Thakayta and Thanlyin power projects on 6-9-2019. CNTIC VPower YG1 Limited and CNTIC VPower YG2 Limited that respectively won the tenders for Thakayta 400 MW LNG power plant project in Thakayta and Thanlyin 350 MW LNG power plant project in Thilawa began the work in parallel on the same day of 6-9-2019 as soon as L.O.A was received.

Even in a short time, power can be sent to the national grid due to the speedy measures in the implementation process, and power can be provided for the State and the people as expected.

Dolphin Jetty had to be built for enabling Floating Storage Unit (FSU) to be berthed for the purpose of distributing LNG fuel to Thakayta and Thanlyin LNG-to-power projects. The Mobile Filling Platform (MFP) had to be quickly built to help the power plants run by LNG during the time of constructing the Dolphin Jetty. MV

“ They are 400 MW Thakayta project, 350 MW Thanlyin project, 151.54 MW Ahlon project in Yangon Region, 70 MW Shwetaung project in Bago Region, 150 MW Kyaukphyu project in Rakhine State, and 66 MW Magway project and 21.54 MW Kyunchaung project in Magway Region. ”

CNTIC VPower Global carrying first-ever LNG 28000m³ to Myanmar managed to successfully dock on 6 June in 2020. At the same time, a new chapter for LNG-to-power project could be open in Myanmar's electric power sector:

Systematic arrangements are being made so as to provide LNG fuel for LNG-to-power projects without any shortage. LNG Mother Vessel MV Methane Alison Victoria capable of storing LNG 140,000 m³ is anchored near Thameehla Islands in Myeik Archipelago. The LNG from Mother Vessel is transported again to Thilawa by two Shuttles. For the first step, LNG has to be carried to the large vessel capable

of storing LNG 28,000 m³ which berths as the FSU during which the Dolphin Jetty is under construction.

Arrival of MV CNTIC VPower Energy to Dolphin Jetty

The construction of the Dolphin Jetty has been currently completed. MV CNTIC VPower Energy capable of storing 120,000m³ LNG has already arrived in place of Dolphin Jetty where MV CNTIC VPower Global carrying first-ever LNG 28,000m³ was originally used as the tem-

porary FSU. The MV CNTIC VPower Global which was originally used as the temporary FSU will continue transporting LNG en route from Myeik to Thilawa as the LNG Shuttle.

November 26th of 2020 when MV CNTIC VPower Energy capable of storing 120,000m³ LNG could be successfully berthed at Dolphin Jetty is a historic day for the Ministry of Electricity and Energy setting a new record along Yangon River. The large vessel is 272-metre in length with 9-metre sounding and total tonnage of 106,283.

The construction of Mobile Filling Platform, the arrival of LNG storage ves-

sels and power generation by LNG are a first-hand experience for Myanmar. The Ministry of Electricity and Energy achieved success in the implementation of overcoming difficulties and challenges during the ongoing Covid-19 crisis.

In the group of plants in Thakayta, Max Power Company Limited-owned 50MW gas engine plant on the basis of IPP/BOT, U Energy Company Limited-owned 106MW plant on the basis of JV/BOT and State-owned 154MW plants are all in the process of generating power now. 400 MW LNG-to-power has already been built in Thakayta, and so a group of plants in Thakayta adds up to 710MW, and has now become a major power distribution place. The power coming from the plants is supplied to Dagon Myothit (South) and Dagon Myothit (North), Thakayta, Mayangon, Botahtaung, Bahan and Dawbon through sub-power station of Thakayta and the surplus power to the national grid via 230KV power lines.

Sufficient power to be consumed

Sufficient power will be able to be supplied not only to the industrial zones and Thilawa Special Economic Zone in Thanlyin and Kyauktan but also to technological development zone in Htantabin, industrial garden project in Hlegu, urban infrastructure facilities in Yangon area. Full access to power is of great importance in a bid to develop a nation. With that notion, the Ministry of Electricity and Energy is striving for a full percentage consumption of power across the country in 2030 as expected.



MV CNTIC VPower Energy capable of carrying 120,000m³ LNG is berthed at the Dolphin Jetty in Thilawa.

Star player Win Naing Tun joins YUFC for three-year loan

MYANMAR U-23 national team and Ayeyawady United striker Win Naing Tun has recently signed a three-year contract with Yangon United Football Club, according to a statement with the football club.

