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Announcement of Union Election Commission

12 April 2021

1. Regarding the Multiparty General Election held on 8 November 2020, the Union Election Commission has inspected the voter lists and the casting of votes of Yamethin Township in Mandalay Region.
2. The findings on voter lists of Yamethin Township were released on 22-2-2021 and findings were as follows:

Findings on voter lists in Yamethin Township

Sr	Township and numbers of polling stations	Township sub-commission	List from Immigration department	Those involved in voting list without citizenship scrutiny cards	Those involved in voter list more than three times holding one CSC	Those involved in voter list more than two times holding one CS
1	247 polling stations in Yamethin township of Mandalay Region	198,438	182,726	15,964	3,067	29,376

3. The Union Election Commission has inspected the withdrawal/receipt/use/remaining of ballot papers used for Pyithu Hluttaw Election of Yamethin Township of Mandalay Region together with the respective township election sub-commission, head of police force, Immigration and Population and administrators.
4. According to the inspection, 247 polling stations in Yamethin Township took out 226,155 ballots and used 156,348 ballots. The extra/shortage ballots were found at respective polling stations and it found 6,321 missing ballots and 1,716 extra ballots which were not issued by UEC. Findings were as follows:

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Ngapali beach being thronged with travellers on Thingyan second day

NGAPALI BEACH is being crowded with the travellers from across the country on the second day of Thingyan holiday.

The Ngapali beach is one of the popular beaches in Myanmar and it is located in Thandwe township, Rakhine State. Most of the travellers are visiting Ngapali beach during Thingyan holidays to relax and swim.

For the convenience of the travellers from across the country in Ngapali, the hotels and the restaurants at the beach are opened in accordance with the COVID-19 rules and regulations.

The Ngapali beach was not opened during the last year Thingyan period because of the outbreak of COVID-19. Thus, the hotels and restaurants at the beach were also closed. Now, the beach is reopened during this year's water festival period. The hotels and restaurants are also reopened under the COVID-19 rules and regulations.

Ngapali beach is a popular tourist destination and it is over 4 miles away from Thandwe town. The beach is one of the most attractive places for the local people and the foreign



The name "Ngapali" was given to a little village in Thandwe District in 1826, after the First Anglo-Burmese War, by Italians who reached there.

travellers.

The name "Ngapali" was given to a little village in

Thandwe District in 1826, after the First Anglo-Burmese War, by Italians who reached there.

According to them, the beach is so similar to a beach in Napoli, a city in Italy and the name

became "Ngapali" on the Rakhine people's tongue. — District IPRD/GNLM

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

- (a) Building of a Union based on democracy and federalism in practising genuine disciplined multiparty democracy in a full fairness manner
- (b) Emphasizing of restoration of eternal peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)
- (c) Continuous practising of the “principle” of peaceful co-existence among countries by holding up the independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy

2. Economic affairs

- (a) Further development of production based on agriculture and livestock breeding through modern techniques and all-round development of other

sectors of the economy as well

- (b) Stability of market economy and inviting international investments to develop the economy of entire ethnic people
- (c) Encouragement of local businesses to create employment opportunities to be able to produce many products of the State

3. Social affairs

- (a) For ensuring of dynamism of Union spirit which is genuine patriotic spirit
- (b) Following customs and traditions of all ethnic nationalities and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national characters
- (c) Enhancement of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

GTC, GTI under Technical, Vocational Education and Training Department of Education Ministry to open third-year courses, GTHS, second-year courses

GOVERNMENT Technological Colleges and Government Technical Institutes under the Department of Technical, Vocational Education and Training of the Ministry of Education will open the third-year courses, the final years of three-year diploma courses of AGTI and the Government Technical High Schools, second-year courses as of 5 May 2021.

Plan to reopen final-year courses, master's courses (written test) opened at universities, degree colleges, colleges under Higher Education Department of Education Ministry

UNIVERSITIES, degree colleges and colleges under the department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education will reopen the final-year courses and master's courses (written test) which were conducted in the 2019-2020 academic year, as of 5 May 2021.

Universities students hold incense grinding festival and sacred Buddha bathing ceremony



A ceremonial procession is seen for incense grinding festival and sacred bathing of Buddha images in Sittway. **PHOTO-TIN TUN (IPRD)**

STUDENTS from various universities collaborated under the leadership of the University social association (Sittway) to celebrate the Incense Grinding Festival and the ceremony of Sacred Bathing Buddha Images yesterday afternoon on 12 April in Sittway.

The festival and the ceremony is annually held to promote friendship, unity and traditional cultures among the university students.

With the collected Thanaka paste from the incense grinding Festival and the teachers and students' contributions, they toured the town and bathed the Buddha Images and donated offertories to the venerable monks at Pyinnya Linkara monastery on 13 April.

Moreover, the incense grinding festival and the Ceremony of Sacred Bathing to Buddha Images are also celebrated by wards and Sittway Township as-

sociations.

Rakhine ethnic nationalities usually celebrate the Thingyan water festival only after the Sacred Bathing Ceremony to the Buddha Images. The ceremony is held on the second day of the Thingyan festival. The incense grinding ceremony is held on the first day of the Thingyan festival.

During the incense grinding festival, girls bring the stone slab to the festival place and grind the incense happily. During that time, men play traditional drum and sing Rakhine traditional songs, and aged people also offer traditional foods and drinks.

On the second day of Thingyan, Rakhine women in beautiful traditional dress take the scented liquids and offertories. The men play the traditional drum, sing songs and dance on the way to the pagodas. The Rakhine traditional Thingyan festival has started following the traditional culture only after returning from the Buddha Images Bathing Ceremony.—Tin Tun (IPRD)

Locals celebrate Thingyan water festival in Sittway

THE city of Sittway is alive with people celebrating the second day of Thingyan (water festival) yesterday afternoon.

Although there are no water pavilions, they have built traditional Rakhine nipa palm leaves pavilions in front of their houses and are throwing water at one another. Families and groups of people are also enjoying the splash of water during the tour around the city.

“It has been two years that we couldn't celebrate the Thingyan festival, our Rakhine State is in peace this year and we can enjoy the festival as the COVID-19 disease is almost non-existent, that is why we came out to play with water,” said Ma Shwe Yin Thu, a resident of Sittway.

The roads in Sittway town are full of people who are celebrating the water festival as well as people in respective wards are also building traditional water pavilions and splashing water. —Tin Tun (IPRD)/GNLM



Festival revellers are seen enjoying Thingyan yesterday.

Tatmadaw hospitals provide healthcare services to more than 110,000 outpatients and over 35,000 inpatients. At present, more than 4,000 patients are being provided treatments, and over 6,900 pregnant women were given to births.

CDM is an activity to destroy the country. The Senior General said he would like to identify CDM activity as a country-destroying movement. Although protests are staged in neighbouring countries and the international community, they do not destroy businesses. However, CDM in Myanmar attempted to halt the running of hospitals, schools, roads, offices and factories. Tatmadaw hospitals provide healthcare services to more than 110,000 outpatients and over 35,000 inpatients. At present, more than 4,000 patients are being provided treatments, and over 6,900 pregnant women were given to births.

(Excerpt from the speech to Union-level personnel, Union ministers, the chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council, chairpersons of Region and State Administration Councils and chairpersons of Self-Administered Zones and Division Administration Bodies made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 7 April 2021)

Announcement

SOME books and journals not included in the list of books and periodicals officially allowed by the Ministry of Information under the Printing and Publishing Law (2014) are being illegally published as of 11 April 2021. It is announced that action will be taken against anyone who operates the journal works without a permit and provides assistance according to the existing law.

*Ministry of Information
(14.4.2021)*

Thingyan celebration held with joy in Nay Pyi Taw

THE Nay Pyi Taw Council area became alive with teeming crowds on the second day of Thingyan (Akya).

The people kept Sabbath at the pagodas, including Nay Pyi Taw Upatasanti Pagoda and the monasteries.

The people also visited famous places like Hlay Khwin Taung beach resort, Kyi Taung jetty and Awai Yar Dam in Kyi Taung Village-tract of Zeyathiri Township.

During the Thingyan holiday, the officials take patrol or security measures to offer a safe environment for the visitors.

A visitor to Hlay Khwin Taung beach resort said, "We came here from Pyinmana.

There are many visitors here like us. As I am staff, I am so glad to spend my holidays with my family. I also thank the officials of the beach resort for their security measures. May all Myanmar people be wealthy and happy in this New Year." Similarly, the residents constructed water-throwing pavilions and some offered Satuditha in respective townships, wards and villages.

