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President delivers keynote speech at International Anti-Corruption Day commemoration



President U Win Myint looks at documentary photos displayed at the event to mark International Anti-Corruption Day in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

NAY Pyi Taw celebrated International Anti-Corruption Day at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-II yesterday morning and President U Win Myint delivered a keynote speech.

Firstly, President U Win Myint delivered the keynote speech (**which is covered in a separate news article**).

Next, Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi explained the implementation of the Anti-Corruption Commission's strategic plan.

He said there are five areas in the strategic plan and they are (1) building strong foundations for effective prevention, investigation and prosecution, (2) integrity and developing skills, (3) coop-

eration with domestic and international organizations in prevention and counter-acting activities, (4) safeguarding national budget and assets and interest of all citizens, (5) creating a corruption-free economic environment.

The ACC Chairman said that to establish these good foundations, the 4th law to amend the Anti-Corruption Law was enacted on 21 June 2018. He said to ensure comparability with the amended law, the ACC has drafted the Anti-Corruption Bylaw (Draft) and Whistleblower Protection Law (Draft) and had submitted it to officials concerned.

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi arrives at The Hague, Netherlands



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is welcomed by Ms Pascale Grotenhuis, the Director of Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the Schiphol Airport. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Myanmar delegation led by the State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs Daw Aung San Suu Kyi left Nay Pyi Taw on 8 December morning for oral proceedings before contesting the case filed by Gambia to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague, Netherlands.

Flying via Bangkok, Thailand, they arrived in Amsterdam, the capital of the Netherlands, at 6:15 pm local time on

8 December. They were welcomed by Ms Pascale Grotenhuis, the Director of Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Myanmar Ambassador to the Netherlands U Soe Lin Han and officials at the Schiphol Airport.

The State Counsellor and Myanmar delegation left Amsterdam in motorcade for The Hague where Myanmar citizens in the Netherlands greeted them.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

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Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw 14th regular session holds 13th day meeting



MP U Nan Mon Htin.
PHOTO: MNA



MP Dr Than Aung Soe.
PHOTO: MNA



MP Lt-Col Thant Zin.
PHOTO: MNA



MP U Kyaw Soe Lin.
PHOTO: MNA



MP Daw Myat Thida Tun.
PHOTO: MNA

THE 13th day meeting of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's 14th regular session was held at the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw meeting hall yesterday morning.

Discussion on a report of Joint Committee on Scrutinizing the Constitution

The meeting started with Hluttaw representatives discussing a report of Joint Committee on Scrutinizing the second Bill Amending the Constitution on a bill amending the Constitution for the second time signed and submitted by 145 Pyidaungsu Hluttaw representatives including U Sai Than Naing of Kayin State constituency 5.

The matter was discussed by U Nan Mon Htin of Machanbaw

constituency, U Thaung Aye of Pyawbwe constituency, U Naing Htoo Aung of Natogyi constituency, U Chin Pe Lin of Mansi constituency, U Kyaw Aung Lwin of Sedoktara constituency, Tatmadaw Pyithu Hluttaw representative Lt-Col Thant Zin, U Saw Shar Phaung Ewa of Kayin State constituency 12, Tatmadaw Amyotha Hluttaw Representative Colonel Aung Lwin, Tatmadaw Amyotha Hluttaw representative Major Kyaw Soe Oo, Tatmadaw Pyithu Hluttaw representative Colonel Min Oo, U Myo Htat (a) Salai Myo Htike of Chin State constituency 12, Tatmadaw Pyithu Hluttaw representative Major Min Min, Daw Myat Thida Tun of Mon State constituency 5, Tatmadaw Pyithu Hluttaw representative Major

Moe Oo Kyaw and Tatmadaw Pyithu Hluttaw representative Brig-Gen Kyaw San Lin.

Hluttaw amend Basic Education Bill and return to the President

Next, Joint Bill Committee secretary U Kyaw Soe Lin tabled a motion to approve Basic Education Bill by paragraph sent back with comments by the President. Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker obtained the decision of the Hluttaw and approved it.

Dr Than Aung Soe of Minhla constituency then discussed Clause 16 sub-clause (b) and Clause 49 of the bill and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker obtained the comments of Ministry of Education and Joint Bill Com-

mittee and decision of the Hluttaw to approve it.

Following this, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker announced the decision of the Hluttaw to the comments of the President and to send the bill back to the President.

Hluttaw decide on bill to amend Farmland Law

Later, Joint Bill Committee member U Zaw Win tabled a paragraph wise motion on a bill to amend Farmland Law in which arose controversy between the two Hluttaws were in. Hluttaw representatives discussed the matter and after obtaining the comments of Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation and the Joint Bill Committee and

the decision of the Hluttaw, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker announced the Hluttaw's approval of the bill.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker also announced the Hluttaw's approval of the clauses and sub-clauses of the bill as approved by the two Hluttaws and approval of the clauses and sub-clauses bill which arose controversy between the two Hluttaws as approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the matter will proceed according to Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law and rules.

13th day meeting of 14th regular session of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw will be held on 11 December it is learnt. —Aung Ye Thwin, Aye Aye Thant (MNA)
(Translated by Zaw Min)

Joint Committee on Amending 2008 Constitution holds meeting 66/2019



Meeting 66/2019 of Joint Committee on Amending the 2008 Constitution held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Joint Committee on Amending the 2008 Constitution held meeting 66/2019 at the meeting hall of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building D in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The meeting was attended by Chairman of the

Joint Committee Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw U Tun Aung (a) U Tun Tun Hein, Secretary of the Joint Committee Dr Myat Nyana Soe, Joint Secretary of the Joint Committee U Htay Win Aung (a) U

Pyone Cho, the Joint Committee's members who are Hluttaw representatives from political parties and Tatmadaw Hluttaw representatives and officials from Pyidaungsu Hluttaw office. — MNA
(Translated by TTN)

Rakhine State Stability Supporting Committee meets for third draft of final report

THE Rakhine State Stability Supporting Committee held a discussion to produce the third draft of its final report, with an opening remark by the committee's Chairman U Aye Tha Aung at the Hluttaw Building I-20 at 12 noon yesterday.

The Chairman also called for recommendations on the second draft of report, followed by the

explanation of Secretary U Tin Myint and the members of committee made discussions on it.

The meeting was also attended by the committees' Vice Chairman 1 Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint, Vice Chairman 2 Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, committee members Deputy Attorney-General U

Win Myint, Yangon Region government's Rakhine Ethnic Affairs Minister U Zaw Aye Maung, Vice Chair of National Education Policy Commission Dr Nyi Hla Nge and Deputy Chief of Myanmar Police Force Police Maj-Gen Aung Naing Thu.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Chairman U Aye Tha Aung delivers the opening speech at the Rakhine State Stability Supporting Committee meeting at the Hluttaw's building in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

President delivers keynote speech at International Anti-Corruption Day ...



President U Win Myint addresses the event to mark the International Anti-Corruption Day at Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

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The ACC Chairman said 36 Corruption Prevention Units have been formed in Union Ministries and about 319 subordinate offices/sub-departments have been formed to communicate and operate with CPU Toolkits. He said six action plans to ensure conformity with CPU have been designated in these workshops. He said if every ministry could successfully follow the CPU process then corruption in Myanmar would decrease significantly and changes could be made to deliver civil servants from the dangers of corruption in the least damaging way possible. He said an inclusive anti-corruption process would further invigorate Myanmar's democratic transition.

