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Wednesday, 13 January 2021

Message of Greetings from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on occasion of Kayin New Year Day (13 January 2021)

AS the 13th of January 2021 (Kayin Era 2760, the first waxing day of Pyatho) is Kayin New Year Day, a day held in high esteem and high honour by all Kayin nationals, I wish to send this message of greetings for auspiciousness, good fortune, good health and happiness on this special occasion of the New Year.

In Myanmar, the Union Government and the people joined hands in confronting the COVID-19 disease, which is being confronted all over the world. At a time when our migrant workers working in neighbouring countries during the last year had to return home due

to COVID-19, the people of Kayin State gave full support with Union spirit; this is indeed a matter to be joyous and proud. I firmly believe that during the time of the Kayin New Year which falls at a time when the old year turns to a New Year, all of you would be vibrant and full of energy, renewed in body and spirit, with renewed commitments and firm resolve.

After the Kayin ethnic armed organizations had made a firm pledge not only to work together for peace but also to build the Democratic Federal Union, the opportunities which had disappeared and dimmed due to armed conflicts reemerged with full momentum. As

Kayin State is an important region for border trade, blessed with pristine natural beauty; a region where eco-tourism has started to develop; a connecting bridge which straddles the ASEAN East-West Economic Corridor; it is a place of great potential where different regions and sectors converge.

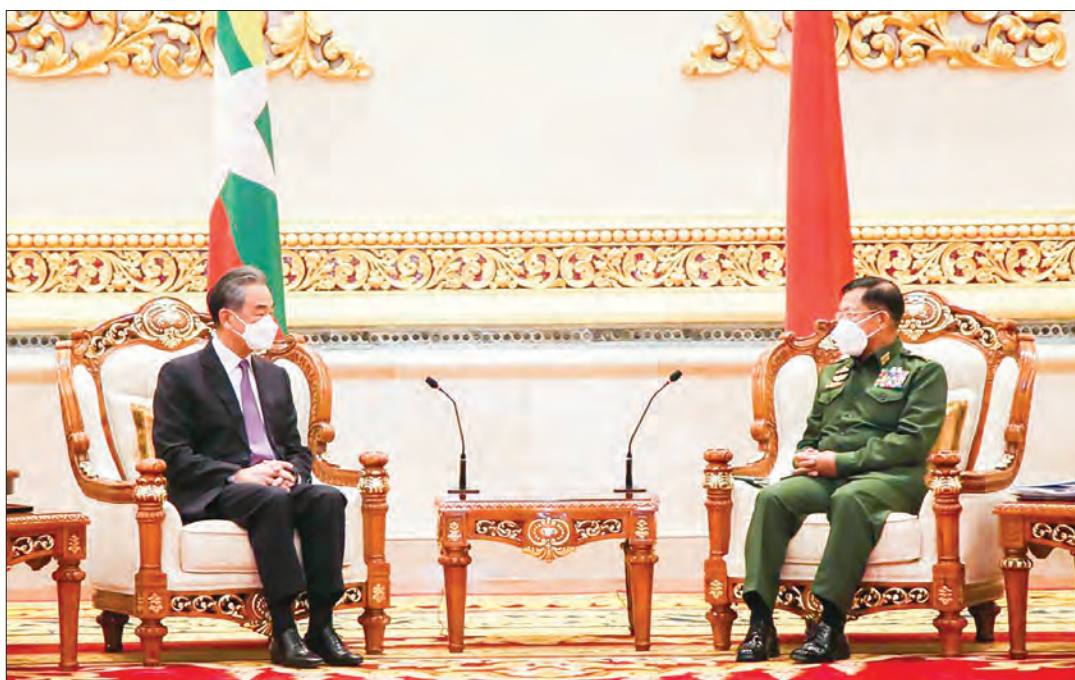
As it is a border region, it is very important to work for systematic development without harming in any way the natural environment and the socio-economic life of the local people. It is also extremely necessary to ensure sustainability, systematic implementation, **SEE PAGE-3**

Senior General receives Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister

C O M M A N D - ER-IN-CHIEF of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Mr Wang Yi at Zeyarthiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The call was also attended by Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung and senior Tatmadaw officers from the Office of Commander-in-Chief (Army), Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Chen Hai and senior Chinese delegation members, according to the report from the Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing receives Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Mr Wang Yi at Zeyarthiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw on 12 January. **PHOTO: MNA**

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551 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 12 January, total figure rises to 131,737

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **131,737** after **551** new cases were reported on 12 January 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these **131,737** confirmed cases, **2,878** died, **115,061** have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 12 January 2021

Total Cases

131,737

New Cases

551

Total Death Tally

2,878

Discharged from Hospital

115,061

Daily death toll until 8 pm 12-1-2021

20

Ministry of Health and Sports

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office Announcement (1/2021)

14th Waning of Nadaw, 1382 ME
12 January 2021

1. A total of 203 Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives including U Thaung Aye (Pyithu Hluttaw MP in Pyawbwe Constituency, Mandalay Region) submitted a letter dated 11-1-2021, calling for a special session of the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. The Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, by letter No 2/4/10 (5)/ Pa Hta Sa- 2021 dated 12-1-2021, replied MP U Thaung Aye and his group as follows:

“By referring to section 84 of the Constitution and section 17 of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law, 33 elected Pyithu Hluttaw representatives including U Thaung Aye, 10 elected Amyotha Hluttaw representatives and 160 Tatmadaw Hluttaw representatives (a total of 203 Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives) submitted a letter dated 11-1-2021, calling for a special session of the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.

Regarding convening a special emergency session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, section 81, 82, 83 and 84 of the Constitution say as follows:

“81. Matters that require resolutions, consents and approvals of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw shall be implemented as follows :

- if the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is in session, the matter shall be discussed and resolved at that session;
- if the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is not in session, the matter shall be discussed and resolved at the nearest Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session;
- a special session or an emergency session shall be convened to discuss and resolve matters which need urgent action in the interest of the public.

82. The Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw may convene a special session or an emergency session, if necessary.

83. The Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw shall convene a special session or an emergency session as soon as possible when the President informs him to do so.

84. The Speaker of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw shall convene a special session as soon as possible, if at least one-fourth of the total number of the representatives so require.”

According to section 83 and 84 of the Constitution, the President or at least one-fourth of the total number of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives can call for an emergency session. Still the main reason needs to be in line with the provision of section 81 of the Constitution.

When we examined the main reason for the special Hluttaw session requested by the above-mentioned letter, we found that the main reason for the demanded special session is to make discussions on electoral complaints of the 2020 multiparty general elections. The letter also called for a smooth end to the current Hluttaw term and a smooth transition to a new one in accordance with the relevant laws.”

Regarding electoral issues, section 402 of the Constitution says as follows:

“402. The decisions and functions made by the Union Election Commission on the following matters shall be final and conclusive :

- election functions;
- appeals and revisions relating to the resolutions and orders of the election tribunals;
- matters taken under the law relating to political parties”

Similarly, section 11 of the Union Election Commission Law says as follows:

“11. The decisions and functions of the Com-

mission on the following matters shall be final and conclusive:

- election functions;
- appeals and revisions relating to the resolutions and orders of the election tribunals;
- matters taken under the law relating to political parties”

At present, the COVID-19 disease still spreads in the country, and there are only about 20 days left in the second term of the Hluttaws. According to the rules of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, MPs must be invited at least 15 days in advance for a special session, so there will be only three days for the demanded session. Moreover, the first regular sessions of the third Hluttaws, which is required by the Constitution, must be convened on 1-2-2021, so invitation letters have been sent to MPs since 6-1-2021 in accordance with relevant laws.

The main reason given by the letter calling for a special session is not the matters that require resolutions, consents and approvals of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw as mentioned in section 81 of the Constitution. Moreover, section 402 of the Constitution and section 11 of the Union Election Commission Law say that the decisions and functions made by the Union Election Commission shall be final and conclusive, so the issue pointed out by the letter is not the matter to be decided collectively in a Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session. The electoral complaints are matters that must be addressed just by the Union Election Commission under relevant laws and rules. So, we would like to reply that it is unnecessary to convene a special session of the second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.”

2. Therefore, it is announced that no special session will be convened.

Myanmar, China discuss drug control cooperation via videoconferencing

THE 17th Myanmar-China Bilateral Meeting on Drug Control Cooperation hosted by the National Narcotic Control Commission under the Ministry of Public Security of the People's Republic of China was held via videoconferencing yesterday.

Myanmar delegation led by Police Brig-Gen Win Naing, Joint Secretary of Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control and Commander of Drug Enforcement Division, Myanmar and the Chinese delegation led by Mr Liang Yun, Executive Secretary-General for NNCC and Director-General for NCB participated in the meeting.

After the greeting message of Mr Liang Yun, Police Brig-Gen Win Naing said that the meeting on drug control cooperation was virtually held due to COVID-19 pandemic.

He also discussed the effective cooperation work with the neighbouring countries, regional countries, world countries and international organizations

in conducting the drug control measures and important plan to crackdown the increasing precursor chemical trade.

He then said it is difficult for

the country to control the entry and exit points on the long border areas although there are no technical or industries to produce precursor chemicals.

He also highlighted the moves of drug smugglers by taking advantage of some organizations at border areas, illegal precursor chemicals trade via border areas, high demand of illegal drugs in international countries and special anti-drug operations depending on the situation of drug trade and routes.

He then urged the participants to accelerate the operations along the borders of two countries.

The meeting also discussed the decisions of 17th bilateral meeting, cooperation work to arrest the fugitives, further cooperation, preventive measures for illegal precursor chemicals and matters related to the 18th bilateral meeting.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



Myanmar and China hold the 17th bilateral meeting on drug control cooperation through videoconferencing on 12 January 2021. PHOTO: MNA

Message of Greetings from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on occasion of Kayin New Year Day

FROM PAGE-1

genuine development for the region and the local people in working for regional development and economic opportunities. In order to work for the rule of law, freedom, equality and justice within the Union which is all linked to durable peace, we need to have the full participation and cooperation of the people of Kayin State.