Myanmar Thingyan symbolizes the washing away of the previous year's ills and sins in preparation for the New Year's goodness. Sprinkling water on other people is also intended to wash away one's sins of the previous year. — Naing Aung/ GNLM



Thingyan revellers enjoy the festival in Pyinmana. PHOTO: AYE HTEIN



Water-splashing festival in Hlay Khwin Taung. PHOTO: AYE HTEIN



Water-throwing festival in Kyi Taung. PHOTO: AYE HTEIN

Announcement of Union Election Commission

12 April 2021

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Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Yamethin Township

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/village-tract ballots	219,850	155,687	64,163	58,273	6,321	431
2	Ward/village-tract separately handover ballots				1,285		1,285
3	Township Advanced ballots	661	661				
4	Township Remaining ballots	5,644		5,644	5,644		
Total		226,155	156,348	69,807	65,202	6,321	1,716

- There are only lists of issued ballot papers with Form (11a) to Ward/Village-tract election sub-commission by township sub-commissions and the Ward/Village-tract commission did not have the lists of granted ballots with Form (11A) and it was announced as extra/shortage lists of ward/village-tract.
- There were 32 additional voters in Form (1) book of No (1) polling station in Yay Oo Village-tract of Yamethin Township and of 32 voters, 21 were submitted to township election sub-commission and the remaining 11 voters were not submitted to there and they were put on the list with handwriting and these 11 voters cast their votes.
- The Ward/Village-tract election sub-commission did not return a total of 1,285 ballots – 100 from Ywar Than Thae Kyun Village-tract, 350 from West Gway Gone Village-tract, 50 from War Phyu Taung Village-tract, 50 from Kamma Village-tract, 148 from Ywar Tan Lal Thar Village-tract, 100 from Taung Kan Gyi Village-tract, 150 from Thaik Myaung Village-tract, 200 from Zee Phyu Gone Village-tract and 137 from unknown Ward/Village-tract, to the respective poll heads in accordance with the law, rule and instructions. They returned only after the election.
- Of 68 Ward/Village-tracts in Yamethin Township, it found extra use of ballots in 1 Ward and 4 Village-tracts and also found missing ballots at 1 Ward and 32 Village-tracts. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Ward/Village-tracts	Total Polling Stations	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Myoma Ward	4	4,100	2,739	1,361	709	652	
2	Shwesikhone Ward	3	3,400	2,539	861	861		
3	Kyaungtaik Ward	2	2,100	1,636	464	464		
4	Tabatkar Ward	3	3,250	2,649	601	593	8	
5	Shwedat Shwegone Village-tract	3	4,000	3,216	784	784		
6	Shwedarthasi Village-tract	5	4,100	3,233	867	867		
7	Watee Village-tract	2	2,500	1,986	514	514		
8	Kanhtet Village-tract	1	8,50	661	189	189		
9	Zitawpin Chaungkhwa Village-tract	2	1,200	905	295	295		
10	Suetetoakpo Village-tract	2	1,300	863	437	445		8
11	Htantawkyanpin Village-tract	1	700	491	209	209		
12	Kanbe Village-tract	2	2,700	2,155	545	545		
13	Htanaunggone Village-tract	10	8,000	5,511	2,489	2,239	250	
14	Nanlone Village-tract	2	2,100	1,336	764	464	300	
15	Nankhwe Village-tract	4	1,350	874	476	376	100	
16	Hnetthaik Village-tract	2	1,100	767	333	332	1	
17	Ingyinkan Village-tract	3	2,700	1,812	888	716	172	
18	Katin Village-tract	2	2,500	2,025	475	475		
19	Ohnetheekwe Village-tract	1	1,300	1,099	201	201		
20	Kywetat Village-tract	2	2,200	1,591	609	609		
21	Thinpangone Village-tract	3	3,200	2,467	733	683	50	
22	Seegy Village-tract	3	2,900	2,108	792	771	21	
23	Thinpangone Village-tract Village-tract	6	6,550	4,639	1,911	1,561	350	
24	Myinna Village-tract	6	5,350	4,178	1,172	1,121	51	
25	Intine Village-tract	5	3,550	2,480	1,070	1,022	48	
26	Sintwinkyaunggone Village-tract	3	1,100	659	441	341	100	
27	Wapyutaung Village-tract	8	3,850	2,287	1,563	1,173	390	
28	Bwetgyi Village-tract	4	3,300	2,295	1,005	1,049		44
29	YayOo Village-tract	3	1,600	1,018	582	524	58	
30	Htinkanoo Village-tract	4	3,150	2,000	1,150	750	400	
31	Kanswel Village-tract	4	3,000	2,109	891	891		
32	Ushitgone Village-tract	3	2,350	1,865	485	485		
33	Ushitkan Village-tract	2	1,950	1,320	630	634		4
34	Zipyugone Village-tract	4	4,400	3,118	1,282	882	400	
35	Hteehlaing Village-tract	5	3,750	2,594	1,156	1,120	36	
36	Taungbo Village-tract	6	3,950	2,759	1,191	1,171	20	
37	Thaekwe Village-tract	1	450	290	160	160		
38	Nwarbukyin Village-tract	5	4,750	2807	1,943	1,643	300	
39	Watoe Village-tract	4	5,050	3,764	1,286	1,286		
40	Aungmingalar Ward	6	6,550	4,622	1,928	2,301		373
41	Ingone Village-tract	1	900	710	190	190		
42	Alegone Village-tract	3	2,950	1,827	1,123	619	504	
43	Pesee Village-tract	4	3,600	2,270	1,330	1,330		
44	Wayonetaw Village-tract	2	1,300	993	307	307		
45	Myohla Village-tract	4	3,250	2,480	770	770		
46	Innpaung Village-tract	2	2,800	2,014	786	786		
47	Pyarsi Village-tract	4	3,800	2,647	1,153	1,153		
48	Sattoegy Village-tract	5	5,350	3,335	2,015	1,876	139	
49	Pategone Village-tract	2	1,500	1,138	362	362		
50	Magyegone Village-tract	2	2,250	1,596	654	654		
51	Inntawgyi Village-tract	3	2,850	2,158	692	692		
52	Kamma Village-tract	5	5,200	3,519	1,681	1,633	48	
53	Ainema Village-tract	4	3,600	2,560	1,040	1,042		2
54	Hlwasin Village-tract	13	8,150	4,828	3,322	2,974	348	
55	Sekan Village-tract	3	2,200	1,438	762	762		
56	KanOo Village-tract	5	4,100	2,654	1,446	1,446		
57	Yingatgone Village-tract	3	3,600	2,420	1,180	1,080	100	
58	Taikhmyaung Village-tract	3	3,050	2,167	883	833	50	
59	Kyaukphoo Village-tract	3	3,000	2,107	893	797	96	
60	Kalahmyaw Village-tract	3	2,200	1,454	746	646	100	
61	Paukaine Village-tract	2	1,700	1,220	480	480		
62	Thiesonegyi Village-tract	3	3,000	1,996	1,004	804	200	
63	Kangyi (Taungkangyi) Village-tract	5	4,150	3,120	1,030	929	101	
64	Gwaygone Village-tract	5	4,400	3,457	943	543	400	
65	Phogone Village-tract	2	2,400	1,778	622	622		
66	Ywatanletha Village-tract	5	4,800	3,524	1,276	856	420	
67	Ywatanthaekyun Village-tract	7	8,200	6,080	2,120	2,012	108	
68	Anaukoakepo Village-tract	3	3,350	2,730	620	620		
Ward/village tract ballots		247	219,850	155,687	64,163	58,273	6,321	431
Ward/village-tract separately handover ballots						1,285		1,285
Township Advanced ballots			661	661				
Township Remaining ballots			5,644		5,644	5,644		
Township total		247	226,155	156,348	69,807	65,202	6,321	1,716

Union Election Commission

Announcement of Union Election Commission

13 April 2021

- Regarding the Multiparty General Election held on 8 November 2020, the Union Election Commission has inspected the voter lists and the casting of votes of Putao and Machanbaw townships of Kachin State.
- Findings in respective townships were as follows:

Findings on voter lists in each township

Sr	Township and numbers of polling stations	Township sub-commission	List from Immigration department	Those involved in voting list without citizenship scrutiny cards	Those involved in voter list more than three times holding one CSC	Those involved in voter list more than two times holding one CS
1	48 polling stations in Putao township of Kachin State	39,268	35,404	1,452	367	4,048

2	17 polling stations in Machanbaw township of Kachin State	5,902	4,183	13	3	210
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3. The Union Election Commission has inspected the withdrawal/receipt/use/remaining of ballot papers used for Pyithu Hluttaw Election of Putao and Machanbaw townships of Kachin State together with the respective township election sub-commission, head of police force, Immigration and Population and administrators in accordance with the Hluttaw Election Law Section 53.

4. According to the inspection, a total of 65 polling stations in these two townships took out 52,877 ballots and used 35,848 ballots. It left 16,964 ballots instead of 17,029 ballots. The difference was 70 ballots and it found 5 extra ballots. Findings were as follows:

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in each township

Sr	Township	Total Polling Stations	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Putao	48	45,575	30,884	14,691	14,630	66	5
2	Machanbaw	17	7,302	4,964	2,338	2,334	4	
	Total	65	52,877	35,848	17,029	16,964	70	5

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Putao Township

5. A total of 48 polling stations in 11 Wards and 14 Village-tracts of Putao Township in Putao District of Kachin State took out 45,575 ballots and used 30,884 ballots. It left only 14,630 ballots instead of 14,691. The extra/shortage ballots and illegal extra ballots were found at respective poll stations. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/village tract ballots	40,600	30,481	10,119	10,058	66	5
2	Township Remaining ballots	4,975	403	4,572	4,572		
	Total	45,575	30,884	14,691	14,630	66	5

6. It found 66 missing ballots and 5 extra ballots at 48 polling stations in 11 Wards and 14 Village-tracts of Putao Township. The township election sub-commission left 4,572 ballots and so the remaining ballots and exact remaining ballots numbers were the same.

7. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Ward/Village-tracts	Total Polling Stations	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Myoma Ward	1	1,200	998	202	202		
2	Kaungkahtaung Ward	1	1,700	1,356	344	344		
3	Hokho Ward	1	900	692	208	208		
4	Punhlaing Ward	1	550	387	163	163		
5	Paain Ward	1	400	364	36	36		
6	Tonlihtu Ward	1	200	164	36	36		
7	Tatthit Ward	1	600	440	160	160		
8	Loneswet Ward	1	1,150	811	339	339		
9	Layyinkwin Ward	2	3,050	2,289	761	759	2	
10	Doketan Ward	1	2,200	1,691	509	509		
11	Mulashide Ward	1	1,700	1,091	609	613		4
12	Mansay Village-tract	7	4,950	3,494	1,456	1,446	10	
13	Mamulei Village-tract	2	1,550	1,290	260	260		
14	Mansaykhon Village-tract	2	1,000	786	214	209	5	

15	Panmati Village-tract	3	3100	2267	833	833		
16	Putauing Village-tract	2	1,600	1,181	419	417	2	
17	Sarkhwamdang Village-tract	3	1,800	1,380	420	420		
18	Makatmone Village-tract	2	450	412	38	36	2	
19	Lantaung Village-tract	4	2,750	1,952	798	798		
20	Ziaon Village-tract	2	1,750	1,412	338	338		
21	Muladi Village-tract	2	1,900	1,462	438	393	45	
22	Phatma Village-tract	1	1,150	991	159	160		1
23	Lonesharyan Village-tract	2	2,700	1,883	817	817		
24	Swampiyan Village-tract	2	900	629	271	271		
25	Namhtwamkhu Village-tract	2	1,350	1,059	291	291		
	Ward/village tract ballots	48	40,600	30,481	10,119	10,058	66	5
	Township Remaining ballots		4,975	403	4,572	4,572		
	Township Total	48	45,575	30,884	14,691	14,630	66	5

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Machanbaw Township

8. According to the inspection, a total of 17 polling stations in 4 Wards and 11 Village-tracts of Machanbaw Township in Putao District of Kachin State took out 7,302 ballots and used 4,964 ballots. It left 2,334 ballots instead of 2,338. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/village tract ballots	6,400	4,890	1,510	1,510		
2	Township ballots	902	74	828	824	4	
	Total	7,302	4,964	2,338	2,334	4	

9. The township election sub-commission must have 828 ballots but it found only 824 remaining ballots during the inspection and so four ballots were missing.

10. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Ward/Village-tracts	Total Polling Stations	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Namkham Village-tract	1	850	717	133	133		
2	Tramdam Village-tract	1	1,350	1,099	251	251		
3	Kaungmulone Village-tract	1	700	542	158	158		
4	Manno Village-tract	2	500	401	99	99		
5	Ward (1)	1	550	375	175	175		
6	Ward (2)	1	300	245	55	55		
7	Ward (3)	1	400	293	107	107		
8	Ward (4)	1	400	288	112	112		

9	Inbuebawt Village-tract	1	350	214	136	136		
10	Shinmwayyan Village-tract	1	100	70	30	30		
11	Alangar Village-tract	1	400	314	86	86		
12	Htangar Village-tract	1	100	80	20	20		
13	Ingadanchet Village-tract	2	300	180	120	120		
14	Makyangar Village-tract	1	50	32	18	18		
15	Dyeinbudyensar Village-tract	1	50	40	10	10		
	Ward/village tract ballots	17	6,400	4,890	1,510	1,510		
	Township remaining ballots		902	74	828	824	4	
	Township Total	17	7,302	4,964	2,338	2,334	4	

Union Election Commission

5 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 14 April, total figure rises to 142,610

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 142,610 after 5 new cases were reported on 14 April 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, 131,879 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Those spreading false news to affect State stability charged under Section 505-A

THE following celebrities and people have been charged under Section 505-A of the Penal Code for intentionally committing incitements to the government employees to join CDM to affect government mechanism and for spreading information showing their support for unlawful CRPH including fake news and other information to unrest riots and threaten the public on the social media.

The list of people charged under Section 505-A of the Penal Code

Sr	Account name	Profile	Address	Section of Penal Code	Photo	Sr	Account name	Profile	Address	Section of Penal Code	Photo
1	Nann Thuzar https://www.facebook.com/nannthuzar.official	Nann Thuzar 	Yankin Township, Yangon Region	505-a		11	Kyaw Thu Shin https://www.facebook.com/yinyin.htwe.1297943	Kyaw Thu Shin 	Myawady Town, Kayin State	505-a	
2	Khine Yin Mon https://www.facebook.com/thwinpapaung1977	Thwin Pa Pa Aung 	Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region	505-a		12	Cham Htet Han https://www.facebook.com/cham.h.han	Cham Myae Kyaw 	Pyay Township, Bago Region	505-a	
3	Phyo Thu Kha https://www.facebook.com/100016422935728	Phyo Thu Kha 	Kamayut Township, Yangon Region	505-a		13	Nyein Su Mon https://www.facebook.com/susumon.susumon.735	Su Mon Htwe 	Madaya Township, Mandalay Region	505-a	
4	Chan Nyein Moe https://www.facebook.com/nyein.moe	Chan Nyein Moe 	Lanmadaw Township, Yangon Region	505-a		14	Pyae Phyoe Aung https://www.facebook.com/pyaephyoe.aung.75436531	Pyae Phyoe Aung 	Hlinethaya Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
5	Phyu Sin Thant https://www.facebook.com/100009190573547	Phyu Sin Thant 	Aunglan Town, Magway Region	505-a		15	San Oo Hlaing https://www.facebook.com/san.o.hlaing.904	San Oo Hlaing 	Meiktila Town, Mandalay Region	505-a	
6	Htoo Kyaw Win https://www.facebook.com/100007034808854	Htoo Kyaw Win 	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	505-a		16	はる (Su Su) https://www.facebook.com/100038908831543	Thin Yadana Sint 	Kyaiklat Township, Ayeyawady Region	505-a	
7	Nay Oo Lwin https://www.facebook.com/alvisnay	Nay Oo Lwin 	Lanmadaw Township, Yangon Region	505-a		17	Thadar https://www.facebook.com/100019115760280	Thadar Zaw Min 	Kamayut Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
8	Aung San Moe Zatt https://www.facebook.com/MyoMinAung69	Myo Min Aung 	Hlinethaya Township, Yangon Region	505-a		18	May Thoon Kha https://www.facebook.com/100013541802016	May Thoon Kha 	Pyapon Town, Ayeyawady Region	505-a	
9	Hnin HninSoe https://www.facebook.com/hninhnin.soe.98	Hnin Hnin Soe 	Taunggyi Town, Shan State	505-a		19	Kaung Kaung https://www.facebook.com/kaung.kaung.505	Kaung Si Thu Win 	Pyay Town, Bago Region	505-a	
10	Win Htein https://www.facebook.com/brian.win.htein	Win Htein 	Mudon Township, Mon State	505-a		20	Nay Zaw Naing https://www.facebook.com/nayzaw.naing	Nay Zaw Naing 	Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region	505-a	

Action will be taken against those who admit the offenders, and list of remaining offenders will be released. —MNA

Files opened against medical doctors who participated in CDM activity with attempts to deteriorate peace and stability of the State

THE following medical doctors have been charged under Section 505-A of the Penal Code for inciting State service personnel and health staff to participate in CDM activities, themselves participating in it, supporting CDM activities and CRPH unlawful association with the aim of deteriorating the State administrative machinery.

Sr.	Name	Hospital	Address	Section of Penal Code	Photo
1	Dr Wai Wai Oo (Medical Superintendent)	PyinOoLwin People's Hospital (300-Bed)	Kawlin Town, Sagaing Region	505-a	
2	Dr Kyaw Kyaw Oo (Medical Superintendent)	Pekhone People's Hospital	Kyauk-Padaung Town, Mandalay Region	505-a	
3	Dr Yi Yi (Specialist)	Ottarathiri Township Obstetrics and Gynecology and Children's Specialist Hospital (500-Bed)	Ottarathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw	505-a	
4	Dr Kyaw Nyi Nyi Htut (Specialist)	Pakokku People's Hospital	Hline Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
5	Dr Htein Lin Aung (Specialist)	Pakokku People's Hospital	Meiktila Town, Mandalay Region	505-a	
6	Dr Chan Mya Aung (Specialist)	Pakokku People's Hospital	Monywa Town, Sagaing Region	505-a	
7	Dr Aung Lin Oo (Specialist)	Pakokku People's Hospital	Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay Region	505-a	
8	Dr Zarchi Pyay Thein (Specialist)	Pakokku People's Hospital	Mogok Town, Mandalay Region	505-a	
9	Dr Cho Nwe Oo (Specialist)	Hinthada People's Hospital	Hinthada Town, Ayeyawady Region	505-a	
10	Dr Pan Myat Thu (Specialist)	Hinthada People's Hospital	Hinthada Town, Ayeyawady Region	505-a	
11	Dr Khin Thet Lin (Specialist)	Katha People's Hospital	Kawlin Township, Sagaing Region	505-a	
12	Dr Pyay Thein (Specialist)	Ottarathiri Township Orthopaedic Specialist Hospital	Yankin Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
13	Dr Zaw Naing Phy (Specialist)	Katha People's Hospital	Sangyoung Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
14	Dr Khin Lei Lei Naing (Specialist)	Katha People's Hospital	Chanayethazan Township, Mandalay Region	505-a	
15	Dr Ko Ko Naing (Specialist)	Ottarathiri Township Orthopaedic Specialist Hospital	Mingaladon Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
16	Dr Aung Tun Win (Specialist)	Bhamo Township People's Hospital	Mogaung Township, Kachin State	505-a	
17	Dr Gam Min Htet (Specialist)	Bhamo Township People's Hospital	Bhamo Town, Kachin State	505-a	
18	Dr Lyan Lin Htwe (Specialist)	Bhamo Township People's Hospital	Myitkyina Town, Kachin State	505-a	
19	Dr Banyar (Specialist)	Bhamo Township People's Hospital	Bhamo Town, Kachin State	505-a	
20	Dr Yan Naing Moe (Specialist)	Loikaw People's Hospital	Loikaw Town, Kayah State	505-a	

Among them, Dr Aung Tun Win (specialist), Dr Gam Min Htet (specialist), Dr Lyan Lin Htwe (specialist), Dr Banyar (specialist) of Bhamo People's Hospital (200-Bed) and Dr Yan Naing Moe (specialist) of Loikaw People's Hospital participated in CDM activities without performing medical treatments at assigned hospitals but gave medical treatments at private hospitals/clinics according to the documentary photos.