The ACC Chairman said because the CPUs are strengthening their work, departments are performing changes but

businesses need to draft their own codes of conduct that resist corruption and practice honesty and accountability. Just in line with the motto 'We should all be united in fighting against corruption', public service personnel, businesses and CSOs should cooperate in coordination to eradicate corruption, implored the ACC Chairman.

Next, a message from the UNODC Executive Director Mr Yury Fedotov was read by UN Resident Coordinator Ms Xiaojie.

Following this, the President took a documentary photo with Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, Union Ministers, attendees, UN Resident Coordinator, representatives from UNDP and UNODC, and award-winning students. He then observed the documentary exhibition relating to the anti-corruption processes.

In the second part of the event, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr Myo Aung delivered an address, officials from UNDP and UNODC explained eradicating corruption processes, and a video clip on International Anti-Corruption Day was shown.

Afterwards, Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr Myo Aung, ACC Chairman U Aung Kyi and officials from UNDP and UNODC presented prizes to students who have won competitions in acting, composition and poetry to commemorate International Anti-Corruption Day. The event was then concluded.

Present at the event were Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, Union Ministers, Union Civil Service Board Chairman, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, Governor of Central Bank of Myanmar, Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Chairman, Chairmen of committees from the Pyithu and Amyotha Hluttaws, Chief Justice of Union Supreme Court, Deputy Ministers, Deputy Attorney-General, Nay Pyi Taw Council members, Deputy Mayor and members of Nay Pyi Taw City Development Committee, Secretary and members of Anti-Corruption Commission, Chairman of

Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Myanmar Press Council Chairman, department officials, ambassadors, persons from United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and international organizations, media professionals and other invited guests. — MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman U Aung Kyi.



UN Resident Coordinator Ms Xiaojie.

MOLIP conducts instructor course for interim census

THE Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population organized the fourth edition of instructor course 2019 for taking interim census at its headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Union Minister U Thein Swe, in his capacity as the Chairman of Interim Census Central Committee, delivered an opening remark on the course, saying that the instructors trained in four courses will be assigned in four groups to take interim census in 4,000 areas across the country

by using mobile tables instead of paperwork in the past.

He added that instructors from the first course have taken census in Kachin, Chin and Union Territory (Nay Pyi Taw), while the second course have been conducted at the districts of Kayah, Kayin, Mon, Taninthayi and Ayeyawady, and the instructors will lead the works commencing 11 December. District-level courses from the third edition are in progress at in Bago, Sagaing and Magway. They will begin taking

census on 2 January 2020. The two-week course of fourth edition is attended by a total of 130 instructor trainees from Shan, Rakhine, Mandalay and Yangon to carry out census on 16 January 2020 after conducting district-level courses.

At the opening ceremony, Ms Nelida, UNFPA Deputy Representative for Myanmar, explained the ongoing assistance for performing interim census.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Union Minister U Thein Swe delivers the speech at the ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

H&S Ministry, Data for Health Initiative jointly organize data collection training course



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe delivers the opening speech at the opening ceremony of five-day course for the first module of Data to Policy Training (2019-2020) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

THE MINISTRY of Health and Sports co-organizes a training course for data collection with the help of Data for Health Initiative supported by the Bloomberg Philanthropies.

The opening ceremony of five-day course for the first module of Data to Policy Training (2019-2020) was held at the Hotel Max in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe made an opening remark, saying the importance of accurate data with adequate information from various sources, including global organizations, for

making health policy decisions.

Ms Mine Metitiri, the Deputy Director of Vital Strategies, extended greetings, and Dr Michael Washington, the Team Leader and Senior Health Economist, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the United States, expressed words of thanks.

Experts from the Ministry of Health and Sports, US CDC and Vital Strategies will give lectures to the staff members of medical services, public health, hospital management, teaching and research of the ministry.

In the afternoon, the Union

Minister received Director Dr Walter Schluter and party from the Global Immunization Division of US CDC at his office, and they discussed providing technical assistance to the ministry for controlling diseases, long and short term cooperation, research works of US CDC in Myanmar on preventable diseases, capacity-building for vaccination programmes of ethnic healthcare groups, infections and dangers of polio disease and cooperation with the ministry in knowledge dissemination programmes.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye holds talks on disability rights with New Zealand officials



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye meets with officials from the Office for Disability Issues under the Ministry of Social Development in Wellington, New Zealand yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

UNION MINISTER for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye is paying a visit to New Zealand at the invitation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Wellington.

He held a meeting with officials from the Office for Disability Issues under the Ministry of Social Development on bilateral co-operation issues between the two countries yesterday morning.

The Union Minister explained the democratic transition

processes of Myanmar; development of human rights in Myanmar; rights of persons with disabilities, including the enactments of laws and regulations for them, formation of national committee, work committees and sub-committees to promote their rights, draw state-level policies, strategies and work plans for focusing on participations of the disabled, the sector-wise programmes of government ministries to implement the UN Convention on the

Rights of Persons with Disabilities, capacity-building of disabled persons in works, formation of an independent assessment committee for implementing UNCRPD, fundamental services, and enhancing confidence of the PWDs.

The Union Minister also visited the Sport New Zealand to discuss recreation and sport system for the PWDs.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

President’s Office continues announcement of illegal drug arrests, seizures acting on tip-offs

THE Office of the President issued Press Release No 45/2019 yesterday, publicly announcing the Ministry of Home Affairs’ arrests and seizures in the fight against illicit drug trafficking up till 7 December.

The ministry made the arrests, acting on information, sent to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department of the Office of the President as of 7 December.

The full text of the press release will be reported in the 11 December issue of The Global New Light of Myanmar.—GNLM

Union Supreme Court sits to hear civil cases

UNION Supreme Court sits at Union Supreme Court Room No 1 yesterday with Chief Justice of the Union Supreme Court U Htun Htun Oo and Union Supreme Court judges U Myint Aung and U Myo Tint and heard five civil cases (certiorari). — MNA

(Translated by TTN)

UNITED NATIONS
SECRETARY-GENERAL’s
MESSAGE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
DAY
(THEME: YOUTH STANDING UP FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS)
10 December 2019

This year, on Human Rights Day, we celebrate the role of young people in bringing human rights to life.

Globally, young people are marching, organizing, and speaking out:

For the right to a healthy environment...
For the equal rights of women and girls...
To participate in decision-making...
And to express their opinions freely...
They are marching for their right to a future of peace, justice and equal opportunities.

Every single person is entitled to all rights: civil, political, economic, social and cultural. Regardless of where they live. Regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, social origin, gender, sexual orientation, political or other opinion, disability or income, or any other status.

On this International Day, I call on everyone to support and protect young people who are standing up for human rights.

United Nations Information Centre, Yangon

Republic of the Union of Myanmar

President U Win Myint's Keynote Speech on International Anti-Corruption Day

(9 December 2019)

I extend greetings with 'Mingalabar' to Deputy Speakers of Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw, Union Ministers, Chairman of Union Civil Service Board, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council and its members, Governor of Central Bank of Myanmar, Chairman of Anti-Corruption Commission, its Secretary and members, Chairpersons of Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw Affairs Committees, departmental heads, diplomats, representatives from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United National Development Programme (UNDP), personnel from international organizations, media persons and invited guests who are attending the International Anti-Corruption Day and the 16th Anniversary of the UN Convention against Corruption.