In the next 10 years, say in the year 2030, how do you wish to see your Kayin State; at which level do you do wish to see? The answer to this question will be given by the responsible people of Kayin State and leaders of various organizations, their vision and decisions. The decisions and actions of current leaders in this New Year and in this ten-year period would be the embodiment of their good intentions, Metta and aspirations for the new generation. This will become abundantly apparent in the year 2030.

The Union Government desires durable peace

and genuine development in the whole of the Union beginning from Kayin State. We wish to see new generations capable of competing in the international arena, youths who are able to stand firmly on their own feet and fully qualified to work on the same level in the technology community; we wish to utilize the strength of these youths and hand over the tasks of nation-building to them. In the year 2030, what we wish to see in practical terms is a Kayin State which has achieved durable peace, a tourism hub, a modern border trade zone, a special agricultural zone, a special industrial zone and a special economic zone. Furthermore, we wish to see in this state a technology-based Kayin community working in unity with their own skills and qualifications.

I also wish to invite you in great seriousness to work for your state with courage adorned with wisdom, and bravery adorned with Metta for your new generations; you should realize that these are mindsets worthy of honour, beliefs which should be held fast,

and duties lofty enough to be fulfilled. Bearing these in mind, you should all join hands and cooperate for a more peaceful, more progressive, and better New Year.

Beginning from this Kayin New Year day, may all Kayin ethnic national brothers and sisters be able to continue to work for Union peace by setting good examples, may you all be able to work for the continued development of Kayin State with momentum with the Metta and united strength of Kayin ethnic nationals, may you all be able to protect and preserve the culture, traditions and heritage of Kayin ethnic nationals, may you all be able to enjoy auspiciousness and blessings in this New Year period in peace, happiness and peace of mind; and may you be free from all dangers including COVID-19.

I send my message of greetings with all these good wishes imbued with warm Metta!

*Aung San Suu Kyi
State Counsellor*

Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor donates cash assistance to IDPs in Rakhine State

The Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor donated cash assistance to the internally displaced persons in Rakhine State yesterday afternoon in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the donation ceremony, Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe said the cash assistance aims to donate blankets for the 15,000 households in Rakhine State to deal with cold weather during the winter season. He also added effective donation through the General Administration Department of the Ministry of the Union Government Office which can hand over the donation to the relevant persons. He expressed words of thanks to the officials of the General Administration Department and the Ministry of the Union Government Office.

Union Minister for the Union Government Office U Min Thu said his department will distribute the blanket donation worth of K60,085,600 to the 15,812 households, both to Rakhine commu-

nity and the Muslim community in Kyauktaw, Minbya, MraukU, Yathedaung, Buthidaung and Maungtaw townships in Rakhine State.

The Union Government Office is cooperating with the relevant organizations to carry out the Social Cohesion process among the communities in Rakhine State. The Rakhine State General Administration Department and the Centre for Diversity and National Harmony-CDNH have jointly launched Maungtaw Township as a model township project for community integration, with the aim of achieving lasting peace and stability and peaceful coexistence between different communities and implementing five projects since December 2019.

He said his Ministry would do the best to implement the administration processes required in IDP camps in other states and regions as well as in the Rakhine State Development processes and expressed words of thanks



Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe presents the cash donation to Union Minister U Min Thu for IDPs in Rakhine State, on 12 January 2021. PHOTO: MNA

to the Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Directors-General and the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor for the donation. Afterwards, Union Minister

U Kyaw Tint Swe handed over the cash assistance K 60,085,600 to Union Minister U Min Thu.

The donation ceremony was also attended by Deputy Minis-

ters U Khin Maung Tin and U Min Lwin, the Permanent Secretary and Directors-General.—MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)



Chinese delegation concludes two-day visit

THE Chinese delegation led by State Councilor and Foreign Minister Mr Wang Yi ended their two-day official visit and left Myanmar at 11:35 am yes-

terday. They were seen off at the Nay Pyi Taw International Airport by Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Chen Hai and officials from Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

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Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko inspects progress in renovation works at Bagan cultural heritage temples



Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko inspects the maintenance and renovation works at Bagan temples on 12 January 2021. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, along with Directors-General for Department of Religious Affairs and the Department of Archaeology and National Museum,

inspected the maintenance and renovation at the Bagan temples damaged by an earthquake.

The earthquake destroyed 389 pagodas on 24 August 2016, and 388 pagodas have been completely renovated until now by the Department of Archaeology and National Museum and the Ministry of Construction under a four-year plan. The Thatbyinnyu Pagoda, the only one left to be finished, is under the nine-year long-term maintenance work by the Cultural Heritage Administration of the People's Republic of China.

Besides, according to the field study, 110 ancient pagodas that required renovation were also renovated, bringing a total number of pagodas to 498 during the four-year project period.

The earthquake measuring 6.8 on the Richter scale occurred

about 10 miles west of Chauk Township, destroying more than 600 pagodas across the country - 389 ancient pagodas in Bagan-NyaungU area, 93 pagodas in Kyaukpadaung Township and 6 pagodas in MraukU, Rakhine State.

For the damages of pagodas in Bagan, donations from the people, organizations and international donors amounted to K6799.11 million and US\$1.1 million. In addition, 224 pagodas that were slightly damaged were donated by the original donors of the pagodas.

The Ministry has fully repaired the earthquake damage during the first term of the current government, and conducting a final report on the renovation work of the earthquake-resistant pagodas by the four-year project.—MNA (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

MoHS launches National Strategic Framework on Health and Drugs

THE Ministry of Health and Sports organized the launching ceremony of the National Strategic Framework on Health and Drugs yesterday.

At the ceremony, Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe highlighted the drug problems in health issue, economy and education and aims of NSP on Health and Drugs. He also stressed the five priority sectors of NSP on Health and Drugs (1) prevention of drug use among young people and children; (2) reduction of risks and harms for PWUD/PWID; (3) provision of voluntary and evidence-informed drug treatment options for people with problematic drug use; (4) rehabilitation and social integration options for those in need of such services; and, (5) continuing the work on national policy and legal reform that favour a 'public health' and a 'rights to services' approach.

The Union Minister then added the objectives of each priority sectors, major work plans, responsibilities and partner organizations, cooperation work with the relevant ministries and departments to conduct the ground survey, timeframe and evaluation in implementing the current NSP. He also discussed the budget and fund allocation, the appointment of focal person and formation of work committee, including the officials from the relevant ministries, departments, partner organizations and civil society organizations.

He also stressed the researches in implementing the facts in a strategic framework, organizing of steering committee to manage the work plans and phase-by-phase processes.

The Union Minister also said the NSP on Health and Drugs does not still include the reduction

of drug production, drug control and other substitute sectors. So, the relevant ministries should make an effort to draft the framework for the needed sectors.

It is better to conduct educating programmes by the ones who quitted using drugs rather than preventive measures. There

are about 9.7 million of basic education students, and if they have proper knowledge regarding the risks of using drugs, the drug consumption rate will decline. The Country Director of UNAIDS Mr Oussama Tawil also presented their performance in drafting the NSP on Health and Drugs and the

pledge of Myanmar made in The United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on the World Drug Problem in 2016.

The other participants then also discussed matters related to drug abuses and HIV.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe speaks on the launching ceremony of the National Strategic Framework on Health and Drug yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Announcement on fund establishment to purchase COVID-19 vaccines

1. 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 Myanmar Economic Bank in Nay Pyi Taw as follows:
 - (a) 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.
 - (b) 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.
2. 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 Myanmar Economic Bank (Nay Pyi Taw), and can donate Myanmar Kyat to the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund (Myanmar Currency Account No. OA 013733).
3. The potential well-wishers can contact the following phone numbers:
 - Director-General (067 3410156)
 - Treasury Department (067 3410158)

Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry

Myanmar, China sign MoU on feasibility study for Mandalay-Kyaukpyu railway project

MYANMAR and China signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to conduct a feasibility study for Mandalay-Kyaukpyu railway project on 10 January.

Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung said that the Muse-Mandalay-Kyaukpyu section is an essential project for the Belt and Road Initiative of Chinese President Mr Xi Jinping and the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor. The bilateral relation between the two countries will become stronger through cooperation.

He added that the MoU for a feasibility study for Mandalay-Kyaukpyu railway was signed

between Myanma Railways and China Railway Eryuan Engineering Group Co.,Ltd (CREEC) and it also should conduct the study in details for the natural environment and social impacts.

Then, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Chen Hai talked about the first visit of President Mr Xi Jinping to Myanmar in January 2020.

The railway section located in Yunnan of China will be completed in 2023 and trains will run between Myanmar and China.

By connecting railways between China and Myanmar by building railroads inside Myanmar, it will connect Myanmar with big Eurasia market of 1.4 billion



The Myanma Railways acting Managing Director and the Chief Representative of the CREEC Myanmar sign and exchange the MoU to conduct a feasibility study of Mandalay-Kyaukpyu Railway on 10 Jan 2021. PHOTO: MNA

population, and it will help Myanmar economy grow as well as assist the better life of Myanmar people, he said.

The feasibility study report of 2-year term MoU must submit within 18 months including the study for impacts of environ-

mental, social and cultural heritage.—MNA
(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

Union Minister U Ohn Win discusses conservation of coastal resources



MNREC Union Minister presides over the sixth meeting of the National-level Management on Coastal Resources Work Committee on 12 January 2021. PHOTO: MNA

THE National-level Management on Coastal Resources Work Committee held its 6th meeting yesterday to discuss conservation of natural resources and ecosystem along the Myanmar coastal areas.

Union Minister for Natural

Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win presided over the meeting that discussed the committee's focus on the situation of natural resources along the coastal areas, crucial role for the socio-economic and



national economy of the country and the integrated coastal management.

The coordination team of Forest Department is drafting the Integrated Coastal Management Programme with the

technical advice of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in collaboration with the sub-national level committees and local organizations to ensure harmonious management of the social, economic and en-

vironmental conservation and promoting cooperation in the effective management of sustainable development works.

The Union Minister discussed conservation of the marine ecosystem, quoting the 2011 report of Norwegian Institute for Water Research, due to disposal of waste materials, chemicals from agriculture and fish farming and plastic materials.