As tasks are being carried out to arrest those medical doctors charged, action will be taken against the persons under the law for admitting those medical doctors, and work licences of the private hospitals/clinics which allowed them to give medical treatments will be closed. Deterrent action will be taken against owners of these hospitals/clinics under the law. Action will be taken against any health staff under the law for taking charges of providing healthcare services to the people and giving assistance to private hospitals/clinics with participation in CDM activities without discharging assigned duty. Severe action will be taken against owners of private hospitals/clinics which admit those medical doctors and health staff for supporting the CDM participants.

Political outlook, analyzing cause and effect, the good and the bad

POLITICAL movements being staged in Myanmar can be identified as non-rational acts. In fact, General Aung San, since his young Thakin life, had expressed definitions of political outlook, political doctrine and rationality on cause and effect as well as the good and the bad.

During the struggling independence period, General Aung San criticized that the ministers at that time didn't have the experience to perform administration effectively, setting aside good or bad governance. He had met with the education minister. Attempts to be self-famous and wealthy were not politics. Conscience to develop the country was politics. He did not rationalize what the State's future was and how to walk along the paradise on earth to keep the State away from poverty. The doctrine was based on rationality, he added.

That is why it is necessary to uphold concepts for accepting a common political doctrine for the sake of the nation and striving to possess the capability to rationalize cause and effect concerning the interests of the State and the people.

During the struggling independence period, General Aung San criticized that the ministers at that time didn't have the experience to perform administration effectively, setting aside good or bad governance. He had met with the education minister. Attempts to be self-famous and wealthy were not politics. Conscience to develop the country was politics. He did not rationalize what the State's future was and how to walk along the paradise on earth to keep the State away from poverty. The doctrine was based on rationality, he added.

Those who served the State interests could not foster genuine unity. They uncertainly governed the country. Without the implementation of genuine political doctrine, they prioritized grasping the State power for their self-interests only. They paved the way heading for hell to the people without the ability to rationalize the future. Dishonesty to the State interests was derailed by confrontation.

That is why it is necessary to uphold concepts for accepting a common political doctrine for the sake of the nation and striving to possess the capability to rationalize cause and effect concerning the interests of the State and the people.

Thingyan: The festival of goodwill and loving-kindness

By Maha Saddhamma Jotika dhaja Sithu Dr Khin Maung Nyunt

MYANMAR people use the Lunar calendar. Months are counted according to the movement of the moon, so the month in Myanmar is 'La', the same word for the moon. There are two types of the month - 30-day month and 29-day month. The month which has 15 days of the waxing moon and 15 days of the waning moon is of the first type and the month which has 15 days of the waxing moon and 14 days of the waning moon is of the second type. These two types alternate in the 12-month calendar. The year always begins with the 29-day month called Tagu, and ends with the 30-day month called Tabaung. So it is customary for the Myanmar people to mark the day not only as the 1st day, 2nd day etc., of the month but also whether the day is waxing or waning moon of the month. The days of the month counted in this way have thus a serial of 1 to 15 for the first half of the month and 1 to 15 for the second half of the month of 30 days, and 1 to 15 for the first half of the month and 1 to 14 for the second half of the month of 29 days. The 15th day of the waxing moon is called Full Moon day, and the 15th (in the case of 30-day months) or 14th (in the case of 29-day months) day of the waning moon is called 'Hidden Moon' day.

Tagu is the first month of Myanmar 12-month calendar, and its astrological name is Mesha (Aries). Of the flowers that bloom in this month gant-gaw (*Mesua ferrea*) is traditionally regarded as the flower of Tagu. Myanmar people celebrate the national festival every month, and the festival of Tagu is the Thingyan festival.

Scholars give different interpretations of the word "Thingyan". The word "Thingyan" (သံဠိန်) is said to have been derived from a Sanskrit word 'Thin ka ran' (သင်္ကရန်), which means change. So Thingyan connotes change from the old season to a new season, old year to new year, change from the month of Tabaung, which is the twelfth month of Myanmar calendar to the month of Tagu, which is the first month of the following year. Thingyan also means move, for in summer, the sun moves from South to North, or from the Tropic of Capricorn to the Tropic of Cancer. The movement of the sun causes the seasons, and its return to the North marks the beginning of Myanmar's three-seasonal year. The

advent of Thingyan is signalled by the movement of the sun from the month of Tabaung (Mina or Pisces (မိနဲရာသီ) to the month of Tagu (Mesha or Aries (မိသရာသီ)). In Tagu the life cycle of nature begins anew, ushering in the new year. In essence, Thingyan means change. Change from the old year to a new year; old life to new life, old cycle of seasons to a new cycle of seasons. Change is in keeping with nature, the weather and the seasons of the country. Tabaung, the last month of the year, has just passed. It is the month of transition - the transition from cold season to warm season. In the month of Tagu, the warm season has arrived in full swing. It is very appropriate that a water pouring festival is held while the weather is favourably warm.

There is a legend that tells us how the Thingyan festival originated. The two mighty devas (deities), Thagyar Min (Indra) and Athi Brahma were drawn into a controversy over the solution of a mathematical problem. They agreed to refer the matter to a sage called Kavalamine, whose verdict would be accepted as final. They also agreed that the winner should cut off the loser's head. The sage judged that Indra's solution was right, and so Indra cut off Athi Brahma's head. But Athi Brahma was so omnipotent, a god, that if his head were thrown down to the Earth, the Earth would burn to ashes, if thrown into



Thingyan is Myanmar New Year Festival that usually occurs in middle of April. It is a Buddhist festival celebrated over a period of four to five days. Bagan era painting of Thingyan. PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

As Athi Brahma's body should not remain headless, Indra cut off the head of the Mahapeingala Elephant and joined it on to the Athi Brahma's body, thereby Athi Brahma became Mahapeinne god (Ganesha). This is the legend of Thingyan.

One traditional belief which still holds sway over the conservative Myanmar is that at the time of Thingyan, Thagyar Min or Indra descends from Tavatimsa, his Celestial Kingdom, to Earth for his

The registrar carries with him two Record Books, one for registering the good people who have behaved well and the other for registering bad people who have misbehaved. In life hereafter, the good people will be rewarded, and punishment awaits bad people in hells.

The above belief may have been based upon one of Myanmar fables in days of yore. It used to be one of the most edifying fables to instruct the children in good morals and manners. The elders in the usually extended Myanmar family, either grandpa, grandma, uncle, or aunt, or even old maid or nanny, would tell the young ones about the annual visit of Thagyar Min, warning them not to be naughty, wicked, and mischievous but to be good, otherwise, Thagyar Min would mark them down in the blacklist for punishment. This belief reminds not only the young ones but also the adults, all and everyone, to live a good life and to do good work for others. True to the teaching of this belief, Myanmar people since time immemorial have been celebrating the Thingyan festival with the spirit of goodwill and loving-kindness.

In the days of the Myanmar kings, Thingyan was celebrated at the Palace, where royalty and nobility participated in the water pouring. King Narathihapate (A.D. 1254-87), the last ruler of the Bagan Dynasty, was recorded in the chronicle to have built

gaw (Ironwood, *Mesua Ferrea Linn*) or Khayey (Starflower tree, *Mimusops elengi Roxb*) to represent Monday, Sein Pan (gold mohur tree, *Poinciana regia*) to represent Tuesday, Ywet Hla (*Croton, Codiaeum variegatum*) to represent Wednesday, Myey Zar (Couch grass, *Cynodon dactylon Pers*) to represent Thursday, Thi (Wood apple tree, *Feronia elephantum Corres*) or Than (*Terminalia Oliveri Brandis*) to represent Friday, and Dan (Henna, *Lawsonia inermis Linn*) to represent Saturday, are arranged in the order in the Atar (the period of Thingyan) pot. Sprigs of Thabyey (*Eugenia, Eugenia jambolana Lamk*) are also added because Thabyey, like Laurel, is the symbol of victory for the Myanmar people. When the report of the Thingyan cannon signals the descent of Thagyar Min, the Atar pot is raised up above the head to welcome him and then water is poured out to symbolically cleanse and purify the world and its peoples. The sprigs are then made into a bouquet to be placed at the entrance of the house to usher in the new year. Today, only the elder members of the family perform this rite.

The second day of Thingyan is called "Akyat Ney", which means the day Thagyar Min goes around inspecting the moral behaviour of human beings. Usually, the inspection day is one day. But according to the calculations of the astrologers, there can be two inspection days in certain years. Next comes the 'Atet Ney', which means the day Thagyar Min ascends to his Celestial Kingdom. The exact time of the ascent is announced by a signal such as a beating drum or cannon report. Thingyan Sa (bulletin predicting the time of transition into the New Year and climatic and crop conditions to be excepted in that year) is issued by a board of eminent astrologers. It is a bulletin predicting the time of transition into the new year. Sometimes future situation of the world is foretold in it.