We feel proud to be able to organize this ceremony to mark the International Anti-Corruption Day in Myanmar like other member countries in the convention. We are also delighted to hold this ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw Council Territory and other States and Regions this year.

The government is on the path of reform and State building through an all-inclusive public-centered approach in implementing national reconciliation, peace-making process and economic policies for the emergence of a Federal Democratic Union. The government is making continuous efforts with strong political will on establishing a corruption-free community as it has understood that the deep-seated corruption is a major obstacle on this path.

Corruption is the most destructive problem for countries in modern time. It wasted resources of public, worsens economic and social inequality, create dissatisfactions and political extremisms among the public and undermines trusts on institutions. Moreover, corruption could exacerbate disparity and poverty among the public. It also disturbs public welfare and revenue sharing, and prevents the equal rights for participations in social, economic and political affairs.

Myanmar signed the UN Convention against Corruption in 2012, and enacted the Anti-Corruption Law in 2013. The Anti-Corruption Commission was formed in 2014. The commission was reformed in 2017 for effective

actions. The fourth amendment on Anti-Corruption Law was made in 2018 to carry out fighting against corruption as the national task, to establish a clean government and good governance, to improve dignity and accountability of state departments, to prevent waste of state property and revenue, and to protect the interest of citizens. The meaning of corruption in this law is wider than bribery. With the stronger legal frameworks, the Anti-Corruption Commission has possessed more authority independently in taking actions against the loss of state revenues and property, in addition to taking bribes. Strict rules and regulations and strong enforcement are seen to be effective in taking action against corruption.

The President said that eradicating corruption involves the three steps of informing, preventing and prosecution. He said this involved distributing honesty promotion brochures in basic education schools, opening youth honesty camps in colleges and universities, and conducting workshops in states and regions to promote responsibility and accountability in government departments and businesses.

He said honesty and discipline are important pillars in politics, business and society. He said they are indispensable for peace and prosperity in conducting business and social interactions between individuals and societies. He said it is also necessary in national reforms in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. Their importance is an assurance for the need of honesty across the nation. They also need to be included for every individual and the private sector.

He added that honesty and straightforwardness are not just limited to the Union Government but also concerns the most basic institutions and departments who will be the first point of contact with citizens. He said they have formed Corruption Prevention Units and compiled a Code of Conduct as corruption prevention measures.

The President said maintaining value of codes of conduct and standards perpetuate honesty in prioritizing public benefit to private benefit. He said they are sustainable methods as they shut out likely paths for corruption. He said the UN Convention against

Corruption is one of the fastest ratified international conventions in the world and since almost all 186 member nations have joined, it is slowly on the way to a Universal Ratification, and this only highlights global support to eradicate corruption. He said in addition to individual national efforts, cooperation among nations will eradicate transnational corruption and related cases.

The President said actively participating in combating corruption supports more than the emergence of a corruption-free environment, but also the formation of a successful society with rule of law. He said it also supports accountable institutions and grants accessible rights for all people and to possess fulfilling lives.

The President said the 16th Goal of the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030 clearly indicates the importance of eradicating corruption. He said nations will promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, accessibility to justice for all, and establishing accountable and inclusive institutions that provides benefits in all stages. He said these will be done through reducing flow of illegal cash, strengthening reclamation of lost national properties, reducing bribery and corruption, and establishing beneficial, accountable, responsible, transparent and inclusive institutions.

He added that the MSDP 2028-2030 is mainly linked with the Global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He said that is why in Pillar 1 of the MSDP on peace and stability strategic plan, it includes cooperation in eradicating corruption in order to enhance good governance, institutional performance and improve the efficiency of administrative decision making at all levels.

The President then reaffirmed Myanmar's pledge to the aims of the UN Convention against Convention at the commemoration of International Anti-Corruption Day and the 16th anniversary of the Convention.

He said just in line with the motto "Let's all unite in countering corruption", continued cooperation between the executive, legislative and judicial pillars, civil servants, private organizations, CSOs, media entities and the general public is essential.

(Unofficial Translation)

Gems to be sold only to local merchants in Myanmar kyats next month

THE Myanmar Gems Emporium Central Committee held a meeting at Mani Yadana Jade Hall yesterday to organize a gems emporium next month in Nay Pyi Taw.

The gems will be sold only to local gems merchants in Myanmar kyats to help them prevent from the shortage of raw gems, to support production of finished products, to create job opportunities and to prevent illegal exports.

Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win, in his capacity as the chairman of central committee, presided over the meeting, with advices on successful



Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win delivers the speech at the meeting to organize a gems emporium next month in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA



holding of the event. The Union Minister, the Deputy Minister and officials coordinated discussions of chairpersons and vice chairpersons of respective committees for the emporium which is scheduled to be held at Mani Yadana Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw from 2 to 7 January.—MNA (Translated by Aung Khin)

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Maritime police to clamp down on illicit sea trade

By Nyein Nyein

MYANMAR will strictly combat the illegal flow of goods into the country through the sea routes with the help of maritime police, according to the 31st regular meeting of entrepreneurs with the Private Sector Development Committee (PSDC), led by Vice President U Myint Swe, held on 8 December at the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

“Illegal goods are flowing into the country through maritime trade. Maritime police patrol teams have not been

formed. So, we are tackling this in cooperation with the Myanmar Navy, especially in the entry of goods at Yangon, Ayeyawady, and other popular ports. This matter needs to be handled effectively,” said Vice President U Myint Swe, , at the meeting.

Despite the low volume of illicit goods in airline cargo, a large number of goods are illegally entering the country through sea routes and border routes in Shan and Kayin states.

“We will start to take heavy action against unscrupulous traders. Earlier, they have not been regulated due

to the political climate. Now, we have been assigned to take effective action on this situation,” said U Myint Swe.

Myanmar ranks 82nd among 84 countries on the Global Illicit Trade Environment Index, which can be attributed to those illegal traders, he said.

Foreign investors might come to consider investments owing to illicit trade, prompting authorities to take effective action on illegal traders, he said.

Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the border areas struggle to run their businesses due to the in-

flow of illegal goods. Therefore, the PSDC has formed illicit trade control and prevention teams in the nine regions and states. There were 1,065 cases of illegal trade registered as of October this year, with the teams confiscating illicit goods worth an estimated K15.64 billion.

Myanmar has also formed the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee to encourage collaboration across the state-level departments on cracking down on illegal trade to help improve the country’s ranking on the Global Illicit Trade Environment Index.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Over 580 acres of village-owned firewood plantations planned in Sagaing Region

IN a push towards more systematic extraction of firewood, the Sagaing Region Dry Zone Greening Department will set up 588 acres of village-owned firewood plantations in 12 townships of four districts in the region’s dry

zone, said U Ba Lwin Oo, director of the department.

The firewood will be grown by the department on lands owned by villages. If the plants grow well, they will be handed over to the respective villages. The village

administrators will monitor the plantations, and they will make plans to extract the wood without damage to the plantations.

The firewood plantations will cover 245 acres in five townships of Shwebo District,

70 acres in two townships of Monywa District, 108 acres in two townships of Sagaing District, and 165 acres in three townships of Yinmabin District. —Win Oo (Zeyar Tine)

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Truck catches fire at petrol station in Mandalay



A 12-wheel truck carrying drums with octane fuel exploded while unloading octane fuel at a petrol station on Mandalay-Pyin Oo Lwin Road near Patheingyi Township. **PHOTO: ZARNI KO KO (TOWNSHIP IPRD)**

A 12-wheeled truck caught fire while unloading octane fuel yesterday at a petrol station on the Mandalay-Pyin Oo Lwin Road in Thanmataw village-tract of Patheingyi Township. Two persons were injured in the mishap.