He also said that the government is implementing the development of management on coastal resources in accordance with the goals of Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan.

The respective committee members also presented their works before the meeting is concluded.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Myanmar nationals brought back home from abroad by relief flights

THE 39th relief flight of Myanmar Airways International (MAI), organized by the Myanmar Embassy in Seoul landed at Yangon International Airport bringing back a total of 92 Myanmar nationals after they were stranded abroad due to the suspension of international flights, yesterday evening. Among them, 78 people were from the Republic of Korea, 1 from Brazil, 1 from Norway, 1 from Italy, 1 from South Africa and 10 from the USA.

The relief flight of Myanmar

Airways International, organized by the Myanmar Embassy in Riyadh also brought back a total of 136 Myanmar nationals who were stranded in the UAE and surrounding countries, yesterday evening.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Yangon Region government arranged 14-day quarantine at specific places or designated hotels, followed by the 7-day home quarantine.

To bring back the Myanmar

citizens and Myanmar seamen who are stranded in foreign countries by relief flights and chartered flights in accordance with the instructions from National-Level Central Committee on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cooperated with the relevant ministries and Myanmar embassies from respective countries and shipping companies.—MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)



Returnees go through immigration process at the Yangon International Airport yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Office of the President

Press Release 1/2021

13th Waning of Nadaw 1382 ME
(11 January 2021)

Additional statistical bulletin on drug seizures, acting on information

- 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.
- With orders from the Office of the President, the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department relayed information on reports on drug-related offences up to 9 January 2021 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 Shan Gyi, who lives in Minenaung village, Mohnyin Township, Kachin State, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 1 January, 2021, police searched the house of Shan Gyi (a) Sai Khan Laung, 45, son of U Aung Tin, who lives in Minenaung village, Mohnyin township and arrested him together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Lonetone) MaYa (Pa) 1/2021 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
2	Information received of Aung Tun Naing, who lives in Bonchaung village in Mohnyin Township, Kachin State, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 4 January 2021, on the Bonchaung village road, police arrested Aung Chin Lwin (a) Chin Paw, 44, son of U Ba Shwe, who lives in Myohaung village, and Aung Tun Naing, 37, son of U Aeik Sae, who lives in Bonchaung village, Mohnyin Township together with heroin. A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Nanmar) MaYa (Pa) 1/2021 under the Section 16 (c) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
3	Information received of Ohn Myaing who lives in Nhatpyawta village, Bhamo Township, Kachin State, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 5 January 2021, on Nhatpyawta-Thaphanpin village road, police arrested Ohn Myaing, 53, son of U Nat, who lives in Nhatpyawta village, Bhamo Township, together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Bhamo) MaYa (Pa) 2/2021 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
4	Information received of people in ward (4) in Myawady Township, Kayin State, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 1 January 2021, on Mahasi monastery road, ward (4), Myawady Township, police arrested Khant Khine Win Htut (a) Ko Htut, 20, son of U Maung Thaung, who lives in the same ward, and Zar Pan (a) Ko Phyo, 28, son of U Kyaw Soe, who lives in ward (3), together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Myawady) MaYa (Pa) 1/2021 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
5	Information received of Htut Khaung who lives in Kyunshwewar ward in Phaungpyin Township, Sagaing Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 29 December 2020, police searched the house of Htut Khaung, 38, son of U Kan Htun, who lives in Kyunshwewar ward in Phaungpyin Township and arrested him together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Phaungpyin) MaYa (Pa) 210/2020 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
6	Information received of Hla Aung who lives in Haephat village in Homalin Township in Sagaing Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 29 December 2020, police searched the house of Hla Aung, 40, son of U Hla Pe, who lives in Haephat village in Homalin Township and arrested him together with opium. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Minekine) MaYa (Pa) 77/2020 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
7	Information received of Maung Cho who lives in Hteintaw village in Kyunhla Township in Sagaing Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 8 January 2021, on Hteintaw-Sabartae village road in Kyunhla Township, police arrested Maung Cho (a) Cho lay, 58, son of U Kyaw Thaung, who lives in Hteintaw village, together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Thaphanseik) MaYa (Pa) 1/2021 under the Section 16 (c) and 20(a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
8	Information received of people in Aungthukha ward in Kawthoung Township, Taninthayi Region, using, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	In recent weeks, a total of 26 cases have been identified and 26 male suspects and 4 female suspects, totally 30 suspects have been charged with the possession of illegal drugs. On 3 January 2021, according to a series of previous arrests, police searched the house of Aung Min Htwe (a) Aluu, 20, son of U Tun Tin, who lives in Aungthukha ward in Kawthoung Township and arrested him and Thura Aung (a) Kayin, 19, son of U Aung Soe, who lives in Padaukshwewar ward, together with WY stimulant tablets and speciosa powder. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Kawthoung) MaYa (Pa) 3/2021 under the Section 16 (c) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
9	Information received of people in Thapyaypin village, Yamethin Township, Mandalay Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	In recent weeks, a total of 5 cases have been identified and a total of 5 suspects (4 male and 1 female) have been charged with the possession of illegal drugs. On 29 December 2020, police searched the house of Myint Thein, 51, son of U Kyaw Than, who lives in Thapyaypin village in Yamethin Township and arrested him and Chit Phyo Wai, 24, son of U Thein Zaw and Ma Sabei, 40, daughter of U Tin Shein, who live in the same village, together with 88/1 stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Yamethin) MaYa (Pa) 40/2020 under the Section 19 (a), 20 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
10	Information received of people in (Sa) ward in Pyigyidagun Township, Mandalay Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 8 January 2021, on Mingyi Yannaung road, (Sa) ward in Pyigyidagun Township, police arrested Zaw Htet Wai, 20, son of U San Wai and brother Zaw Win Naing, 38, who live in Thaecone village in Patheingyi Township, together with heroin. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Pyigyidagun) MaYa (Pa) 7/2021 under the Section 16 (c) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
11	Information received of people in Abit-Khalae Takontine village road, Mudon Township, Mon State, using, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	In recent weeks, a total of 29 cases have identified and a total of 50 male suspects have been charged with the possession of illegal drugs. On 27 December 2020, according to a series of previous arrests, on Abit-Khalae Takontine village road, Mudon Township, police arrested Thurein Win, 25, son of U Shwe Ya, who lives in Thirmyaing ward in Mawlamyine Township and Hein Min Soe, 21, son of U Saw Aung, who lives in Thirimingalar ward in the same township, together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Kamarwut) MaYa (Pa) 60/2020 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
12	Information received of people in Shwemyinethiri ward in Mawlamyine Township, Mon State, selling, using and distributing illegal drugs.	On 28 December 2020, on Thayatchaung road in Shwemyinethiri ward in Mawlamyine Township, police arrested Paing Nyan (a) Paing Paing, 26, son of U Tun Hlaing, who lives in Dinewunkwin ward in Mawlamyine township, together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Dinewunkwin) MaYa (Pa) 34/2020 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Similarly, on 4 January 2021, police arrested Saw Pyae Sone Aung (a) Karbon, 21, son of U Aung Kyaw Thu, who lives in Hline ward in the same township, together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Zeyarthiri) MaYa (Pa) 2/2021 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
13	Information received of Waso, who lives in (Za) ward in North Okkalapa Township, Yangon Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 29 December 2020, police searched the house of Zaw Myo Tun (a) Waso, 21, son of U Mya Win Than, who lives in (Za) ward, North Okkalapa Township, and arrested him together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (North Okkalapa) MaYa (Pa) 97/2020 under the Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
14	Information received of Aphwargyi and her daughter who live in (51) ward in Dagon Myothit (North), Yangon Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 7 January 2021, police searched the house of Daw Myo Myint (a) Aphwargyi, 42, daughter of U Theik Tun, who lives in ward (51) in Dagon Myothit (North) and arrested her, her husband Kyaw Win Tun (a) Kalar, 32, son of U Hla Myint, her daughter from former marriage Ma Wai Wai Hnin, 17, daughter of U Zeya, son-in-law Nyan Myo Tun (a) Angai Kaung, 20, son of U Maung Cho, daughter-in-law Ma Yamin Thuzar Nwe, 17, daughter of U Maung Maung Lwin, together with stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Dagon North) 1/2021 under the Section 19 (a), 20 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Motor Vehicles Importing Supervisory Committee holds meeting (1/2021)

THE Motor Vehicles Importing Supervisory Committee held the (1/2021) meeting yesterday afternoon in the Ministry of Commerce via videoconferencing in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the meeting, Union Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the Committee said there would no longer be the individual programme or old vehicle programme in importing vehicles in 2021.

It has been announced that vehicles manufactured within three years can be imported as

private vehicles with non-commercial purpose. In the import of passengers vehicles, it should be the vehicle manufactured within 5 years and the import of fire engine and ambulance includes the vehicles manufactured within 10 years. As for the import for heavy machineries, the vehicles manufactured in the last 15 years are allowed to import.

A total of 123 civil servants were allowed to import vehicles from abroad from 18 December, 2020 to 7 January, 2021 and the Union Minister said to help those people in buying automobiles



Union Minister Dr Than Myint chairs the first meeting 2021 of Motor Vehicles Importing Supervisory Committee on 12 January 2021. PHOTO: MNA

from the showrooms.

Afterwards, the members of the committee who attended

the meeting presented their related activities in the respective sectors and the Union Minister

coordinated the meeting.— MNA (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

China donates yuan250,000 worth of COVID-19 medical supplies

THE People's Republic of China donated yuan250,000 worth of COVID-19 medical supplies to the Ministry of Health and Sports



Union Minister accepts the donation of medical devices from the People's Republic of China on 12 January 2021. PHOTO: MNA

yesterday afternoon.

The medical supplies were some of the yuan3 million worth of donations pledged by Chinese Councilor and Foreign Minister Mr Wang Yi during his recent two-day official visit to Myanmar.

The first batch of donation items was carried by his special flight.

The handover of medical supplies was made at the headquarters of MoHS in Nay Pyi Taw in the presence of Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe, Deputy Minister Dr Mya Lay Sein, Permanent Secretary Professor Dr Thet Khaing Win, Director-General

Dr Soe Oo from the Public Health and Medical Services Department, Deputy Director-General Dr Kyaw Khaing, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Chen Hai and officials.