Goodwill, loving-kindness and cheerful heart vibrate the spirit of Thingyan. People go out to perform religious and social works such as keeping Sabbath, meditating, visiting pagodas and monasteries for worshipping or alms offering, paying homage to the monks, parents, elders,

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the oceans, all water would dry up. So seven goddesses of the seven days were assigned to holding his head by turn. The time when the head changes hands corresponds to Thingyan. The blood which gushed out of the head was believed to be potent and auspicious when applied to one's body.

annual round of inspection - to check whether human beings on Earth are behaving well or not. He is accompanied by two assistant gods, Witha-kyone (*Visukama*) and Mateli, the former is the registrar-cum-carpenter, and the latter is the driver of the chariot vehicle which Indra rides.

Announcement

The Molotov journal is not signed on the list of books and periodicals allowed by the Ministry of Information for legal publishing under the Printing and Publishing Law (2014). The Molotov journal is illegally published. It is announced that action will be taken against anyone who operates the journal works without a permit and provides assistance, according to the existing law.

Ministry of Information

Public information

Yangon Administration Council is working with relevant departments to help the businesses in the region. People are informed to contact the following phone numbers to get assistance for their small and medium-scaled businesses and investments which are facing some delays and working to do new businesses.

Phone numbers: 01 830 1975, 01 830 2175

Yangon Region Administration Council

သတင်းစာတစ်ပြည်သူများအနေဖြင့် မြန်မာ့အလင်း ကြေးမုံ၊ The Global New Light of Myanmar ရောင်းခုံသတင်းစာများ မှာယူဖတ်ရှုလိုခြင်းနှင့် သတင်းစာများရောက်ရှိမှု မရှိခြင်းတို့ကြောင့် အသက်အသားဖြစ်ပေါ်ပါက အောက်ဖော်ပြပါ ဖုန်းနံပါတ်များသို့ ဆက်သွယ်နိုင်ပါသည်။

- သတင်းနှင့်စာမူထုတ်ဝေရေးဌာန (ရန်ကင်း) ဖုန်း-၀၆၇-၃၅၁၁၀၈၊ ၀၆-၄၃၀၀၅၀၆၁
- အပြည်ပြည်ဆက်သွယ်ရေးဌာန (ရန်ကင်း) ဖုန်း-၀၆၇-၃၆၁၀၇၇၊ ၀၆-၄၂၀၇၀၆၆၆၇
- မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာတိုက် (ရန်ကင်း) ဖုန်း-၀၁-၉၅၄၄၃၁၇၊ ၀၉-၄၄၀၀၂၂၁၄
- ပြည်ထောင်စုသတင်းစာတိုက် (ရန်ကင်း) ဖုန်း-၀၁-၉၂၂၁၀၀၊ ၀၉-၄၅၀၀၂၅၅၇၀
- The Global New Light of Myanmar (ရန်ကင်း) ဖုန်း-၀၁-၉၆၀၄၅၃၇၊ ၀၉-၉၈၄၉၂၅၃၁
- ကိုယ်ပိုင်သတင်းစာတိုက် (မန္တလေး) ဖုန်း-၀၂-၄၀၃၂၇၂၈၊ ၀၂-၄၀၃၂၅၅၀
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- ရန်ကင်း-၀၄၃-၂၀၂၄၀၅၁၊ ၀၄၃-၂၀၂၄၀၆၈
- ကိုယ်ပိုင်သတင်းစာတိုက် (တောင်ကြီး) ဖုန်း-၀၈၁-၂၂၁၀၁၆၄
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- ကိုယ်ပိုင်သတင်းစာတိုက် (သာစန်း) ဖုန်း-၀၈၂-၂၀၄၀၆၇
- ကိုယ်ပိုင်သတင်းစာတိုက် (ဖြူတီ) ဖုန်း-၀၅၉-၂၀၄၂၀၈၃

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Five future programmes of State Administration Council

1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted to carry out tasks that should be done, including inspection of voting lists in accordance with the law.
2. Effective measures will be taken for the prevention of current infectious COVID-19 with added momentum.
3. Efforts will be made to recover businesses that faced loss caused by COVID-19 in various ways as quickly as possible.
4. Emphasis will be placed on restoring eternal peace in the entire nation in line with agreements from the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) as much as possible.
5. When missions will be accomplished in accord with provisions of the state of emergency, a free and fair multiparty democracy election will be held in accordance with the Constitution (2008), and further tasks will be undertaken to hand over State duty to the winning party meeting the standards of democracy.

Thingyan: The festival of goodwill and loving - kindness.....

FROM PAGE-9

superiors and teachers, bathing and shampooing the aged, cleaning up one's home and surrounding, and throwing cool scented water at the passerby to cleanse him. Thingyan is a Myanmar national festival held on a grand scale, in which all Myanmar nationalities, regardless of age, race, class, and religion, participate and revel in water pouring.

More than that, Thingyan has assumed an international character since the days of Myanmar kings. It is a free-for-all-fun-lovers festival in which people of every clime and creed can participate benevolently and joyously. The following is an account of the Thingyan Festival participated by Major Michael Symes, an English Envoy despatched to the Court of Inwa, in A.D 1795, during the reign

of King Bodawpaya (A.D. 1782-1819).

“On the 12th of April, the last day of the Birman year, we were invited by the Maywoon to bear a part ourselves in a sport that is universally practised throughout the Birman dominions on the concluding day of their annual cycle. To wash away the impurities of the past and commence the new year free from satin, women on this day are accustomed to throwing water on every man they meet, which the men have the privilege of retorting; this licence gives rise to a great deal of harmless merriment, particularly the young women, who armed with larger syringes and flagons, endeavour to wet every man that goes along the street, and, in their turn, receive a wetting with perfect good humour; nor is the smallest indecency ever manifested in this or

in any other of their sports. Dirty water is never cast; a man is not allowed to lay hold of a woman, but may fling as much water over her as he pleases provided she has been the aggressor; but if a woman warns a man that she does not mean to join in the diversion, it is considered as an avowal of pregnancy, and she passes without molestation”.

‘About an hour before sunset, we went to the Maywoon’s and found that his lady had provided plentifully to give us a wet reception. In the hall were placed three large china jars, full of water, with bowls and ladles to fling it. Each of us, on entering, had a bottle of rosewater presented to him, a little of which we in turn poured into the palm of the Maywoon’s hand, who sprinkled it over his own vest of fine flowered muslin; the lady then made her appearance at the door and

gave us to understand that she did not mean to join in the sport herself, but made her eldest daughter, a pretty child, in the nurse’s arms, pour from a golden cup some rosewater mixed with sandal-wood, first over her father, and then over each of the English gentleman; this was a signal for the sport to begin. We were prepared, being dressed in linen waistcoats. From ten to twenty women; young and middle-aged rushed into the hall from the inner apartments, who surrounded and deluged without mercy four men ill able to maintain so unequal a contest. The Maywoon was soon driven from the field; but Mr Wood having got possession of one of the jars, we were enabled to preserve our ground till the water was exhausted; it seemed to afford them great diversion, especially if we appeared at all distressed

by the quantity of water flung in our faces. All parties being tired and completely drenched, we went home to change our clothes and in the way met many damsels who would willingly have renewed the sport; they, however, were afraid to begin without receiving encouragement from us, not knowing how it might be taken by strangers; but they assailed Baba-sheen and his Birman attendants with little ceremony. No inconvenient consequences were to be apprehended from the wetting; the weather was favourable, and we ran no risk of taking cold. Having put on my dry clothes, we returned to the Maywoon’s and were entertained with a dance and puppet show that lasted till eleven”.

(Michael Symes, *An Account of an Embassy to the Kingdom of Ava, London 1800, pp. 178-180*)

Man Wein border closure affects Muse trade

MYANMAR’S Muse border trade came to a standstill following the closure of the Man Wein border checkpoint triggered by the detection of the coronavirus cases in the border area, according to the Muse Rice Wholesale Centre.

A Myanmar citizen who tested positive for COVID-19 was found in Kyalgaung precious stone market on 29 March. It prompted China to restrict border access at the Man Wein checkpoint, a major border crossing between Muse and Kyalgaung areas.

Over 180 trucks from Myanmar struck in Kyalgaung, Yunnan Province were allowed to depart on 11 April, said Muse traders.

“Man Wein post has been closed down since 12:30 pm of 30 March. Man Wein is the important cross-border point



Trade value through the Muse land border plummeted to US\$2.47 billion between 1 October and 2 April in the current financial year 2020-2021 from \$2.6 billion recorded in the corresponding period of last FY.

between Myanmar and Ruili, China. Following the detection of coronavirus case in Kyalgaung border, the Ruili-Kyalgaung river crossing is also closed. The coronavirus tests and vaccination are now offered in Kyalgaung,” Vice-Chair U Min Thein of the Muse Rice Wholesale Centre

elaborated.

Consequently, there is no trade flowing in and out of the country via the Muse-Man Wein border, and Myanmar’s Muse border came to a halt. However, Kyinsankyawt and Wan Ding posts give the green light to over 400 watermelon trucks.

Before the Man Wein checkpoint closure, Myanmar daily sent about 2,000 tonnes of rice and 40,000 broken rice bags to China. This Man Wein post plays a pivotal role in trading between Myanmar and China. Myanmar exports rice, broken rice, onion, chilli pepper, pulses

and beans, food commodities and fishery products to China. In contrast, electrical appliance, equipment, medical device, household goods, construction materials and food products are imported into the country via Man Wein. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, about 500 trucks were daily flowing in and out of the Myanmar-China border Man Wein. At present, Man Wein post remains closed amid the heightened coronavirus containment measures.