The incident occurred at

10:20 am yesterday at the Yadanarlin petrol station owned by U Nay Win. One laborer, identified as Ko Aung Thu, and a member of the AungPinLe Auxillary Fire Brigade, identified as Phyo Wai Soe, were injured in the blaze. They were

admitted to the Mandalay General Hospital.

The fire damaged the 12-wheeled truck, one 30x40 ft warehouse, 25 drums with octane, 75 vacant fuel, and the glass panes of a three-storey building beside the station.

The fire was put out by 11:15 am by 250 members of the Regional Fire fighters, police and locals, with the help of 50 fire trucks and five water tankers. —Zarni Ko Ko (Township IPRD)

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Trade Mark Ads

Call Thin Thin May,

09251022355,09974424848

Govt urged for negotiation with China for pineapple, avocado exports

THE Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association (MFVP) expects a negotiation of government with China about a legal export channel for pineapples and avocados.

The request was made at the 31st regular meeting of entrepreneurs and the Private Sector Development Committee, led by Vice President U Myint Swe, which was held on 8 December 2019 at the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

China has said it is open to negotiations on legal export of banana, paddy, cassava, and passion fruit. However, avocados and pineapples, which are prioritized items, have been excluded from that list.

“With China blocking purchase of pineapples through the Muse border gate during the harvest season this year, growers in Myanmar lost 24,800 tons of the fruit, taking a finan-



PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MAHN SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)

cial hit of K7 billion. Therefore, we have forwarded a request for legal exports to the government to benefit growers,” said Daw Sandar Myo, secretary of the MFVP. “In addition, avocado cultivation is rapidly increasing. Myanmar is expected to produce about 80,000 tons in 2020 and about 200,000 tons in 2021, according to a survey by the association. Myanmar exports avocado to Thailand, but at a low price.

So, we need to penetrate China’s market. Therefore, we would like to request negotiations with China for market preparation,” she said. “Moreover, we need financial support to aid the growth of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) related to packaging and drying in order to reach the export standards for avocado and pineapples,” she added.

“SMEs are facing difficulties in gaining access

to loans on collateral from banks to buy machines and equipment, and produce quality products. Therefore, we have requested the government to provide loans for MFVP members and growers,” said Daw Sandar Myo.

According to the MFVP, obtaining a certificate for exporting fruits via maritime trade involves several steps. Sometimes, the long processing period for issuing of export licenses

leads to fruits spoiling and traders suffering losses, it stated. Therefore, it would be better if the government provides a one-stop service for processing fruit export-related documents, the association added. The Ministry of Commerce has been negotiating with China for resuming pineapple exports, which have been banned by the neighboring country since 15 June, according to news released online by the ministry.

“When the mango season ends, pineapple, also a seasonal fruit, is in abundant supply in the markets. Therefore, the Ministry of Commerce has held a series of negotiations with China’s government to create a legal export channel for pineapples,” said U Khin Maung Lwin, from Commerce Ministry.

At present, mangoes, rambutans, lychees, watermelons, and muskmelons grown in Myanmar have been certified by China’s food safety inspection mechanism, the General

Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection, and Quarantine (AQSIQ), for legitimate export. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation has already sent information on tissue-culture bananas, lime, pineapples, avocados, and pomelos to China.

China has been clamping down on illegal goods since the second week of October, 2018. The policy change by the neighboring country has hurt exports of Myanmar’s agro products through the Muse gate. China has imposed a 50-per cent tax on entry of goods that are not included in the quota list, as per a government-to-government pact. However, Myanmar merchants and their Chinese counterparts are finding the tax rate exorbitant. China accounts for 95 per cent of Myanmar’s fruit exports. Watermelons top the list of fruits exported to China, followed by mangoes and muskmelons. — GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat

MLF asks government to phase-in ban on integrated poultry, fish farming slowly

THE Myanmar Livestock Federation (MLF) has asked the government to move slowly on implementing a ban on integrated poultry and fish farming to allow farmers to make a smooth transition. The federation has also asked the government to explore more external markets.

The requests were made at the 31st regular meeting of entrepreneurs with the Private Sector Development Committee, led by Vice President U Myint Swe, which was held on Sunday at the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

“If the government bans integrated poultry and fish farming with immediate effect, it could hurt the livelihood of more than 37,980 people depending on this industry and investors. Moreover, it can pose land problems for poultry farming and reduce the number of poultry raised,” said Dr Kyaw Htin, vice president of the MLF.

“Having said that, we have requested the government to conduct a systematic analysis of integrated poultry and fish farming,” he said.

According to the MLF, at present, there are 1.35 million broilers being raised for meat, about 1.465 million semi-broilers, and more than 2.9 million layers for egg at integrated poultry and fish farms. “The in-

dustry has been producing meat and eggs at a reasonable price to fulfill the needs of the consumers. It also helps support the country’s meat sector,” it stated.

Currently, there are 211 livestock entrepreneurs employing 6,330 laborers in the integrated farming industry. It is estimated that about 37,980 people are relying on this industry, according to the MLF.

The Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF) had asked the government to issue a directive to restrict integrated poultry and fish farming at the 30th regular meeting of Vice President U Myint Swe with private entrepreneurs.

According to MFF officials, about 80 per cent of such mixed farming is being conducted with the help of foreigners. This kind of integrated poultry and fish farming is not in line with Good Aquaculture Practices, Good Manufacturing Practices, and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), and it can harm the export of farm-raised fish, they said.

“Moreover, fish bred on integrated farms pose food safety risks and are not suitable for consumption. Furthermore, such practices can harm the country’s National Aquaculture Development Plan to build a sustainable aquaculture sector in Myanmar,” they added. —GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Comparison chart of foreign tourist arrivals at international airports, sea ports, and border gates

Sr	Month	2018-2019 financial year			2019-2020 financial year		
		Tourist	Business	Total	Tourist	Business	Total
1	October	52647	21005	73652	91836	27590	119426
2	November	77498	21482	98980	115898	27488	143386
Total		130145	42487	172632	207734	55078	262812

Comparison chart of foreign tourist arrivals at international airports, sea ports, and border gates

Sr	International airports and border gates	November 2018		November 2019		Remark
		Tourist	Business	Tourist	business	
1.	Yangon Airport/ Sea Port	57214	16308	70197	17697	
2.	Mandalay Airport	13431	4037	37736	4595	
3.	Nay Pyi Taw Airport	273	267	1380	344	
4.	Myeik Airport	0	0	0	0	
5.	Tachilek	3724	135	3660	71	
6.	Myawady	1336	635	1809	4675	
7.	Kawthoung	1137	70	580	44	
8.	Hteekhee	132	12	50	19	
9.	Tamu	250	17	476	43	
10.	Reedhorda	1	1	10	0	
Total		77498	21482	115898	27488	

Adapt to climate change to better deal with future troubles

THE effects of climate change are already visible across the world and in Myanmar. Climate change is expected to exacerbate current challenges, and result in more frequent and more severe extreme weather events.

At present, the negative impact of climate change is surpassing efforts to combat natural disasters. The government has been taking measures to mitigate natural disasters along with activities to fight climate change.