At the donation ceremony, the ambassador reaffirmed the commitment of China to continue a community of shared future, mutual assistance in COVID-19 fight, maintaining friendly bilateral relations, the priority of Chinese President to help in the peacemaking process of the country, promoting bilateral businesses, and donation of 300,000 units of COVID-19 vaccines to

Myanmar. China is also providing assistance to Myanmar to establish the Centre for Disease Control, Training and Research.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe expressed the appreciation on the latest donation as China is cooperating in healthcare sectors in remote areas of Myanmar; research works, assistance in H1N1 disease outbreak, sharing control and medical treatment amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The donation items handed over at the event were 100,000 masks, 30,000 N95 masks and 2,000 PPE sets. — MNA (Translated by Aung Khin)

Additional statistical bulletin on drug ...

FROM PAGE-6

15	Information received of Arrgyi, who lives in ward (56) Dagon Myothit (South) Township, Yangon Region, selling, using and distributing illegal drugs.	On 28 December 2020, on Maungmakan road in ward (20) in Dagon Myothit (South) Township, police arrested Chan Nyein Aung (a) Arrgyi, 37, son of U Aung Kyant Khine, and Tay Zar Aung, 27, son of U Maung Soe, who live in ward (56) in the same township, together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Dagon South) MaYa (Pa) 91/2020 under the Section 16 (c) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
16	Information received of Kyaw Phyo Wai, Thone Thone, Baw Gyi and San San Oo who live in ward (5) Mayangon Township, Yangon Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 6 January 2021, police searched the house of Kyaw Phyo Wai, 27, son of U Thein Oo and arrested him and his brother Myat Thu (a) Thone Thone, 22, son of U Thein Oo together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Mayangon) MaYa (Pa) 1/2021 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Police also searched the restaurant of Ma San San Oo, 34, daughter of U Thein Oo, who lives in the same ward and arrested her and her sister Ma Lai Ye Win (a) Ma Ye Win, daughter of U Thein Oo and the husband of Ma Lae Ye Win, Aung Tun (a) Bawgyi, 26, son of U Maung Lay, the brother-in-law of Ma San San Oo, Myint Myat Tun, 19, son of U Tin Maung Tun and Ma Aye Aye Mar, 29, daughter of U Tin Win, together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Mayangon) MaYa (Pa) 2/2021 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

17	Information received of people in Phayaryphyu ward in Taunggyi Township, southern Shan State, using, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	In recent weeks, a total of 19 cases have been identified and a total of 38 suspects (36 males and 2 females) have been charged with the possession of illegal drugs. On 5 January 2021, according to a series of previous arrests, police searched the house of Daw Malar Myint, 41, daughter of U Hla Myint, who lives in Phayaryphyu ward, Taunggyi Township and arrested her together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Taunggyi) MaYa (Pa) 3/2021 under the Section 19 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
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3. Out of the information sent to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department, so far a total of 1,498 cases have been opened files as of 9 January, 2021. A total of 2,293 people, including 1,908 men and 385 women had been arrested with 11,139.1814 g of heroin, 1,490.92 g of ICE, 48,354.63886 g of opium, 1,418.96 g of low-quality opium, 54,993.40 g of speciosa powder, 558,597.32 g of speciosa, 2.5 litres of liquid speciosa, 704,300 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

National Strategic Framework-NSF a step towards ending drug scourge

WITH the launching of the National Strategic Framework (NSF) on Health and Drugs, our country has taken a further step to tackle our country's decades-long issues with the drug menace.

It is worth noting that the strategy aims at addressing all aspects of the drug problem through health, social and legal approaches.

Besides, we can say that the NSF is perfect because its five-priority strategies have their own objectives and tasks, and has also given a room to relevant civil organizations and partners to cooperate in implementing these strategies.

The NSF will be implemented effectively, and all stakeholders including governmental departments must work closely, especially with those communities that are affected by the drug problem.

The tasks in the national strategy are important for the country; a steering committee needs to be formed to promote cooperation between the work groups under the committee.

As NSF is not directly related to reducing drug production, to control drug usage and to implement the opium substitute projects for farmers, ministries concerned are obliged to draw frameworks for tackling the above objectives and to implement them.

For several decades, Myanmar has been beleaguered by its drug problem, an issue that has been accentuated by the country's decades of civil wars.

By implementing the NSF, our country has made a significant step towards a health-centric approach to reduce the rise in drug use among the youth. According to statistics, drug users in a town in central Myanmar make up 75 per cent of its population.

It has alarmed us that if we cannot eradicate the drug problem in our country, our efforts for the development of youth, their health and education, will be in vain.

The menace of drugs is slowly eroding our society, ruining the lives of our youth, and destroying the dignity and future of our country. We must promote the anti-narcotic awareness raising programme at schools where about 9.7 million of our school children are learning.

If we do not collaborate and successfully combat the drug problem today, Myanmar will face a severe and drastic situation in the coming decade.

In this regard, we earnestly urge all stakeholders to join us in our efforts in the fight against drugs. Under the strategy, the regional and state authorities are required to come up with projects, in line with the situation in their areas, and implement them.

Building awareness of proper COVID-19 protective behaviour key to returning to (new) normal

By Dr Than Sein & Dr Thein Swe

WITH universal access to COVID-19 vaccinations in Myanmar still months away, Myanmar is entering a new phase. Keeping the number of new infections limited depends for a large part on how successful the Government will be in persuading citizens to stick to proper protective behaviour in the "new normal".

From a public health perspective one could argue that the Government of Myanmar's approach to COVID-19 has been a resounding success. After the first COVID-19 case in the country was discovered, in late March 2020, a set of measures was implemented that kept people at home, and that restricted domestic and international travel. As a result, the number of cases and fatalities was kept so low, that the term "first wave" was almost an exaggeration.

After a brief opening up of the country during the early monsoon months the picture became much bleaker, though. The number of infections accelerated to over a thousand per day, and the death toll rose from a handful to over two and a

half thousand in late December 2020, forcing the Government to reinstate restriction aimed at controlling the spread of the virus and to prevent the potential collapse of the public health system.

Nonetheless, the "second wave" figures were still only a fraction of the impact COVID-19 has had in Western countries like Italy, the UK, and the United States. Furthermore, the number of new cases declined in late December, 2020, and early January, 2021.

With many people having been hit by economical woe because of the restrictions, a return to normal is eagerly awaited. But Myanmar is not out of the woods yet. A new strain of very infectious COVID-19 has been discovered in England, and has spread to a handful of other countries. It is likely that the new strain will rear its ugly head in Myanmar as well.

With regards to vaccinations patience will be the key word. Developed countries have bought up vaccines in bulk, leaving developing countries like Myanmar at the end of the line.



People wearing face masks walk in downtown Yangon, on 10 January, 2021. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR.

The Ministry of Planning, Finance, and Industry (MOPFI) is in talks with international organizations like IMF, ADB and World Bank to obtain financial assistance and establish a COVID-19 Vaccine Fund. The Government seeks almost a billion US dollars in support, to finance the acquisition and distribution of vaccines. On December 7, Myanmar submitted a request to the COVAX program at the World

Health Organization (WHO) and the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, which aims to ensure COVID-19 vaccines reach the world's poor.

The Government has bought 30 million vaccine doses from India, that will arrive in Myanmar end of February. That does not mean that the whole population will have access to vaccines right away. There's limited supply and health workers

and the most vulnerable will be vaccinated first. It is likely that it will take until 2022 for the rest of the population to get access to vaccines. That means that COVID-19 will make a comeback in the rainy season of 2021, Myanmar's traditional flu season.

With universal vaccinations still months away and the country facing at least one more "COVID-19" season, it will remain to be important to

exercise proper protective behavior: wearing a mask, washing hands, watching your distance, and avoiding crowded situations as much as possible.

In the "new normal" situation, these behaviours should become regular habit. To facilitate this, building of awareness and stimulating behavioural change is key. The People's Health Foundation supported the Ministry of Health and Sports by running a second "Let's Beat COVID Together" mass media campaign in the last quarter of 2020. In the first half of January 2021 we will follow up with another COVID-19 public awareness campaign, focused on urban audiences in Yangon.

Only if we stick to protective behaviour that we know can greatly reduce infection risks, can we save lives and prevent the public health system from getting overloaded.

Dr Than Sein and Dr Thein Swe are the President and Vice-President of the People's Health Foundation, a non-government organization that strives to contribute to health care services provision and health education in Myanmar.

COVID-19: NO HERD IMMUNITY IN 2021

EU gets vaccine boost as WHO dampens hope of herd immunity

THE European Union started the approval process for its third vaccine on Tuesday after WHO scientists warned that herd immunity from coronavirus was unlikely this year even with mass inoculation schemes.

The 27-nation EU — under fire for lengthy approval processes and slow national rollouts of drugs — promised an "accelerated timeline" after confirming drug company AstraZeneca had applied for approval for the jab it developed with Oxford University.

The EU's medicines agency said a decision would still not come before January 29, even though the drug is already being used in countries including Britain.

And even with mass vaccinations, World Health Organization scientists warned that coverage

would still not be wide enough for population-level immunity this year.

"We are not going to achieve any levels of population immunity or herd immunity in 2021," said WHO's chief scientist Soumya Swaminathan of a disease that has already infected more than 90 million people worldwide and killed almost two million.

The United States remains the worst affected country, posting daily death tolls in multiple thousands, but European hospitals are increasingly warning of stretched resources and Asian countries are also facing upsurges.

Malaysia declared a state of emergency on Tuesday as fears grow that its health system is close to being overwhelmed, after China and Japan took measures against

localised clusters.

China added a city of five million to a growing lockdown area near Beijing on Tuesday, as WHO experts arrive in the central city of Wuhan to probe the origins of the disease.

"Superspreader event" With recriminations already flying over America's longer-term handling of the virus, lawmakers voiced fury on Tuesday over the actions of some of their peers during last week's ructions in Washington DC.