The closure of the Man Wein checkpoint wreaked havoc on the Muse trade. Trade value through the Muse land border plummeted to US\$2.47 billion between 1 October and 2 April in the current financial year 2020-2021 from \$2.6 billion recorded in the corresponding period of last FY, the Ministry of Commerce’s data showed. — KK/GNLM

Theehmwe banana and calabash grown to earn family income

THE cultivation of mixed crops of Theehmwe banana and calabash has met with success in Kyaukton village, Minbu (Saku) township, Magway region and the farmers are earning family income.

The nursery banana plants are cultivated five feet apart in between.

Then, the calabash seeds are dropped in the banana plants so that there is no space between banana trees.

The yellow leaves and the leaves that are thought to be infected should be cleaned by putting them in the trash or burning them to prevent the plant buds.

Similarly, the yellow banana leaves should be gut-

ted regularly. In summer, the plants need to put in irrigation water once a week. Banana plants are not resistant to heat and drought, and when the plants submerge, their leaves turn yellow and die. The banana plants are grown well in winter because they enjoy low humidity and cooler weather.

Theehmwe banana is sold for K1,000 or K1,200 per bunch depending upon the size. The calabashes are sold for K200 or K300 per one.

The cultivation of mixed crops of Theehmwe banana and calabash is achieving success in Minbu (Sagu) township, said Daw Kay Thi, a banana grower in Kyaukton village. —Zeyar Htet (Minbu)/GNLM



The cultivation of mixed crops of Theehmwe banana and calabash is achieving success in Minbu (Sagu) township.

Trade deficit sharply narrows in H1 on falling imports

MYANMAR'S trade gap has significantly narrowed to US\$168.202 million in the first half of the current financial year 2020-2021 from just \$1.29 billion registered in the corresponding period of the 2019-2020FY, according to data provided by the Ministry of Commerce.

The drastic drop in imports is a contributing factor to a decrease in trade deficit this year.

Between 1 October and 2 April in the current FY, Myanmar's external trade drastically plunged to \$15.78 billion from \$20.36 billion recorded in the year-ago period.

While exports were estimated at \$7.8 billion, imports were valued at \$7.9 billion this FY. Compared to the FY2019-2020, exports showed a drop of over \$1.7 billion,

while imports fell by \$2.85 billion.

Myanmar witnessed a slump in exports and imports triggered by the coronavirus pandemic.

Both sea trade and border trade dropped amid the coronavirus impacts and political changes.

The neighbouring countries tightened the border security and limited trading time to contain the virus's spread. For maritime trade, disruption in the logistic sector, some ocean liners' suspension, and the pandemic-induced container shortage somehow scaled down the maritime trade.

"The lack of money in circulation due to the closure of private banks decreases economic efficiency," an exporter stressed.

Political uncertainties, reduced mobility derail the main contributors to the economy, and certain restrictions on banking, businesses' operations, logistics, and network services, World Bank stated.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods.

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

The country's export sector relies more on the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. The Ministry of Commerce is endeavouring to boost export under World Trade Organization's rules, enhance value-added production and competitiveness, reduce ex-

port barriers and provide trade financing services.

The government is trying to reduce the trade deficit by screening luxury import items and boosting exports. The country mainly imports essential goods, construction materials, capital goods, hygienic material and supporting products for export promotion and import substitution.

Myanmar's trade deficit was pegged at \$1.3 billion in the 2019-2020FY, \$1.14 billion in the 2018-2019 FY, \$1.3 billion in the previous mini-budget period (April-September, 2018), \$3.9 billion in the 2017-2018FY, \$5.3 billion in the 2016-2017FY, and \$5.4 billion in the 2015-2016FY, according to statistics released by the Central

Statistical Organization.

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

The Ministry of Commerce has adhered to its policy reform depending on the State and people's requirements.

Moreover, a series of trade liberalization and openness for policy development have been introduced for enhancing a more viable trade environment.

The private sector plays a prominent role in Myanmar's market-oriented economic system. The ministry is highlighting free and fair trade, ensuring product safety and quality goods and services. — MM/GNLM

Seasonal fresh tamarind leaves fetch high price



THE seasonal fresh tamarind leaves are selling well at K7,000 per viss (a viss equals 1.6kg) in NyaungU district, Mandalay Region, allowing the growers to earn well in the meantime.

A local person who plucks the tamarind leaves supplies about three to five viss of tamarind leaves a day to Kyaukpadaung market in the district. The tamarind leaves are seasonal vegetable, and

the housewives mostly make a salad with the leaves. And it is also the common ingredient in the curry in Myanmar.

Moreover, some tea leaf processors buy tamarind leaves and mix them with the tea leaf. Some ferment the tamarind leaves. In the early season, the price is relatively high. It will slide during the abundant season. — Ko Htein (KPD)/GNLM

A local person who plucks the tamarind leaves supplies about three to five viss of tamarind leaves a day to Kyaukpadaung market in the district.

Record of Press Conference (4/2021) held on 9 April 2021 by the State Administration Council's Information Team

CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY

35. Correspondent U Thwin Htoo Aung pointed out that some trade circles have said that foreign trade has been stagnant during the State Administration Council's tenure. He asked about the current situation of foreign trade.

36. Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun said he would talk about trade according to statistics. Practically speaking, trucks are moving on the Yangon- Mandalay old route. According to the provisional accounts for February and March 2021, while the State Administration Council was in charge, the export value was US\$ 1,774 million, and the import value is \$ 1,772 million. The trade volume was \$ 3,546 million, and the trade surplus was over \$ 2 million. At present, most of the trade at border crossings with neighbouring China was about US\$ 438 million in exports and US\$ 171 million in imports between February and March. The trade volume is US\$ 609 million, 65 per cent from Muse border trade camp, 6 per cent from Lwejel, 18 per cent from Chinshwehaw, 10 per cent from Kampaiti in total. In trading with Thailand, \$352 million in exports and \$104 million in imports. The trade volume is \$492 million through the trading camps in Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee and Mawtaung. As with Bangladesh, \$5 million was imported from Sittway during the first two months of this year without any export.



He identified only one reason why the State Administration Council's Chairman wanted to open the schools because schools were closed during the COVID-19 period, affecting the students and parents. Although refresher courses are open for reopening schools, people who participated in the CDM campaign are putting pressure on the teachers. We have seen things that are not in our Myanmar society.

On the Indian side, \$7 million were exported from Tamu and could not be imported. At the trading camp in Myeik, exports \$34 million and imports \$0.17 million. On the Laos side, there is not much trade from Kyauklat. He replied that although business and commerce were less than before, they were operating normally.

37. Correspondent U Thwin Htoo Aung further mentioned that refresher courses are being provided to teachers to reopen basic education schools. He asked what percentage of teachers are in basic education; Whether it is effective or not, and the difficulties during the training and

planning to open schools.

38. Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun said he would answer this question as much as he knew, and the Ministry of Education would add more information. He identified only one reason why the State Administration Council's Chairman wanted to open the schools because schools were closed during the COVID-19 period, affecting the students and parents. Although refresher courses are open for reopening schools, people who participated in the CDM campaign are putting pressure on the teachers. We have seen things that are not in our Myanmar society. In the respectable and lovely



tradition of Myanmar people, teachers are regarded as one of the five infinite venerables. It is now seen that students are insulting the teachers. As per experience, there are not many countries that respect teachers as the way Myanmar people do.

He said if they appreciate the gratitude of those who educated them, he would like to ask why they are insulting the teachers.

As for difficulties, there are schools that were set on fire because of the opening of the refresher course. He said he would like to say to the teachers that there are 50 per cent and more of the teachers who are attending the refresh-



Media persons are viewing the weapons used in riots.

revitalization was that it would never betray nationalism and would be taken seriously.

42. Dr Soe Myint Oo, Editor-in-Charge of Myanmar Public Press New Agency, said that our country's media were taken action. However, some foreign media outlets have been found to be inciting false news. He asked how it is planned to prevent such information from flowing into the country.

43. Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun said that it is impossible to prevent, even modern countries can't do, regarding the flow of information. There are various ways -- traffic on the internet and flow from air. He said he does not think it is the right



Panel displays of weapons and related items of evidence used in riotous protests and violent attacks.

er course. Some teachers are not able to come due to many difficulties such as attacking by students, but he said he believed they would absolutely succeed. As for teachers, basic education needs teaching, unlike universities, and it is a community where no self-study can be done without instruction. He would like, on behalf of the State Administration

Council, to express words of thanks to those who attend the students' education.

39. A Ministry of Education spokesperson added the coordination with the Ministry of Health and Sports for the COVID-19 prevention at schools, preparation to reopen the schools, attendance of more than 50-per-cent teachers, difficulties for teachers to

come to the course due to regional issues and the successful conducting of the course for the rest.

40. Dr Soe Myint Oo, editor in-charge of the Myanmar Public Press New Agency, raised the first question. After passing through 10 years as a democratic nation, patriotism has weakened a lot. Later, during the second parliamentary term, our country's culture came with many distortions, and national characteristics have become very weak. Therefore, during the State Administration Council's time, how does the Tatmadaw plan to promote and protect patriotism, national culture, and national characteristics?

He also asked if there were any plans to hold traditional performing arts competitions again.

41. Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun said there are different ideas about patriotism. For some liberal people, they see patriotism as a danger. He quoted the former Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yu, who is considered a realist in Southeast Asia. As he put it,

patriotism is, in fact, a "place to cast the anchor". No matter how big the ship, if it loses its place to cast the anchor, it will not be able to stand.