Myanmar has long struggled with the direct consequences of climate change. Over the last two decades or so, the country has experienced the worst effects of extreme weather events worldwide. Due to climate change, there have been changes in Myanmar's monsoon seasons, and our farmers need to adapt to the changing weather pattern.

A fall in the water level in the dams mean thirstier winter and summer crops, quenched with less water supply from dams. The situation has rung alarm bells and brought into focus the need to fundamentally rethink our current agricultural practices, water usage, and food systems.

With rainfall patterns changing and Myanmar receiving less rainfall in the last rainy season, the flow of water into dams has decreased this year.

A fall in the water level in the dams mean thirstier winter and summer crops, quenched with less water supply from dams.

The situation has rung alarm bells and brought into focus the need to fundamentally rethink our current agricultural practices, water usage, and food systems.

We need to prepare for supplying supplementary water to summer crops, including paddy, in order to prevent a decline in summer paddy production.

To help farmers adapt to climate change in terms of changing crops and agricultural systems and farming methods, the responsible departments are obliged to

cooperate and coordinate with each other in making the necessary preparations.

It is the responsibility of the local agricultural departments to give advice to farmers in catchment areas on changing crops, depending on the situation of irrigation water supply, so that the production of crops does not drop.

The climate is prompting us to carry out a 'massive' adaptation and we need to meet this challenge with urgency and resolve.

The lower inflow of water into dams in the last rainy season is likely to hit summer crops hard in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Mandalay, and Magway.

When it comes to adapting to climate change, we need to be careful not to undermine food security and farmer livelihoods.

Adaptation efforts must focus on the needs of smallholder farmers, who will be the hardest hit and are the least equipped to cope. They will be on the front lines in the battle for adaptation.

Farmers are fundamental to food security in Myanmar and they are extremely vulnerable to climate. Building the resilience of our farmers is an urgent climate adaptation priority.

"To quicken success by cooperation, we invite private businesses and international partnerships."

One-year performance of Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations

Interviewed by Shin Min

ON 19 November, 2018, with President Office Notification No. 87/2018, the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations was formed and now it has reached its first year anniversary. During their one-year process, the ministry had endeavoured to make investment processes more efficient and establish good investment environments.

The following interview is with U Thaug Tun, the Union Minister who heads the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and their efforts to develop the investment and economic sector in the one year since their formation.



Union Minister U Thaug Tun. PHOTO: HTEIN NAN NAW

Q: What did the ministry do in the one-year process?

A: Our Ministry was formed in November 2018. Now it has crossed its one year mark. There are two departments in the ministry. The Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) is stationed in Yangon. The main

task is to make companies first formed for investment processes more efficient. The headquarters is in Yangon and there are branches in the states and regions. So, in total there are 15 branches in the states, regions and Nay Pyi Taw. There are 480 staff in DICA and the Union Minister's office has 50 staff.

The next department is the

Foreign Economic Relations Department (FERD) which is stationed in Nay Pyi Taw. It is tasked with developing investment in Myanmar and setting policies to ensure it is achieved. They coordinate with surrounding nations, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, regional GMS, ASEAN, and BIMSTEC. There are only 180

staff in this department. In total, our ministry has 710 employees. We are doing our best with the strength we have for the nation's benefit.

DICA is making processes efficient for companies starting to set up for investment and reduce steps to make investing easier. Now investors are knowing more. An online registration system is running. Establishing a company can be done easily online. We can stand in the region as a fast and energetic organization.

In last September, the World Bank published the Ease of Doing Business Report. It is a list of countries on how easy it is to make an investment there. Myanmar was included in the list of 20 countries with the most improvement. The thing is, we are making necessary changes for our country. We provide security to even small companies coming to invest here. Our country was ranked 155 from 190 countries for the Starting a Business index last year. We climbed to

70 this year. This means the rank has visibly increased.

Including Starting a Business, there are 10 sectors. Combining all 10, Myanmar ranked 171 last year. It has increased to 165 this year. But we cannot be satisfied just yet. We need to try more to make investments flow into our country even more. Only then will there be sustainable and balanced economic system in our country. Most people know this as MSDP.

To implement MSDP, we cooperate with Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry, and other organizations related with finance and economics. We are also cooperating for this.

Q: Can you tell us how the work and staff situation is to make processes more effective now that the ministry has gone past one year.

A: There were many processes done during one year. We have over 700 staff in the national

context. We strove to make our work effective with the human resource we had. And our endeavours brought improvement. And improvement brought billions in investment into the country. To achieve this, we have to elevate investment.

We have to work hard both at home and abroad. We held investment forums in Kayah State, Kayah State, Rakhine State, Shan State, Ayeyawady Region, Mandalay Region and Yangon Region.

Chin State is difficult to get to so their forum was held in Yangon instead. There will be another in Taninthayi Region. We are also working to go abroad to invite investment. We need more staff to expand our work. We want to increase our staff if possible. Currently, we hired permanent secretaries because we didn't have any, and also for directors-general. We will appoint full staff for other areas as well.

SEE PAGE-10

During the reporting period, 6 tractors, 383 walking tractors, and 3 threshers were sold to farmers. Sale of farm machinery in the previous quarters is shown in the table below.

No.	Period	Large Tractors	Walking Tractors	Threshers
1	1 May - 31 Aug 2018	-	392	-
2	1 Sep - 31 Dec 2018	-	18	2
3	1 Jan - 30 Apr 2019	5	151	-
4	1 May - 31 Aug 2019	1	232	3



The construction of a 350-ton capacity silo for the long-term dry storage of rice was 100% completed on 16 February 2019.



Distribution of high-quality genetically pure seeds and the use of modern agricultural techniques



- Seed farms have been planted consisting of 13 acres of winter peanut, 6 acres of mung bean, 25 acres of summer paddy and 602 acres of monsoon paddy.
- Distribution of high-quality genetically pure seeds consisted of 198.5 baskets of summer paddy, 83.5 baskets of black gram, 3441 baskets of peanut, 85 baskets of green gram and 41092.5 baskets of monsoon paddy.
- Genetically pure agriculture zones were set up, consisting of 565.5 acres for peanut, 60 acres for cow pea, 150 acres for mustard to produce oil, 90 acres for vegetables and 3025 acres for monsoon paddy.
- Department-owned machinery was used to plant 501 acres of summer paddy, of which 105 acres were harvested with department-owned combine harvester-threshers, yielding 7380 baskets of summer paddy.
- Model farms were set up to showcase agricultural techniques, consisting of 64 acres of summer paddy, 16 acres for the system of rice intensification (SRI) summer paddy, 93 acres of winter peanut, 28 acres of black gram, 5 acres of sun flower, 25 acres of green gram, 335 acres of monsoon paddy on raised beds using the box system, 47 acres for the system of rice intensification (SRI) monsoon paddy, 187 acres of seeder monsoon paddy, and 88 acres of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) monsoon paddy.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Order 50/2019

13th Waxing of Nadaw, 1381 ME
(9 December 2019)

Appointment of Deputy Minister

In accordance with the provisions stated in article 234 section (a) (d) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and section 16 (b) sub-section (9) of the Union Government Law, U Bharat Singh has been appointed as Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations.