Congress members were forced to hunker down in secure rooms as supporters of President Donald Trump marauded through the corridors of the Capitol building, and some have now tested positive for coronavirus and squarely blamed their colleagues.

"Many Republicans still refused to take the bare minimum COVID-19 precaution and simply wear a damn mask in a crowded room during a pandemic — creating a superspreader event on top of a domestic terrorist attack," said Democratic Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, who has since tested positive.

US President-elect Joe Biden, who has pledged to devote all available resources to fight the pandemic, received his second vaccine dose on Monday of the Pfizer-BioNTech jab — the first to be approved in Western countries.

German firm BioNTech said it could produce millions more doses than originally expected this year, but warned that Covid-19 was likely become an endemic disease and vaccines would be needed to fight

new variants.

"Wing and a prayer"

The sporting world provided some respite from the continuing cycle of glum news, with England beginning a cricket Test match in Sri Lanka on Thursday, 10 months after a tour was called off.

It was bitter-sweet for one England fan, who has been waiting in Sri Lanka for 10 months for the match to start, only to miss out on the live action because it will be played behind closed doors.

"I've been in Sri Lanka the whole time on blind faith, on a wing and a prayer," Rob Lewis, who has been working remotely as a web designer and DJ-ing at a local bar in Colombo, told AFP.

But elsewhere in the sporting world, shredded schedules and crisis meetings were still the order

of the day.

Tokyo Olympics organizers were forced to dismiss speculation that this summer's event was about to be cancelled, as polls showed public support declining.

"I want to say that we are not thinking that way at all, and that these reports are wrong," said Tokyo 2020 CEO Toshiro Muto.

Formula One announced a major reshuffle of next season's races on Tuesday, shifting the season-opening Australia Grand Prix from March to November and postponing the China race indefinitely.

As sports organizers plan their medium-term future, environmentalists are raising the alarm over the pandemic's longer term impacts.

SOURCE: AFP



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 12 January, 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 13 January, 2021: Rain will be scattered in Kachin, Shan States and isolated in Upper Sagaing, Mandalay, Taninthayi Regions and Kayah State. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Naypyitaw, Mandalay, Bago Regions and Shan, Kayah States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13 January, 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13 January, 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13 January, 2021: Partly cloudy

Advertisement for 'The Global New Light of Myanmar' magazine, featuring a 'NOW Available' banner and a 'BUY NOW' button. The ad shows a preview of the magazine cover with headlines like 'ROK President pays state visit to Myanmar' and 'State Counsellor holds talks with ROK President'.

Advertisement for 'The Global New Light of Myanmar' magazine, featuring a 'BUY NOW' button and contact information. The ad includes the text 'သတင်းစာများကို ကြိုဆိုသည့်အတွက် ဝယ်ယူပုံစံအမျိုးမျိုး' and 'Circulation order is in easier way.' along with a hotline number 09-45237515.

Permanent Residency Implementation Central Committee holds meeting in Nay Pyi Taw

A coordination meeting of the Permanent Residency Implementation Central Committee was held at the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe, in his capacity as the committee chairperson, took part in the meeting, together with Deputy Minister U Myint Kyaing, permanent secretaries and directors-general who are committee members, and relevant officials.

During the meeting, Union Minister U Thein Swe talked



Union Minister U Thein Swe chairs meeting of Permanent Residency Implementation Central Committee on 12 January. **PHOTO: MNA**

about effective management of central committee in the process of issuing permanent residency

in line with the existing laws and international standards.

On 18 November, 2014, the

ministry announced a rule related to permanent residency. And an amending rule for the permanent residency was enacted on 27 April 2017. As a result, initial applications for permanent residence permits can be applied not only in Myanmar but also at Myanmar embassies in foreign countries.

Myanmar introduced the permanent residency system in 2015. The applicants are classified into four types: experts, investors, former Myanmar nationals, and foreigners who are related to Myanmar nationals.

Under this system, the permanent residency has been grant-

ed to 617 persons out of 705 foreign citizen applicants in accordance with the laws and rules.

The applicants need the approval of the central committee after passing the scrutiny of the work committee.

The meeting passed the permanent residency to an expert, 3 investors, 30 former Myanmar nationals, 15 foreigners who are related to Myanmar nationals, and 21 family members of them, totally 70. Face-to-face interviews will be held depending on the situations of COVID-19 pandemic.

—MNA (Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye addresses community COVID volunteer training online



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye presides over online training programme for Community COVID Volunteers on 12 January. **PHOTO: MNA**

MINISTRY of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement held an online training programme for Community COVID Volun-

teers (CCVs) to be involved in the community-based COVID-19 Prevention and Control activities in Mandalay Region yesterday

morning through videoconferencing in Nay Pyi Taw.

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye, in his capacity as the Secretary of the National Volunteer Leading Body, said Myanmar is still facing the second wave of COVID-19 and is focusing on preventing the spread of the disease, and it still needs to put into practice although the public is familiar with the COVID-19 method of transmission and prevention.

He added the need to widely cooperate with the people including charitable organizations and civil society organizations such as youth committee members in the village/ward, women committee members and the members of the Red Cross in raising awareness in villages and wards. The training programme aims to ac-

celerate the COVID-19 control activities with the participation of the people in each community/village. The role of the Community COVID Volunteer-CVV plays an important role in not only preventing the spread of the disease by the effective awareness-raising activities but also in the cooperation with the responsibilities assigned by the Ministry of Health and Sports when COVID-19 vaccine is available.

He said the volunteer programme also aims the village or community volunteers will able to cooperate in the development activities in the post-COVID-19 period, and he urged them to connect and cooperate with health departments, village or ward administration offices and civil society organization in their re-

gions in implementing the project at the end of the training.

A total of 139 village/community volunteers from Mandalay Region participated in the first batch of the Community COVID Volunteer-CCV online training programme. The second batch will be held on 14 January 2021 in Yangon Region.

Afterwards, Professor Dr Mya Thida, Vice-Chair of Myanmar Medical Association explained the training programme and the experts from the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement gave lectures respectively and discussed interactively with the volunteers.—MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

MoEA discusses successful holding of 3rd Ethnic Culture Festival 2021 online

THE Ministry of Ethnic Affairs held a preliminary coordination meeting on holding the 3rd Ethnic Culture Festival 2021 online in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin, Deputy Minister U Hla Maw Oo, Permanent Secretary Dr L Tu Maing Gaung, Directors-General of relevant departments and Vice-Chairman of Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneur Association joined the meeting online.

The Union Minister firstly said the 1st festival was held from 25 to 30 January in 2019 while the 2nd one was from 1 to 7 February in 2020. The proposal to hold the 3rd festival in a virtual way from 27 February to 5 March 2021 was submitted to the National-Level Central

Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19.

The committee replied that the Ministry of Information, Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs are to broadcast the 3rd festival via MRTV, MRTV-4, NRC (National Races Channel), Web portal, Webinar (Web programme) and Facebook platform in accordance with the COVID-19 health rules.

The Union Minister then said the objectives of the festival are to assist the national peace process, showcase ethnic solidarity and culture, boost tourism, expand regional products and ethnic textiles to international markets, and create employment to promote the socio-economic status of ethnic

people.

The Union Minister recommended the need to avoid mass gatherings in holding the festival, although it is held in accordance with the health rules of the Ministry of Health and Sports.

He also stressed to consider the facts that can affect the interests of ethnic people. He then urged to participate in carrying out the measures for the interests and socio-economic status of ethnic people, the peace process in ethnic regions, tourism development and improvement in regional products.

Deputy Minister U Hla Maw Oo said he hopes the festival will become more alive through the experience of relevant departments although the ethnic



Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin joins the meeting to hold 3rd Ethnic Culture Festival 2021 online, on 12 January 2021. **PHOTO: MNA**

people cannot participate in this virtual festival during COVID-19 outbreak. But the festival will reveal unity, good relation and also build trust among the ethnic people.

Vice-Chairman of Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneur Associ-

ation U La Phine Khum Sar and other officials briefed the preparation works for Myanmar Ethnic culture Festival 2021.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

PyinOoLwin growers supply fresh strawberries to Mandalay market during harvest time

FRESH strawberries from PyinOoLwin Township have started to arrive Mandalay fruit depots in early January, the growers said.

This year, it is about one-month late harvesting. The market is sluggish amid the slump in demand triggered by the COVID-19 impacts. The opening price is K8,000 per viss (a viss equals to 1.6 kg). However, the fruit depot owners from Yangon and Mandalay offer only K6,000 per viss, said Ko Phoe Thar, a grower from Pinleinthapyay village of PyinOoLwin Township.

"During the early harvest time, an acre produces only six visses every other day. Earlier, the plants produced fruits in December. This year, it can be

harvested only in early January. COVID-19 impacts negatively affected the market. Nevertheless, strawberries cannot be flowed into the country by China this year amid the pandemic. As a result of this, the price is unlikely to drop during the plentiful harvest period (May). It may fetch K2,000 per viss," he continued.

Usually, strawberries can be plucked up to April-end. An acre can produce 1,500 visses per season. However, the yield may vary depending on the weather condition. Strawberries generally prefer plenty of sunlight.

"When we looked back the previous years, the price of strawberries plunged to K1,200 in March, and it climbed up



Women are seen sorting and packing strawberries. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MANDALAY SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)

to K2,000-3,000 per viss in the post-Thingyan period (mid-April)", a grower affirmed.

Strawberry is a lucrative fruit for families in Pyin Oo Lwin to earn for a living.

—Min Htet Aung (Mandalay sub-printing house)
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

CMP raw materials import plunges to \$476 mln over past 3 months

IMPORTS of raw materials by CMP (cut-make-pack) businesses has touched a low of US\$476.3 million as of 1 January in the current financial year 2020-2021 since October 2020, which fell from \$581.34 million registered in the previous FY2019-2020, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The figures reflected a decrease of \$105 million, the Commerce Ministry's data indicated.

In October of FY2020-2021, the country exported \$203.95 million worth garments to foreign countries. The figure plunged from \$384 million registered in October of the 2019-2020FY.