When we talk about patriotism, we often talk about the era of globalization. It is acceptable that news, trade, education and technology are spreading in the age of globalization. However, which country accept the spread of people? Does the so-called democratic USA get immigrants from southern Mexico? No country accepts the influx of people.

He said he was not comparing with patriotism, but it is said its reality has not been erased. In some places, not all liberals are perfect.

The main point is that if the anchor's place is lost, patriotism will be challenging to stand on. The State Administration Council is working to revive patriotism. Since our country's foundation is based on Buddhist culture, the constitution also provides Buddhism, and other religious groups must also be given priority.

He clarified that the Tatmadaw's belief in patriotism's

way to prevent them from entering the country. The main right thing to do is build and promote the strong national identity in the people's minds. It means that it is more important to promote it.

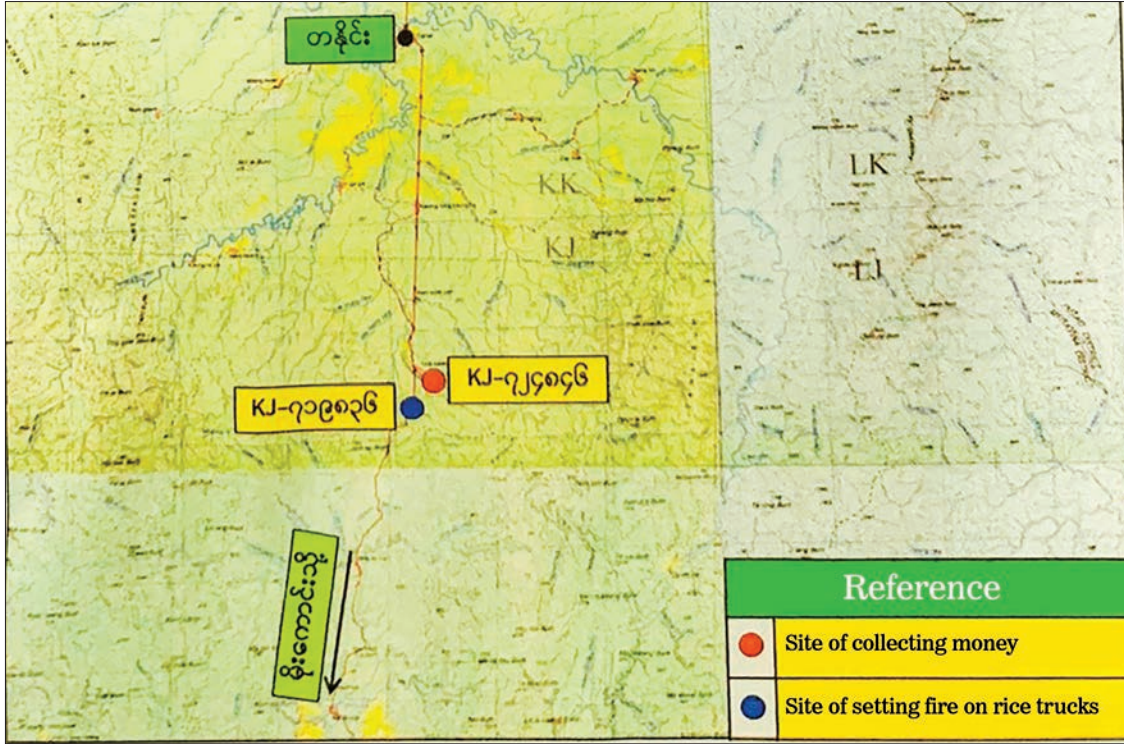
There is very little good writing about China in the world media. Suppose you look at every news item, whether it is right or wrong, including Myanmar media outlets who reported that Wuhan's situation was really like hell in the COVID-19 outbreak. But the national response is more critical. As they have better national resilience, they do not need to worry too much.

The number one thing in the news media sector is that the State-owned media and local media must work hard to spread the truths about the news media, and we must continue to focus on nationalism not only at the State-level but also at the national-level. He said there are more things to be done and expressed words of thanks for the suggestion.

TO BE CONTINUED.

The number one thing in the news media sector is that the State-owned media and local media must work hard to spread the truths about the news media, and we must continue to focus on nationalism not only at the State-level but also at the national-level.

KIA collects money, destroys vehicles in Tanai



ETHNIC armed group Kachin Independence Army (KIA) collected money from the vehicles and set the four rice trucks on fire in Tanai of Kachin State.

vehicle. They collected money from a small car and three large trucks on that day.

About 30 members of KIA (leader is under scrutiny) stopped and inspected the vehicles on Tanai-Myitkyina road near Rawam hillock in Tain Kauk Village of Tanai Township at 3 pm on 13 April. If the drivers showed some documents of paying tax to them, KIA collected K40,000 per truck. If the drivers cannot offer such documents, KIA gathered K250,000 per truck and K50,000 per small

That team also burnt four rice trucks, including three 12-wheel trucks and one 10-wheel truck in the forest about 1 mile from Tanai-Myitkyina road. It caused about K175 million in damages to four vehicles and about K38.4 million worth of damages for 1,200 rice bags.

The Tatmadaw convoy conducted security operations at the place where KIA collected money and destroyed the rice trucks. — MNA

The sites are shown where KIA collects money and destroyed the rice trucks.

Rioters escalate terrorist acts in townships across country

RIOTERS escalated terrorist acts in the townships in respective regions and states across the countries. They have attacked the security forces with grenades and live ammunition, setting homemade mines on public places and roads and setting fire on the people's houses.

in Kytaitpauk village in Singu Township, was attacked by a group of rioters. They splashed petrol into the shop and threw a homemade mine, which exploded, and the fire broke out. Although the shop was burnt, no one was hurt.

On 13 April, a mine explosion on Tagaung (8) street, No. (5) Ward, South Okkalapa Township, occurred in the afternoon and security forces went and inspected the area. A man riding on a motorbike threw a homemade mine on the street, and it was reportedly exploded.

The two homemade mines were also thrown into the shop owned by a civilian in Chaung Gyi village, Thabeikkyin Township, at about 4:30 am. One mine was exploded in front of the shop, and another was on the house's roof. Two people were injured due to the explosion and sent to the Tatmadaw hospital for medical treatment. At the same time, a group of people came and threw a mine to the house of U Myint Win, 52, son of U Thaug Kyi, who lives in the same village. The mine exploded on the roof of the house but didn't harm anyone.

Similarly, three men came and threw three mines that exploded in front of the ward administration office in No (4) Ward, South Okkalapa Township, at around 2 pm. However, they didn't harm anyone or anything.

Similarly, at around 8:05 am yesterday, three landmines planted in the ground by terrorists exploded while the security forces' vehicles were stopping near the checkpoint in Monywa town. The security forces had to deactivate one mine found at the mine explosion area near the trash can on Thittaw road, Yone Gyi ward, Monywa Town, at about 8:35 am.

At about 8:15 pm on 13 April, two security force members were attacked by two men with live ammunition at the No (2) branch of the Global Treasure Bank in Zayit ward, Dawei Township. During the inspection around the area, one 91 grenade, .22 cartridges and two shells were recovered.

At about 4:30 am yesterday, the Golden Point tea shop owned by U Maung Nge, 54, son of U Kyi Shwin, who lives

It is reported that action will be taken against those perpetrators as soon as possible according to the law. — MNA

Rioters arrested, weapons used in riots seized in Tachilek, Dawbon



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Arrestee Win Zaw Oo and pieces of evidence seized.

THE combined team comprising the Police Force of Tachilek Township confiscated the materials used in making air guns on "Doh Nyi Naung" passenger bus at Mal Yan checkpoint in Tachilek on 8 April. The combined team received the information about the owner of these materials and contacted Win Zaw Oo, 37, to take the parcels back as

the bus line suspends operation during this period on 13 April. When the suspect came to take the parcels, the police arrested him.

Similarly, the security forces raided the house of Win Zaw Oo in Wan Mine Village in the afternoon and seized 1 air gun, 1 gas gun, 3 gas cylinders and 4 lead balls.

Moreover, the combined

team raided the house of Aung Kyaw Soe, 46 in Aung Chan Tha Ward of Dawbon Township on 13 April midnight and arrested him together with weapons used in riots.

Action will be taken against those arrested together with the weapons and other materials used in riots according to the law. — MNA/ GNLM

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Report on Capitol Hill riot criticizes police preparation, response

CAPITOL Police had more intelligence than was previously known ahead of the January 6 riot at Congress but were instructed not to use their most aggressive tactics to repel the mob, a report cited late Tuesday by US media said.

The scathing 104-page report by the Capitol Police's internal inspector general, Michael Bolton, concluded that officers did not prepare for or respond adequately to the assault, The New Times and CNN reported.

A congressional hearing on the report is scheduled for Thursday.

Capitol Police failed



Riot police push back supporters of then-president Donald Trump on January 6, 2021 after they attacked the Capitol building in Washington. PHOTO:AFP

to prepare properly even though they had intelligence warnings that Trump supporters who believed his claims that the November election was stolen

from him posed a threat, the report states.

Police were told to refrain from using their most aggressive crowd control tools such as stun gre-

nades, it said. Three days before the assault the Capitol Police received an intelligence assessment warning of violence by Trump supporters. —AFP ■

Swiss strike gold with world's smallest commemorative coin



The gold quarter Swiss franc coin issued in 2020 that entered the Guinness Book of Records as the world's smallest commemorative coin. PHOTOS:AFP

A tiny Swiss gold coin bearing a picture of Albert Einstein sticking his tongue out has been crowned as the world's smallest com-

memorative coin, Switzerland's mint announced Tuesday.