Sd/
Win Myint
President
Republic of the Union of Myanmar

U Lwin Oo presents Credentials to President of the Republic of the Philippines

U Lwin Oo, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of the Philippines, presented his Credentials to Mr Rodrigo Roa Duterte, President of the Republic of the Philippines, on 4 December 2019 in Manila.—MNA

ဧကဝတီတိုင်းသားကြီးအစိုးရအဖွဲ့၏ စီမံခန့်ခွဲမှုဖြင့် ပြန်ကြားရေးနှင့်ပြည်သူ့ဆက်သွယ်ရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန အခြေခံပညာသုံးစီးဌာနနှင့် ဖြူနယ်စီမံခန့်ခွဲမှုဌာနကပတ်သက်၍ ပူးပေါင်းစီမံခန့်ခွဲမှုပေးသော

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People hold mass rallies in towns to support State Counsellor



People hold the mass rally in Bago to support State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who will contest the case filed by the Gambia at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). **PHOTO: IPRD**

NATIONWIDE mass rallies were held yesterday in support of State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who will contest the case filed by the Gambia at the International Court of Justice (ICJ).
The rally was staged yesterday

in Myitkyina, Bago, Patheingyi, Meiktila, Kani, Oakpo, Myeik, Zigon, Wetlet, Minhla, Gyobingauk, Debayin, Nyaungdon, Pyay, Hinthada, Budalin, Mawlamyine, Paungde, Homalin, Letpadan, Sagaing, Thayawady, Insein, Moenyio and Bamauk.

Shouting slogans including “We Stand With Our Leader” and “Every citizen has a responsibility to defend the interests of the State”, over 1,000 locals marched in Myitkyina.
Similarly, in Bago, over 15,000 people from eight town-



People rally in Myeik to support State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who will contest the case filed by the Gambia at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). **PHOTO: KHAING HTOO (MYEIK IPRD)**

ships in Bago District, led by Bagon Region Chief Minister U Win Thein and members of the Bago Region cabinet marched in the town in support of the State Counsellor.
Representatives from political parties, civil service organizations and religious groups from different faiths also participated in the rally.
During the rally, the people marched from the City Hall to the grounds near the Shwemaw-

daw Pagoda holding up placards reading “We Stand With Our Leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi” and “We Stand With State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi” and miniature State flags.
The assembly of the people announced that they support the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who is defending the interests of the State. The rally came to an end with a song “Unity is the Strength”.—MNA
(Translated by TTN)

One-year performance of Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations

FROM PAGE-9

Only then can we reach our intended goal. We also try to increase interest from neighbouring countries.
We also explain and clarify to attract. We went to Thailand, China, South Korea and Japan last year. We also explained our nation’s actual situation to UK, France, Japan, Germany and Italy. We tell them improvement for economic environment. There has been interest.
For example, big companies have entered Thilawa Special Economic Zone in Yangon. Famous Japanese companies Toyota and Suzuki too. In addition, pharmaceuticals and electric companies are also entering Myanmar. We are also setting up industrial zones to increase employment for the public.
We have approved a large industrial zone with Thailand. There’s also an industrial zone with South Korea. When the ROK President arrived on a friendly visit here in September, an agreement was made to construct the Korea Myanmar Industrial Complex.
ROK has lent us US\$ 1 bil-

lion at an affordable interest rate. The interest is only at 0.01% and across 40 years. When our leaders went to China, there was also a lending of 1 billion Chinese Yuan. The EU also provided an interest-free loan of Euro 231 million to invest in our education sector. Our ministry had to negotiate and work to achieve these situations. You can see the success being achieved.
Similarly, we are also working with UN agencies. There are also successes with UNDP and WFP. These processes can reduce poverty in our country, elevate the education sector, conduct anti malaria campaign, and supply more medicine for HIV/AIDS. In short, while it’s true that we need to stand on our own feet for development in our country, cooperation will get the job done faster. That is why we want to invite private businesses to work with us. We also invite international partnerships.
Q: According to your explanations, your ministry’s work is quite expansive. Are there challenges to getting all this work done?
A: There are certain chal-

lenges. Myanmar is implementing Sustainable Development Plans for its development. We have to negotiate to succeed in our work. On 4 and 5 December, we are coordinating with relevant ministries, foreign assisting organizations and private businesses. If we can make the coordination a success these days, we believe this will make our work more expansive in the coming years.
The meeting held at Myanmar International Convention Center-II in Nay Pyi Taw is for implementing the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan comprehensively and to bring benefits to our people. We must cooperate for development with cooperating nations, organizations and private businesses.
To implement the projects, we need to utilize national budget in addition to private sector involvement. We also need to cooperate with international organizations and affiliated nations that can assist us. If the results here are good, then there will be increased business investments and that is why we are giving our time and energy for this. But we need more staff in our ministry

to carry out the work with vigour. We are also discussing for this.
In the previous financial year, economic investment was at US\$4.5 billion. We expect it to increase in the coming year and we need a larger workforce to make that increase.
Q: Trade and investment are related. Can you explain how investment will assist in promoting exports?
A: Our GDP rose markedly last year. The GDP used to be 6–6.5% but we expect it to rise to 6.8% in the next year. These rates were said by the World Bank. Their report also said this is due to the increase in domestic/foreign investment. Trade has also increased. We have trade by land with neighbouring countries and through sea routes as well.
Most of the investors here aim to export products from our country. The textile business is one example. But it’s no longer limited to just textile manufacturers. The businesses have proliferated. There are manufacturing for shoes, sportswear and traveling bags. There have been more improvements than before. There are also automobile assemblies in

our country now.
Not only do our people get more employment but investments also increase. Exports also go up. This is why investment brings a lot of benefit for trade as well as within the nation. You can see electric equipment being produced domestically and exported abroad.
Q: How is the ministry forming good investment environments?
A: Like I’ve mentioned before, the World Bank categorizes 190 nations every year on ease of investing there. We have reached the top 100 and Vice President U Myint Swe is leading on that front. There have been some improvements this year and we hope for more in the future.
It used to be hard to establish a company in the past but online registration with the birth of MyCO has made it immensely easier. We have also enacted a law that protects investment here. We are also working to make permit issuance faster. Building permits can be applied online in Yangon Region and that has made work faster.
(Translated by Pen Dali)

Mexico rejects US trade deal proposals on steel, aluminum

MEXICO CITY (Mexico) — Mexico’s foreign minister said Sunday the country would not accept a US proposal for steel and aluminum production under the new trade deal, saying it would leave Mexico at a disadvantage.

During a meeting with senators to discuss details of negotiations for the United States-Mexico-Canada treaty (USMCA), Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard said the US proposed that 70 per cent of steel for automobile production come from the North American region.

The proposal would put Mexico “at a very great disadvantage,” said Ebrard, because cars produced in Mexico also use components made in Brazil, Japan and Germany.

Ebrard said the Mexican delegation will ask at the next



Mexico’s Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard has said it will not accept a US proposal that 70 per cent of steel for automobile production come from the North American region. PHOTO:AFP

meeting of treaty representatives that the provision come into effect “more than five years” after the start of the trade pact, rather than immediately. Mexico will also not accept “any term” for aluminum provisions, Ebrard said, because

they do not have the resources to produce aluminum. Mexico is one of the world’s largest automobile exporters due to multiple brands — including General Motors, Nissan, Fiat-Chrysler and Volkswagen — building facilities in the country.—AFP ■

Japan’s initial FY 2020 budget to hit new record, top 100 tril yen

TOKYO — Japan’s initial budget for fiscal 2020 will hit a record high and top 100 trillion yen (\$920 billion) for the second straight year due to swelling social security and defense costs, government sources said Monday.