At present, over 100 CMP garment factories temporarily shut down on the reason for the lack of raw materials and slump in demand due to the coronavirus negative impacts, leaving thousands of workers unemployed. Sixty-four factories have been permanently closed down during the pandemic, compensating about 25,000 workers. The data does not include those factories that have not resolved worker payments, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, and Population stated.

The coronavirus impacts

badly batter the labour-intensive enterprises, indicated the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

The MGMA and EuroCham Myanmar held virtual meetings on 7 January 2021, along with representatives from EU brands. They highlighted efforts to increase job creations in the garment factories, keeping garment factory order from European buyers, improving skilled workers' capacity, and upgrading the Myanmar Garment Human Resource Development Centre (MGHRDC) and strengthening relationships between employers and workers. Additionally, MGMA also proposed leading a working group including government officials, European Brands' representatives and the related institutions, to transform CMP into the free-on-board (FoB) system.

"Myanmar mainly exports the garments to Japan and European countries, especially Germany. The US has also purchased the garments made in Myanmar. Some western countries cancelled orders amid the pandemic. Therefore, we need to focus on market diversification. Myanmar Garment Manu-

facturers Association (MGMA) requested the ministries to deal with changing and cancelling orders to keep the business alive. Myanmar's garment factories have been complying with the COVID-19 health guidelines, and the buyers recognized this. If the factories can prevent from spreading the virus, it will not affect the production," MGMA General Secretary Daw Khaing Khaing Nwe shared her opinion at the virtual conference held on 11 December 2020.

Under the EU Myan Ku Fund, we have now distributed K5.2 billion in support across 67,810 payments to unemployed garment factory workers as of 12 October. Workers in all the states and regions of Myanmar have received this financial assistance, said Jacob A. Clere, Team Leader for EU Myan Ku Fund.

Next, foreign direct investments flow into many types of businesses, including garment enterprises. The foreign investors are not bothered by the disputes between employers and employees and some CMP businesses' closure during the mean times, the Myanmar Investment Commission stated.

Of the investment proposals, the manufacturing and labour-intensive businesses are prioritized by the commission.

Myanmar mainly exports CMP garments to markets in Japan and Europe, along with the Republic of Korea, China, and the US.

The garment sector is among the prioritized sectors driving up exports. The CMP garment industry has emerged as a promising one, with preferential trade from Western countries.

Myanmar's garment factories operate under the CMP system, and those engaged in this industry are striving to transform CMP into the free-on-board (FoB) system. As the factories cannot enter into a contract for FoB, Own Design Manufacturing (ODM) and Own Business Manufacturing (OBM), the income is limited, according to the MGMA.

According to the Ministry of Commerce data, exports of garments manufactured under the cut-make-pack (CMP) system were valued US\$4.798 billion in the last financial year 2019-2020.

Although the sector is facing hardships because of the cancellation of order from the Europe-

an countries and suspension of Western countries' trade amid the pandemic, export values rose in the previous FY (1 October 2019-30 September 2020).

The export value of CMP garments was only \$850 million in the 2015-2016FY, but it has tripled over the past two FYs. In the 2016-2017FY, about \$2 billion was earned from exports of CMP garments. The figure increased to an estimated \$2.5 billion in the 2017-2018FY and \$2.2 billion in the 2018 mini-budget period (from April to September). It tremendously grew to \$4.6 billion in the 2018-2019FY, according to the Commerce Ministry.

Since an outbreak like COVID-19 might happen in the future, it is necessary to prepare for a sufficient raw materials supply. The public and private sectors will cooperate in setting up the supply chain on our sources, including weaving, knitting, dyeing, and sewing factories.

The MGMA has more than 500 members, and garment factories in Myanmar, employing more than 400,000 workers. Investors prefer to invest in countries with inexpensive labour, such as Myanmar.—Ko Htet
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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Myanmar's first glass bridge to be built near Goteik viaduct



The Goteik viaduct was constructed in 1899 and opened in 1900 which is the highest bridge in Myanmar. **PHOTO: HTWE NGE (NAWNGHKIO - IPRD)**

MYANMAR'S first glass bridge will be constructed near Goteik viaduct in Nawngkhio Township, Northern Shan State.

The bridge will be developed on a project area of 17 acres and the project will also consist of a recreation park, playground,

bungalows, tents and restaurants. For the project, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) has been entered into with the Shan State government. Plan is also being carried out to sign a letter of intent.

The project is estimated to

cost approximately US\$5 million and is expected to complete by October 2022. The project will create over 300 new job opportunities for the local residents.

The glass bridge will be built as a tower design and it will be 200 feet in length, 120 feet in width

and 160 feet in height. The bridge project will be implemented jointly with an indigenous development team.

For the road section, the government has upgraded the road from Nawngkhio to Goteik while Cherry Muse Company is conducting the upgrading project between Goteik and the project area.

The Cherry Muse Company will support half of the costs of the bridge and the remaining will be offered to the businessmen who are interested to cooperate in partnership. Upon completion of the project, it can raise the national income by visiting the local and foreign visitors.

The Goteik viaduct was constructed in 1899 and opened in 1900 which is the highest bridge in Myanmar. It has only one round trip railway. The bridge can be reached by taking a train from Mandalay or PyinOoLwin north towards Nawngkhio where the bridge is located about 3 miles (5 kms) further east.—
Htwe Nge (Nawngkhio - IPRD)
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Upgrading of circular railway section to be completed this month

MYANMA Railways (MR), divided into eastern and western sections, is implementing the circular railway upgrading project.

The western part of the circular railway project consists of three phases and has been upgraded by A-1 company since 21 February 2018. The three railway stages include a total of 12.25 miles with 3.75 miles in Danyingone-Insein section, 5.5 miles in Insein-Kyimyindine section and

3 miles in Kyimyindine-Pagoda Road section.

The upgrading project of western part was completed. The last project, the inner line of Kyimyindine-Pagoda Road section was completed and opened yesterday morning. Now, the up and down circular trains can operate as usual.

The eastern part of the circular railway project consists of two phases and has been improved by

Shwe Taung Company since 21 December 2018. The project's two phases are 15.75 miles with 7.25 miles in Danyigong-Paywetseikon section and 8.5 miles in Paywetseikon-Pazundaung section.

The outer line of Yegu-Tamway was opened yesterday. So, the circular railway's inner line and outer line from Danyingone station to Tamway station was completed. Only the inner line of Tamway-Pazundaung is needed

to be upgraded, and it is expected to open at the end of January 2021.

The circular trains are available only in the mornings, evening and during the office hours in the pandemic period. About 3,700 commuters are using the circular trains daily on weekdays, and about 3,100 commuters are using them on the weekends.—GNLM

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Myanmar rice export suspended due to China's import permit pending

By Nyein Nyein

ALTHOUGH Export of Myanmar rice to China has been suspended because of rice import permit pending, about 30,000 bags of broken rice are being exported daily, said Vice-Chair U Min Thein of the Muse Rice Wholesale Centre.

Myanmar rice trading to China has stopped because the last year's rice export permit from China ended on 31 December. Myanmar is thus still waiting for the rice import permit from China for this year 2021. This is

the reason why the rice entering the Muse border area is postponed, and the rice will re-enter the border area only in the first week of February.

However, broken rice could be exported with internal tax without an import licence. So, about 30,000 bags of broken rice are entering daily Muse border, and the same volume is being exported daily to China.

"The rice import permit ended on 31 December 2020. Consequently, we could not export

the rice to China starting from 1 January. The broken rice doesn't need a permit license. We have to pay only the internal taxes. Therefore, Myanmar exports the broken rice daily to Muse border commodity depot," said U Min Thein.

"The price of broken rice is a bit on the decline. The price at Muse market was 130 Yuan for a bag of broken rice on 20 December. But, a bag of broken rice is sold only for 126 Yuan today, a decrease by four Yuan per bag,"

he added.

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

Myanmar shipped over 520,000 tonnes of rice and broken rice during the past three months of this financial year from 1 October to 18 December. In comparison, over 400,000 tonnes of rice export of Myanmar go to China.
(Translated by Hay Mar)

PLAN TO CLOSE DOWN

Brexit, COVID threaten 250,000 small UK firms

MORE than one quarter of a million small British businesses face bankruptcy this year without more state help amid coronavirus and post-Brexit trade fallout, a study showed yesterday.

“A record number of small business owners are planning to close their firms over the coming 12 months, putting the UK on course to lose more than a quarter of a million businesses,” the Federation of Small Businesses estimated after last month quizzing 1,401 firms on their outlooks.

The FSB, meanwhile, said that Britain’s financial support measures



A couple wearing face masks walks past shop windows with ‘Closing Down’ stickers in Dublin, Ireland. **PHOTO: ARTUR WIDAK/AFP**

in response to COVID-19 did not “keep pace” with tightening lockdown restrictions.

It added in its study that exporters were “feeling the strain as [the] new

EU-UK trade deal beds in” following Britain’s recent exit from EU single market and customs union.

FSB National chairman Mike Cherry called on the UK government look

at how emergency debt facilities could help small businesses to survive.

And he urged the adoption of “transition vouchers” to help firms cope with uncertainty surrounding the Brexit trade deal that came into force on January 1.

“Our exporters are trying to get across what a new EU-UK trade agreement means for them without the cash they need to make adjustments,” Cherry said.

“Direct funding to help them manage new obligations in the form of transition vouchers is urgently needed.

SOURCE: AFP

BUSINESS SENTIMENT

Japan Dec. economy watcher sentiment tumbles amid resurgent pandemic

BUSINESS sentiment among workers with jobs sensitive to economic trends in Japan posted the largest drop in nine months in December, as a resurgence in novel coronavirus infections hit consumption during the year-end holiday season, government data showed Tuesday.

The diffusion index of confidence in current conditions compared with three months earlier among “economy watchers” such as taxi drivers and restaurant staff fell 10.1 points from November to 35.5, down for the second straight month following an 8.9 point drop in the previous month, according to the Cabinet Office.

The latest monthly decline was the sharpest since a 13.2 per cent fall was logged in March last year when the virus began

to spread rapidly, clouding the economic outlook.