The miniature coin, with a face value of a

quarter of a Swiss franc (€0.23), measures just 2.96 millimetres in diameter and weighs only 0.063 grammes.

"Guinness World Records has recognized the quarter-franc gold coin issued in 2020 as the world's smallest commemorative coin," Swissmint said in a statement.

Claiming inspiration from the "determination and patience" of theoretical physicist Einstein, who died in 1955, the coin features the Swiss citizen

in his famous pose on the obverse.

The reverse shows the nominal value of the coin, the Swiss cross and the inscription Helvetia – the Latin name for Switzerland, which is used on coins in the four-language European nation.

However, casual observers should not expect to see much.

"The world's smallest commemorative coin is decorated with images that cannot be discerned with the naked eye. —AFP ■

By rail, road or on foot, migrants flow across Mexico towards US

GREYSSI Venegas devours her first meal in three days at a Mexican shelter near the railroad where migrants risk their lives clinging to freight trains on their grueling journey north to the United States.

An unexpected pregnancy has complicated her already tortuous trip from Honduras by rail, road and on foot with her seven-year-old son Eduardo.

"Yesterday I felt ill. I didn't want to eat. So



Migrants rest at a shelter in central Mexico near the railroad where they cling to freight trains on their journey to the United States. PHOTO: AFP

I asked for a pregnancy test," said the 23-year-old, who has a cough and dark circles around her eyes from fatigue.

Venegas scraped together around \$100 for her second attempt to reach the United States in three years, but the money had

already run out by the time she reached Mexico. She set off from the Honduran city of San Pedro Sula on March 21 and walked almost 300 kilometres to eastern Guatemala with her son, before traveling more than 12 hours by road.

Then she crossed part of southern Mexico on foot before riding a freight train northwards with other undocumented Central American migrants fleeing violence and poverty. —AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Immunized' Muslim pilgrims in Mecca as Ramadan begins

PILGRIMS immunized against Covid-19 circled Islam's holiest site in Saudi Arabia's Mecca city Tuesday as they performed the year-round umrah pilgrimage on the first day of the fasting month of Ramadan. Mask-clad worshippers entered Mecca's Grand Mosque in batches to perform the ritual of circling the sacred Kaaba, a cubic structure towards which Muslims around the world pray, along socially distanced paths. Only immunised pilgrims are eligible for permits to perform the pilgrimage and to attend prayers in the Grand Mosque during Ramadan, the hajj and umrah ministry announced earlier this month.

According to the ministry, three categories of people are considered "immunized" -- those who have received two doses of coronavirus vaccine, those administered a single dose at least 14 days prior, and people who have recovered from the infection.

The policy has effectively raised the Grand Mosque's capacity during Ramadan to accommodate 50,000 umrah pilgrims and 100,000 worshippers per day, according to state media.

It is unclear whether the policy, which comes amid an uptick in coronavirus infections in the kingdom, would be extended to the annual hajj pilgrimage later this year.

In late July last year, the kingdom hosted a downsized hajj, one of the five pillars of Islam and a must for able-bodied Muslims at least once in their lifetime. —AFP ■

Life's a Bitche for French town censored by Facebook

THE French town of Bitche celebrated its return to Facebook on Tuesday, three weeks after censors took down its page, believing the name to be an insult. The mayor of the northeastern town of 5,000 inhabitants, near the border with Germany, said that Facebook took down the page on March 19 on the basis that Bitche was a "violation of the conditions applying to Facebook pages".

"Our town's name seems to have been misinterpreted," mayor Benoit Kieffer said in a statement, suggesting it had been mistaken for the derogatory English term.

Bitche, famous for its 17th-century citadel, promptly appealed the ban but its pleas to have its page, which has more than 2,350 followers, reinstated went unanswered for weeks.

Desperate to reconnect with residents, the municipality set up another page with the more unobtrusive name of "Mairie 57320" (townhall 57320), after its postal code.

The town's campaign to clear its rightful name finally ended in triumph on Tuesday, with Facebook restoring the "Ville de Bitche" page after admitting to an "incorrect analysis" by its algorithms.

For Kieffer it showed "the insufficiency and limits of moderating tools which only the human eye can really evaluate". —AFP ■

Myanma Port Authority "Notice of High Tide"

Exceptionally high spring from 20.41 feet to 20.64 feet high above the chart datum are expected to occur in Yangon River during the period of April 27th to April 29th, 2021. Please be noted that it is not serious level of tide because the highest tide level have reached up to 22 feet above the chart datum in year 2014 and 2015, and this notice is normally issued whenever high tide of Yangon River is expected to reach over 20 feet high above the chart datum in order to take precautionary measures to the public living near river foreshore area of Yangon City.

ONE Championship: Lee to face Nastyukhin for Lightweight title today

CHRISTIAN Lee will fight against Timofey Nastyukhin in the main card of Men's Lightweight Kickboxing World Championship under the ONE Championship title: ONE on TNT II. It will be held today at Singapore Indoor Stadium, Singapore.

The ONE event will feature

bouts of world-class fighters, and fights will start at 8:30 am of Singapore standard time, according to the statement with the ONE Championship.

There will be a total of six fights: five men's bouts and one women's bouts.

In the co-main event or Men's Featherweight Mixed

Martial Arts, Martin Nguyen will fight against Kim Jae Woong.

In the Women's Atomweight Muay Thai fight, Janet Todd will face Anne Line Hogstad.

In the Men's Strawweight Mixed Martial Arts fight, Jarred Brooks will compete against

Lito Adiwang.

In the Men's Heavyweight Mixed Martial Arts bout, Dustin Joynson will meet Kirill Grishenko.

Next, in the Men's Bantamweight Muay Thai fight, Pongsiri PK. Saenchai Muaythaigym will take on Liam Harrison.

The ONE Championship

Fights will be broadcast live free on ONE Super Application and ONE

Championship YouTube Channel, according to the ONE Championship. The first two fights will also be streamed live on the ONE Championship Facebook page, officials stated.

—GNLM ■

Arsenal wait on Aubameyang and Odegaard ahead of Slavia tie



Illness - Arsenal captain Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang. PHOTO: AFP

ARSENAL manager Mikel Arteta is still unsure if captain Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and Martin Odegaard will be fit for Thursday's Europa League quarter-final second leg away to Slavia Prague.

Aubameyang and Odegaard, who is on loan from Real Madrid, missed training Tuesday because of illness and an ankle injury respectively.

Arsenal were due to train Wednesday before travelling to the Czech Republic with the tie all-square at 1-1 and Arteta,

asked if the duo would take part in the session, told reporters: "It depends how they wake up. (On Tuesday) none of them could train. Hopefully (on Wednesday) it is a sunnier day so maybe it is better.

"I don't know, we have to see how they are. We still have a couple of other ones as well from the last few days, so we'll have to see how everybody is and after training how they react for (Thursday's) game."

The Gunners, however, have been buoyed by the

availability of Bukayo Saka and Emile Smith Rowe.

Saka suffered a thigh injury during last weekend's 3-0 win away to Sheffield United in the Premier League, while Smith Rowe missed the trip to Bramall Lane with an ankle problem.

But both players are now set to feature in Prague.

Arsenal, however, will definitely be without David Luiz and Kieran Tierney, who both have knee problems, on Thursday. —AFP ■

Flick mulls future after Bayern Munich exit Champions League

BAYERN Munich head coach Hansi Flick admits he is considering his future after the holders were knocked out of the Champions League by Paris Saint-Germain.

Bayern's 1-0 return-leg win in Paris on Tuesday was not enough to overturn last week's 3-2 first-leg defeat in Munich as PSG marched into the semi-finals at the Germans' expense.

"Everyone understands that I am thinking about my future," Flick told Sky after Bayern striker Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting scored the only goal on Tuesday.

Flick has been under noticeable strain in recent weeks with tensions running high between him and Bayern sports director Hasan Salihamidzic.

The 56-year-old Flick has also been tipped to become Germany's next head coach when Joachim Loew steps down after the Euro 2020 finals this summer.

For now, Flick, whose Bayern contract runs until 2023, says he "first wants to process

the elimination" and "assess the situation. I also have my own ideas."

Ultimately, a PSG side boasting the talent of Neymar and Kylian Mbappe was too good for a depleted Bayern team missing their injured top-scorer Robert Lewandowski.

Under Flick, Bayern won all six titles available in the last 12

months, defeating PSG in last season's Champions League final in Lisbon.

However, elimination from both the Champions League and German Cup, means only the Bundesliga is still in play with leaders Bayern five points clear and on course to win the German league for the ninth straight year.—AFP ■



Bayern Munich head coach Hansi Flick admits he is considering his future after their Champions League elimination. PHOTO: AFP

Virus surges fuel fears 100 days before Tokyo Olympics



The tone from Tokyo 2020 organizers and Olympic officials is still one of confidence. PHOTO: AFP

THE Olympic flame is on its way across Japan and athletes around the world are ramping up training, but 100 days before Tokyo 2020 opens, organisers still face monumental challenges. Virus surges, including in Japan, are playing havoc with preparations and fuelling uncertainty about whether the Games can, or should, happen this summer.

The torch relay has been pared back, overseas fans will be barred for the first time and rising infections mean Tokyo and several other parts of Japan

are under new restrictions.

Despite that, the tone from organizers and Olympic officials is still one of confidence, with public pronouncements focused on how the Games will happen, not whether they will.

They have some cause for optimism. The Olympic torch relay kicked off in Fukushima last month, albeit with spectators barred from the launch ceremony, and vaccination programmes are under way in many countries, with some teams already given their shots.—AFP ■