The initial general account budget for the current fiscal year ending March stood at 101.46 trillion yen.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s Cabinet plans to approve a draft of next fiscal year’s budget on 20 December and submit it to a regular Diet session to be convened in January.

The total amount is expected to increase as the government aims to earmark funds for free preschool education to be extended by six months as

well as a rebate program for purchases made via cashless methods — including credit cards — aimed at bolstering consumer spending following the consumption tax hike in October.

Meanwhile, the government may increase the amount of deficit-covering bonds as tax revenue is unlikely to rise as expected, according to the sources.

The Finance Ministry is seeking to curb the expected rise in spending in the face of growing criticism from opposition parties. The government will need around 800 billion yen for the extended free preschool education program, compared with 388.2 billion yen allocated for half a year in fiscal 2019 for that purpose. —Kyodo News ■

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Syrian President Assad’s uncle on trial in France on graft charges

Over 9 million facing food shortages in African Sahel: officials

PARIS (France) — The uncle of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is set to go on trial in Paris Monday on charges of building up a property empire in France using funds from Syrian state coffers.

Rifaat al-Assad, dubbed the “Butcher of Hama” for allegedly commanding troops that put down an uprising in central Syria in 1982, has been under investigation in France since 2014.

This year, an investigating magistrate ordered he stand trial for organised money laundering in building a 90-million-euro (\$99.5-million) property portfolio in France.

But the dock will be empty: the 82-year-old accused — younger brother of Syrian ex-president Hafez al-Assad — will miss the trial “for medi-



Rifaat al-Assad, uncle of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, goes on trial in Paris for organised money laundering. **PHOTO: AFP**

cal reasons”, his lawyers told AFP.

The trial, scheduled to last until December 18, concerns crimes allegedly committed between 1984 and 2016, including aggravated tax fraud and misappropriation of Syrian funds.

Assad, who splits his time between France and Britain, denies the charg-

es.

Formerly Syria’s vice-president, Assad left Syria in 1984 after mounting a failed coup against his brother Hafez, Bashar’s father, who led Syria from 1971 to 2000.

After he arrived in Europe, Rifaat al-Assad’s lavish lifestyle, four wives, and 16 children soon raised eyebrows.—AFP ■

PARIS (France) — The number of people requiring urgent food aid in 16 countries across Africa’s Sahel region more than doubled this year to some 9.4 million amid an increase in violence and insecurity, officials and experts said Monday.

Three countries — Nigeria, Niger and Burkina Faso — are facing crisis conditions, at phase three of five on the scale used by the Food Crisis Prevention Network, which includes government and United Nations representatives as well as NGOs. Some 9.4 million people are estimated to be in immediate need of assistance in October-December 2019 in the 16 countries analysed (excluding Liberia), including 4 million in Nigeria, 1.5 million in Niger and 1.2 million in Burkina Faso. “By June-August 2020, 14.4 million people are

projected to be in a crisis situation or worse, including 1.2 million in an emergency situation (phase 4),” the network said in a statement issued during its annual meeting in Paris. “Civil insecurity has deteriorated this year in Mali, Burkina Faso and Nigeria,” said Mahalmoudou Hamadoun of the Permanent Interstate Committee for drought control in the Sahel. “So these mainly rural populations cannot ensure their means of subsistence, agriculture or animal raising, even as they continue to be affected by climate change,” he said. The vast expanse of the Sahel along

the southern rim of the Sahara is extremely vulnerable to drought, even as birthrates surge across the region. Attacks by jihadist insurgents against police and other government targets, along with inter-ethnic fighting, are also adding to the strains on local populations. “Entire villages have been displaced in Burkina Faso, schools and health clinics are closed — people don’t have the possibility of staying in their homes,” said Sibiri Jean Zoundi, head of the Sahel Club at the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.—AFP ■

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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.

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Email address: myanmar@tilleke.com
Dated: 10th December 2019

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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.

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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.

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Statement by the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission on the occasion of the 71st anniversary of International Human Rights Day which falls on 10th December 2019

Statement No (7/ 2019)

1. Myanmar National Human Rights Commission together with the people of Myanmar and the International community is celebrating the auspicious occasion of the International Human Rights Day which falls on 10th December 2019.

2. On this important occasion of the International Human Rights Day, the Commission deems it the most appropriate moment to review the promotion and protection activities carried out within the span of the year and further wishes to present the activities to be carried out in the future.

3. As a measure of raising awareness and knowledge of Human Rights of the public, the Commission carried out human rights talks in the States and Regions and also in the self-administered regions. Community talks in 14 village tracts in the States and Regions were implemented to foster the understanding of the basic concepts of human rights which can in turn lead to alleviation of violation of human rights. In coordination with human rights educators, human rights awareness talks were also held in the townships in Yangon and Bago Regions. A workshop on human rights, child rights, women rights and disabled persons rights was held in Nay Pyi Taw for Government Officials with the purpose of instilling a sense of human rights in carrying out their functions. To better understand human rights by the general public, basic and advanced training courses were conducted at the Commission. In addition, human rights lectures were given at the National Defense College, Combat Training Schools in Bahtoo and Bayintnaung, Central Institute for Civil Service and the police training centers. Trainees attending the training courses at the fire services training centers and refresher courses conducted at General Administration Training
- Center were also given human rights lectures. The Commission has also facilitated the translation of UDHR into the ethnic languages and to date translation has been done on 21 ethnic languages. The Commission in cooperation with Pen Myanmar carried out training workshop on freedom of expression in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw. Moreover, to carry out activities related to child rights, the Commission signed a letter of cooperation (LOC) with Good Neighbours International (GNI) in 2019.

4. Regarding violation of human rights, the Commission received complaints and reviewed them in accordance with the complaint procedures. In some cases, fields visit had also been carried out. In line with the provision of the Commission law, inspection visits were made to the prisons, labor camps, police lock-ups, court lock-ups and guard wards to ascertain their compliance with human right standards. Based on the visits, recommendations were made to the department concerned to take action as required and statements were also issued for the general public. In addition, the Commission summoned complainants to the Commission for verification of facts. The findings were then forwarded to the concerned department for the further action as necessary.

5. In compliance with the provisions of the Commission law, the Commission has been extending its recommendations and observations to the departments concerned on the laws that are in practice and on the draft laws to be in consonance with human rights point of view. In addition, the Commission submitted a separate report to the committee on the rights of disabled persons on 12-7-2019 and the report was posted on the Commission's website for perusal of the general public.
6. The Commission has as part of its obligations attended the meetings and seminars conducted by Southeast Asia National Human Rights Institutions Forum (SEANF), Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF) and Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) and its cooperating closely with the organizations.

7. The Commission launched its capacity assessment with the cooperation of APF, OHCHR and UNDP. In 2019, the Commission cooperated with UN Agencies and CSOs to hold workshops in the implementation of UPR recommendations.

8. In line with the recommendations contained in the capacity assessment report, the Commission drafted the Strategic Plan with the assistance of experts from APF. The draft proposal was then coordinated with the parliamentarians and CSOs and together with the recommendations put forward by them and it was adopted. The annual work plan for 2020 was also approved.

9. With view to enhance the awareness of human rights and smooth functioning of its activities the Commission has opened branch offices in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay and in 2019, a temporary branch office was also set up in Sittwe township of Rakhine State.