A reading above 50 indicates that more respondents reported improving conditions than worsening ones. “Amid the virus spread, people refrained from holding year-end parties and were asked (by the government) to spend the holiday season ‘quietly,’ which we believe affected the sentiment in the service industry,” a government official told reporters.

The official said business sentiment also worsened after the government decided to suspend its “Go To Travel” subsidy program from Dec. 28 in an effort to prevent the spread of the virus during the New Year holidays. The campaign was launched last July to boost the virus-hit domestic tourism sector.

SOURCE: KYODO

AT LEAST 320,000 TRANSACTIONS

German police take down ‘world’s largest darknet marketplace’

GERMAN police have taken down the “world’s largest” darknet marketplace, whose Australian alleged operator used it to sell drugs, stolen credit card data and malware, prosecutors said Tuesday.

Police in the northern city of Oldenburg “were able to arrest the alleged operator of the suspected

world’s largest illegal marketplace on the darknet, the DarkMarket, at the weekend,” prosecutors said in a statement

“Investigators were able to shut down the marketplace and turn off the server on Monday,” they added, calling it a months-long international law enforcement operation.

At the time of its closure, DarkMarket had nearly 500,000 users and more than 2,400 vendors.

“A total of at least 320,000 transactions were carried out via the marketplace, with more than 4,650 Bitcoin and 12,800 Monero — two of the most common cryptocurrencies — changing hands,” prosecutors

said. At current exchange rates, that represented turnover valued at 140 million euros (\$170 million). The marketplace offered for sale “all kinds of drugs” as well as “counterfeit money, stolen and fake credit card data, anonymous SIM cards, malware and much more”.

SOURCE: AFP

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THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE
(INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER)
(28/2020-2021)

1. Open tenders are invited for supply of the following respective items in Myanmar Kyats.

Sr.No.	Tender No.	Description	Remarks
(a)	DMP/L-005(20-21) (Retender)	Truck Mounted Single Drum Well Servicing Unit (1) Unit	Ks

2. The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available during office hours commencing from **12 January 2021** at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No. (44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

3. The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications with Original Bid Bond and Commercial Quotation in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than 12:00 pm on **11 February 2021**.

4. Tender Closing Date & Time – **11-2-2021, 12:00 pm**

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph No. + 95 67 – 411206

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MARAKI V.10B/2020

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V M.V MARAKI VOY. NO. (10B/2020)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **14-1-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT-4** 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 INFINITE PROSPERITY SHIPPING PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V KUO LUNG VOY. NO. (108N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V KUO LUNG VOY. NO. (108N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-1-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **TMIT/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 CONTINENTAL SHIPPING LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY. NO. (112N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY. NO. (112N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-1-2021** 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 NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V EDWARD OLDEN DORFF V.2006462

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V EDWARD OLDEN DORFF VOY. NO. (2006462)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-1-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **IBTT** 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 BEN LINE AGENCIES (S’PORE) PTE LTD

Importance of effective corporate governance

By Pyae Phyo Aung (Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry)

THE 9th December of 2020, the National Victory Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar was timed to coincide with the 33rd ASEAN Capital Markets Forum (ACMF) Chairs' Meeting organized by Viet Nam via videoconferencing, joined by the deputy minister for Planning, Finance and Industry, who is also the chairman of Securities and Exchange Commission and party during which others present were senior officials of the capital markets in the ASEAN region, the representatives of partner organizations, the ASEAN Secretariat, and Asian Development Bank (ADB).

According to the roadmap for ASEAN Sustainable Capital Markets, four key priorities were highlighted in the ACMF Action Plan to develop the capital markets in the ASEAN region from 2021 to 2025, which include fifteen sectors under implementation. The meeting discussed the long-term and mid-term Roadmap of ASEAN Capital Markets for sustainable funding in ASEAN regions, criteria for ASEAN Capital Markets, Sustainability-Linked Bond, procedures for sustainability reporting of ASEAN Corporations, assessment for 6th ASEAN Corporate Governance, technical aids of ADB and ASEAN Capital Markets website programmes and cooperation works between ASEAN Working Committee for Capital Market Development (WC-CMD) and ACMF. The meeting also highlighted Corporate Sustainability Disclosures, Sustainable and Responsible Fund Standards and ASEAN Sustainability-linked Bond Standards. The meeting also agreed to keep carrying out the priority sectors of the ACMF Action Plan (2021-2025) between 2021 and 2015. The ACMF is a high-level grouping of capital market regulators from ASEAN countries, according to the report released by the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry.

The Securities and Exchange Commission and the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration are working together on Corporate Sustainability Disclosures, Sustainable and Responsible Fund Standards and ASEAN Sustainability-linked Bond Standards.

Myanmar and Corporate Governance

International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, and the Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar (SECM) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in 2017 to strengthen corporate governance regulatory standards and practices in Myanmar and to provide Myanmar technical assistance in this regard. Then the working group was formed with the responsible persons from the Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar (SECM), the DICA, Yangon Stock Exchange and the IFC in order to carry out Corporate Governance Scorecard. The IFC provided training. Educational seminars were held after inviting interested and potential companies. Arrangements were made to be able to answer the questions. Detailed negotiations with the interested companies were conducted, and then Myanmar Corporate Governance Scorecard 2018 was released.

Efforts to issue No. 2/2020- Notification on Requirements for Effective Corporate Governance

The Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar



Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Win participates in the 33rd Chairs' Meeting of ACMF on 9 December via videoconference. **PHOTO: MNA**

mar (SECM) under the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry issued No. 2/2020- Notification on Requirements for Effective Corporate Governance on 3 December in 2020. In an attempt to release this notification, the commission has made efforts since the end of 2018. The officials from the SECM and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to provide the technical assistance required for the reforms of Myanmar's corporate governance in the presence of the DICA as a witness during which the advisory committee for reforming corporate governance was formed with the representatives from OECD, IFC, CBM, DICA, SECM, MICPA and UMFCCI and then the notification with regard to the emergence of effective corporate governance beneficial to Yangon Stock Exchange-listed companies and the public companies with more than 100 shareholders could be issued.

Corporate Governance

Corporate governance can be recognized as a system by which a company or an organization is openly and transparently directed or controlled with rules, practices and processes. Its main objective spotlights sustainable investments of the companies, financial stability, and reputation on which the investors can rely, that's why, it is to establish a comprehensive environment equipped with trust, transparency, responsibility and accountability. In general, good corporate governance can be assessed with the four following points.

A. Accountability

The management has to be accountable to the Board of Directors elected by a majority of shareholders regarding the activities of running and controlling a business or similar association and BOD is responsible for the investment of the shareholders.

B. Fairness

Shareholders' right must be fair among the shareholders, including those with minimum shares under control by rules and processes. Complaints must be handled in an effective and transparent manner.

C. Transparency

There must be a system which reports on disclosures of financial data, important decisions, work performances, assets and management are presented in a synchronous manner.

D. Independence

The Management and Board of Directors earlier mentioned above are basically the same but different in their actions. The BOD must independently decide the work matters in accord with rules and regulations agreed by all shareholders. The Management must systematically carry out daily activities without being influenced, where Independent Committees and Independent Directors must be appointed as well, and their assigned tasks must be conformity with the work procedures that are laid down. The activities of the BOD, the Management and the Independent Committees must not be influenced by a person or an organization.

What is prescribed in No. 2/2020- Notification on Requirements for Effective Corporate Governance?

Chapter 7 of No. 2/2020- Notification on Requirements for Effective Corporate Governance issued by the SECM includes 15 provisions obliged by law. There are four main areas in the corporate governance—Control System for the Board of Directors, Audit Committee, Independent Directors and Disclosures/ Directors' Reports. Based on these four areas, the SECM in cooperation with the DICA negotiated with the organizations concerned about the ways how to draft the notification after seeking technical

advises appropriate with the situations of the country.

The DICA issued the notification No 90/2020 in October in 2020 to specify the qualifications of independent directors ("ID") of listed and non-listed public limited companies ("PLC") registered under the Myanmar Companies Law for good corporate governance. If an independent director is appointed to a company, (1) he or she must be the one, who worked for the related organization of the company three years ago, (2) family members apart from this person must be the ones who worked three years ago or the ones who are working currently, (3) he or she must own capital or above the one-fifth of vote right and (4) he or she must not be the one, who worked as an executive for the companies that have financial relations. Only those who are free from those criteria must be appointed as the independent director.

Chapter 3 of the notification states provisions as to shareholders' rights, easy way for voting, adequate information available in a synchronous manner, laying down and announcing a policy on profit sharing. Chapter 4 of the notification expresses provisions as to the Board of Directors, BOD set-up, five basic tasks, BOD meeting to be held at least for four times, the formation of the audit committee, the four-point duties of the committee including the introduction of a system comprising three points that can be well-managed.

Chapter five of the notification states three points to be followed in the decision to share trading among the related persons or organizations. Chapter six indicates 14 mandatory disciplines like reports on profit sharing policy, the formation of the Board of Directors, control system, number of meetings held all year round and attendance lists.

The SECM issued a joint statement on a mandatory directive (3/2020) and notification on corporate governance. It includes mandatory rules as to valuable share trading and transfer. Anyone can visit www.secm.gov.mm of the Website of the SECM for further information.

Benefits from obligations

The main aim of issuing the provisions as to corporate governance is to promote regulatory practices of corporate governance of the public companies running in Myanmar and develop reciprocal control among BOD members, executive officers and shareholders.

Abiding by the provisions of corporate governance ensures more transparency, an increase in trust of the public including the investors, sustainable existence of the company and good basic practices contributing to unbiased work procedures between the company and related persons and organizations. Moreover, our country will have to witness an improving score in Protecting Minority Investor index regarding East of Doing report annually assessed by the World Bank, but some scores are taken into account only when there are at least more than 10 listed companies of Stock Exchange. In addition to the public companies, State-owned economic organizations and private-owned companies can establish sustainable and improved corporate governance regulatory practices as they like by following the provisions prescribed in the corporate governance notification.