Upon joining the team, the 20-year-old forward player has expressed his overwhelmed feeling.

"I am proud to be a part of a great team in the Myanmar National League, and I will perform as much as I can for the team. And I want to say our fans to support wherever you are and I will work hard to be ready for the team," said Win Naing Tun.

The young striker began his domestic league career in Yadanarbon from 2017 to 2019 and moved to Ayeyawady United in 2020.

Win Naing Tun studied football education from National Football Academy

(Mandalay) from 2011 to 2015. Next, he was selected in the junior Myanmar National team and assisted in winning the silver medal in AFF U-16 Championship in Cambodia in 2016, and another silver medal in the AFF U-19 Championship in Indonesia in 2018. Win Naing Tun achieved Top Scorer Award in the Youth Championship.

Next, he also helped the junior Myanmar team earn a third place in the U-21 Brunei Invitation Cup and a second place in the Thanh Nien Newspaper International U-21 tournament in Viet Nam. He won the best player of the match in the Viet Nam tourney.

Along with the Myanmar National U-22 team, Win Naing Tun made his best to secure the bronze medal of the men's football event in SEA Games 2019. —Lynn Thit (Tgi)



Youth striker Win Naing Tun seen with the Yangon United banner. PHOTO: YUFC

Milan teams regroup as Roma, Juventus close gap in Serie A



AC Milan remain one point ahead of second-placed Inter Milan despite Juventus ending their 27-match unbeaten league run last week. PHOTO: AFP

MILAN—Reeling after mid-week defeats, both Milan clubs look to get back on track in Serie A this weekend to hold off their rivals as champions Juventus and Roma close the gap on the leaders. Milan remain one point ahead of second-placed Inter despite Juventus ending their

27-match unbeaten league run with Inter's eight-match winning streak ending at Sampdoria. Stefano Pioli's Milan have a chance to consolidate their lead at home against 17th-placed Torino on Saturday, a day before Inter face a tricky trip to Roma, who are three points behind

their opponents in third. Both Milan clubs have injury worries. Star striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic remains sidelined for a ninth consecutive league game with midfielder Hakan Calhanoglu joining the growing Milan injury list with an ankle problem. —AFP ■

English seizes two-stroke PGA Tournament of Champions lead

KAPALUA, Hawaii—Harris English closed with a 10-foot birdie to fire a six-under par 67 and seize a two-stroke lead after Friday's second round of the US PGA Tournament of Champions.

The 31-year-old American made six birdies in a bogey-free round to stand on 14-under 132 after 36 holes on the par-73 Plantation course at Kapalua, Hawaii.

"I feel good about my game right now," English said. "I felt like I played really solid. Just didn't hole as many putts as I did in the first round. I drove the ball really well and hit a lot of greens in regulation." "If I keep shooting six-under it's going to be a good score at the end of the week." Americans Justin Thomas, Ryan Palmer, Collin Morikawa and Daniel Berger shared second on 134 with South Korean Im Sung-jae and Americans Brendon Todd, Patrick Reed and Xander Schauffele on 135.

World number one Dustin Johnson, in his return after winning the Masters in November, was among seven on 136 ahead of the weekend shootout. "You've got to go low out here," English said. "I'm going to try to make as many birdies as I can. I've got to keep the pedal down." —AFP ■



Harris English of the United States plays a shot on the seventh hole during the second round of the Sentry Tournament Of Champions at the Kapalua Plantation Course on January 08, 2021 in Kapalua, Hawaii. PHOTO: GREGORY SHAMUS/AFP

Djokovic, Nadal, Serena to quarantine in Adelaide, not Melbourne

SYDNEY—Tennis' top stars will quarantine in Adelaide rather than Melbourne and play an exhibition there ahead of the Australian Open, with the city also hosting a WTA event after the years' first Grand Slam, organizers said Saturday.

Some 1,270 players and support staff are due to arrive in Melbourne on charter flights late next week, where they will have to spend a mandatory 14 days in quarantine. But with hotel rooms in the city scarce, Australian Open chief

Craig Tiley said he had approached the South Australian government about taking some of them. Matters were further complicated when a hotel in Melbourne that was due to accommodate players pulled out on Tuesday, reportedly be-

cause of concerns from residents.

With little benefit to Adelaide from putting its community at risk of coronavirus by housing players, an exhibition featuring the top names in the game was suggested as an enticement. —AFP ■