References:--www.secm.gov.mm

* The article "Economic Enterprises and Corporate Governance in Myanmar" written by U Aung Naing Oo

* Discussions on Corporate Governance by Mr. Kanta Fukami, Senior Policy Analyst from OECD

Translated by Htut Htut (Twantay)

Impact, Innovation and Inclusion Through Difficult Times

WAVE Money, the mobile financial services provider in Myanmar, moved a total of 12 trillion Myanmar kyat (US\$8.7 billion) in 2020 as the country rapidly embraced digital financial services in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This figures doubles from last year's 6.4 trillion kyat (US\$4.3 billion) and is equivalent to 11.5% of Myanmar's estimated 2020 gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$ 75.5 billion.

From January to December in 2020, Wave Money also reported over 1.5 million monthly active users (MAU) of its digital application WavePay and more than 3.9 million MAU of its agent-led money transfer services.

"Wave Money's commitment to create a fairer future for Myanmar proved stronger than ever amid this year of disruption and adversity. Through all the challenges, we continue to focus on driving impact, innovation and inclusion as we provide an essential service to millions of customers, businesses, government and humanitarian organizations," said Brad Jones, Chief Executive Officer of Wave Money. Of the 2020 figures, donation and disbursements to those severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic reached 32 billion kyat (US\$24 million), peaking during the first wave of the crisis from April to June 2020. To date, relief efforts facilitated by Wave Money have reached more than 300,000 people.

Economic Lifeline

Through its agent network comprised mostly of women, Wave Money has created sustainable livelihood, especially in the countryside. From January to December 2020, the company paid 88 billion Myanmar Kyat (US\$ 65 million) in agent commissions, which is nearly 60% more than in 2019.

"Beyond contributing to the COVID-19 efforts, we are delighted to help keep the wheels of Myanmar's economy moving. Money transfers, utilities payments, shopping for food and other necessities have all had to be done mostly digitally for people's safety. This has helped businesses, particularly SMEs to stay afloat, and allowed all of us to cope and carry on with our daily lives," Brad Jones added.

Wave Money is a convenient, secure and reliable mobile financial service that can be widely accessed via

mobile phone and through an extensive agent network across the country.

It is the largest in Myanmar with more than 68,000 agents and coverage of 91% of the country. In recognition of its innovative services and social impact, Wave Money was named "Best Digital Wallet of the Year" and "Best Mobile Payments Services" by Digital Banker at the 2020 Global Retail Banking Innovation Awards in Singapore in December 2020.

Essential Service

When the Myanmar government released its COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan, mobile financial services were among the list of essential services and Wave Money was singled out as an example of a digital payment platform onto which government services would be delivered. In early April 2020, Wave Money was the first to announce that it would make all COVID-19 related disbursements free-of-charge to help organisations that are delivering aid to vulnerable sectors.

"We have an agile team with a clear purpose of serving Myanmar while accelerating financial inclusion. Our technology is excellent, secure and always ready to be used for greater good," said Brad Jones.

Wave Money is currently supporting 37 projects, including social security payments under the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population; loan disbursements for farmers from the Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank; cash transfers to pregnant women and children under the Maternal and Child Cash Transfer programme of the Department of Social Welfare, and the emergency funds for laid off garment workers from the Myan Ku Fund project of the European Union which is financed through the European Union's Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus Response Mechanism managed by the United Nations Office for Project's Services.

Wave Money also continues to mobilise and disburse donations in partnership with various corporates, individuals, and social impact organisations for the National Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19 under its kindness initiative "WavePay it Forward."—GNLM

Impact, Innovation & Inclusion Through Difficult Times WAVE MONEY IN 2020

WavePay monthly active users are growing fast, reflecting the shift to digital in Myanmar

5.4+ Million* An active mobile money account (a mobile money account which has been used to conduct at least one transaction during 30 days of 90 days as per GSMA global standard for mobile money reporting. The monthly active user (MAU) consists of both Digital and OTC users.

1.5+ Million WavePay digital monthly active users (as of December 31, 2020)

3.9+ Million Wave Money OTC monthly active users (as of December 31, 2020)

Transaction volume has nearly doubled from 2019 to 2020

2019: Transferred approximately **6.4 Trillion MMK** (US\$4.3 Billion) through Wave Money platform

2020: Transferred approximately **12 Trillion MMK** (US\$8.7 Billion) through Wave Money platform

*Consists of P2P and OTC transactions as per GSMA global standard for mobile money reporting

Continuing to create sustainable income for thousands of micro and small businesses

Wave Money coverage in Myanmar has grown from **56,000** to **68,000+** Wave Shops

Injected more than **88 Billion MMK** (US\$65 Million) into Myanmar's economy as agent commissions paid out

91% Country Coverage **90%** Rural Coverage

32 Billion MMK (US\$24 Million) Partnered with government and NGOs to help pensioners and financially marginalised recipients through nationwide disbursement. Disbursed more than

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Real Madrid defend Super Cup repatriated from Saudi to storm-hit Spain

MADRID — Despite the concerns about a crammed fixture calendar in a season badly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, Spain is going ahead with its four-team Super Cup this week as Real Sociedad and Athletic Bilbao provide the opposition for Barcelona and Real Madrid.

However, after being taken to Saudi Arabia in January 2020, the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) is organizing this year's version in Andalusia, with the final on Sunday at La Cartuja in Seville.

From the shores of the Red Sea back to Spain, which has been battered in recent days by Storm Filomena delivering

the country's worst snowfall in decades as well as brutally cold temperatures.

Barcelona play Real Sociedad in the first semi-final on Wednesday in Cordoba, before trophy holders Madrid face Athletic Bilbao in Malaga on Thursday, with the winners remaining in southern Spain to contest Sunday's final. All of the games will be behind closed doors. In ordinary times the RFEF would not have given up on its controversial money-spinning Saudi venture, after initially agreeing a 120 million-euro (\$146m) three-year deal to play an expanded four-team competition in the Middle Eastern Kingdom.—AFP ■

Mourinho has no sympathy for Fulham over fixture switch

LONDON — Tottenham boss Jose Mourinho says Fulham have little reason to complain about being told to play a Premier League game at short notice as his opposite number Scott Parker called the scheduling “scandalous”.

Spurs had been due to play Aston Villa on Wednesday, but a coronavirus outbreak at the Midlands club forced a postponement on Monday.

The Premier League acted quickly to put Spurs' match with the Cottagers into the vacant slot after the original fixture was postponed with three hours' notice on December 30 due to a Covid-19 outbreak in Parker's squad.

The Fulham boss criticised the decision, with their game



Tottenham boss Jose Mourinho. PHOTO: POOL/AFP/FILE

against Chelsea scheduled for Friday also put back 24 hours.

But Mourinho, who had feared a crippling fixture pile-up

for Tottenham, offered little sympathy given the short notice of the original game's postponement.

Asked whether Fulham had a right to be upset, Mourinho said on Tuesday: “Are you serious? They had 48 hours to prepare for this game. You think so? I had the news I was not going to play them two hours before the game started.”

“The biggest impact is to have matches postponed,” he added. “That is the biggest impact.”

“The changing of the order of the matches, the impact is minimal because in the end you have to play 19 matches at home and away, you have to play two matches against every team.—AFP ■

Man. United to face Liverpool in FA Cup 4th round

LONDON — Manchester United will face Liverpool in the blockbuster tie of the FA Cup fourth round, while League Two Cheltenham host Manchester City.

Liverpool and United will clash for two consecutive weekends with the top two also facing off in the Premier League on Sunday.

National League North side Chorley's reward for their victory over a depleted Derby was a home tie with Premier League Wolves.

Chorley manager Jamie Vermiglio told BBC Sport: “That's what we really wanted,

Premier League opposition, great.

“And there's a bit of history because in 1986, Chorley played against Wolves at home and beat them 3-0, so we just need to do that again.”

Should Chorley pull off another upset, they could face holders Arsenal in the fifth round.

League Two Crawley, who thrashed Leeds 3-0 in the third round, travel to Bournemouth.

The fourth round ties will be played across the weekend of 22 to 25 January with the fifth round taking place between 9 to 11 February.—AFP ■



FILE: Manchester United striker Edinson Cavani celebrates scoring his team's third goal with teammates during the English Premier League football match between Everton and Manchester United at Goodison Park in Liverpool, north-west England on 7 November 2020. PHOTO: AFP

Villas-Boas wants Marseille to settle PSG account in Trophy match

MARSEILLE — Marseille coach Andre Villas-Boas said on Monday (Jan 11) that despite the controversy surrounding the first meeting with Paris Saint-Germain this season, his team would approach the Champions Trophy between the clubs with “aggression” and “intensity”.

He also said there was no pressure on his team because PSG's wealth had made French football “the most unbalanced in the world”.

But, he said, the financial pressures of the coronavirus pandemic could offer “an opportunity to change the face of football”.

Marseille's 1-0 victory over PSG in Ligue 1 in September was marred by five red cards, Angel Di Maria spitting at Marseille centre back Alvaro and Neymar accusing the same opponent of racism.

The Champions Trophy usually pits the Ligue 1 champions



Neymar (left) and Marseille's Spanish defender Alvaro (right) had to be separated in a bad tempered match in September. PHOTO: AFP/FRANCK FIFE

against the French cup winners, but since PSG finished top of the league when the season was halted and won the cup, they face the league runners up Marseille in Lens on Wednesday.

The Marseille coach said the encounters between the clubs, dubbed “Clasicos” in France, were “always hot”.

“Fans demand we play these matches with aggression and authority. The match at the Parc des Princes was out of control at the end, but that was more because of provocation from the other side than from us”, he told a press conference. “So we will go with humility, but also aggression and intensity.”—AFP ■

Game, test and match: Australian Open hopeful gets coronavirus news during play

DOHA — America's Denis Kudla was told he had tested positive for the coronavirus mid-match at the Australian Open qualifying tournament -- and then sealed victory before going into

quarantine.

The fourth seed learned of the positive test when 5-3 up in the second set against Moroccan Elliot Benchetrit, but was allowed to complete the

ninth game.

Kudla, the world number 114, clinched the match 6-4, 6-3, but was then pulled out of the tournament and placed in hotel quarantine.—AFP ■