10. On this auspicious occasion of International Human Rights Day, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission pledges to continue with the Human Rights Promotion and Protection activities in line with the provisions of the Commission law in order that a society that respect and promote human rights can be created.
- Myanmar National Human Rights Commission
Date: 10 December 2019

In Jharkhand, Rahul questions PM Modi's silence over rape cases

Ranchi (Jharkhand) — Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi and questioned his silence over the recent rape cases that shook the nation.

“Have you made New India? Every day women are being raped... Uttar Pradesh MLA raped a woman. Narendra Modi didn't even utter a word,” Rahul said during a rally here. The former party chief said if Congress comes to power in Jharkhand, it will “waive off farmers’ loans after forming the government.”

“We will pay them Rs 2,500 for grains (dhaan) and your land will stay protected,” he said.

He also promised 27 per cent reservation for the OBCs if a Congress government is formed in the state.

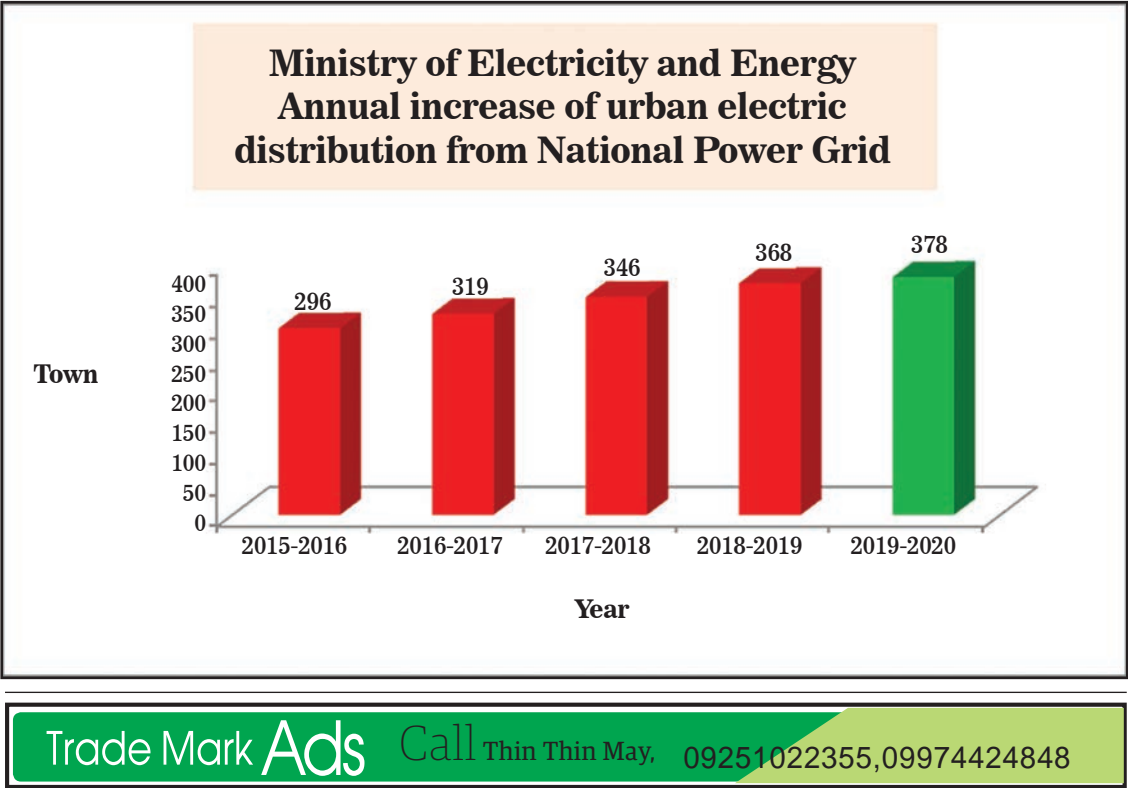
Jharkhand, which has an 81-member Assembly, is undergoing polling in five phases.

The first phase of the election in the state took place on 30 November while the second round was held on 7 December.

The voting for the third phase will be conducted on 12 December; the fourth phase on 16 December; and the fifth and last phase on 20 December.

The counting of votes will take place on 23 December.

—ANI ■





A photo courtesy of Michael Schade shows the volcano on New Zealand's White Island spewing steam and ash moments after it erupted. **PHOTO: AFP**

No more survivors on New Zealand island after volcano eruption

WELLINGTON (New Zealand) — New Zealand police have said no more survivors were expected to be rescued from an island volcano that erupted suddenly on Monday, suggesting as many as two dozen people could have died.

Police said some 50 people were visiting White Island when it exploded in the early afternoon — hurling ash and rock high into the air.

Some 23 people made it off the island, five of whom have since died, the rest were being treated for injuries, including severe burns.

It was earlier estimated the number still on the island was in double digits.

Police said early Tuesday that despite several aerial reconnaissance flights to try and find those trapped “no signs of life have been seen at any point.”

“Based on the information we have, we do not believe there are any survivors on the island. Police is working urgently to confirm the exact number of those who have died.”

As night fell, deputy commissioner John Tims said volcanic activity made a rescue attempts by land too dangerous. “I’ve got to consider the safety of our people and emergency services staff,” he said.

The New Zealand military is expected to make a pass of the island at first light in the hope that people may have survived against the odds.

The eruption occurred just after 2pm (0100 GMT), thrusting a thick plume of white ash 3.6 kilometres (12,000 feet) into the sky.

Seconds before, live camera feeds showed a group of more than a half dozen people walk-

ing on the crater floor. Then the images went black.

A “considerable number” of those caught up in the disaster are believed to be Australian, according to officials in Canberra.

As many as 30 of those involved are also believed to be cruise passengers on a day trip from the vessel *Ovation of the Seas*, Kevin O’Sullivan, chief executive officer of industry body the New Zealand Cruise Association told AFP.

The ship’s operator Royal Caribbean — who had billed the trip to White Island as “an unforgettable guided tour of New Zealand’s most active volcano” — said “a number of our guests were touring the island” but did not confirm that number.

The ship has a capacity of around 4,000 people and set sail from Sydney last week on a 12 day voyage.— AFP ■

Saudi eliminates gender-segregated entrances for eateries

RIYADH (Saudi Arabia) — Restaurants and cafes in Saudi Arabia are no longer required to have gender-segregated entrances, officials said, in a further easing of social restrictions in the ultra-conservative Islamic kingdom.

Eateries have long required one entrance for single men and another for women and families, in a country where the once-powerful religious police zealously enforced sex segregation in public places for decades.

The ministry of municipalities and rural affairs said on Twitter Sunday it was eliminating several requirements for restaurants, including the need for “an entrance for bachelors and a separate entrance for families”.

It was unclear whether a restriction on seating inside restaurants will also be removed.

Restaurants are currently segregated into a “family” section for those accompanied by women and a “singles” area for

men, though many have quietly taken down the barriers in recent years amid the kingdom’s sweeping liberalisation drive.

The latest reform was hailed by young Saudis but dismissed by arch-conservatives on social media, with one Twitter user saying it went “against sharia”, or Islamic law. Saudi Arabia’s de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, has sought to project a moderate, business-friendly image of his austere kingdom as he seeks to boost investment.

Prince Mohammed has clipped the powers of hardline clerics as he pursues a modernisation drive that has allowed mixed-gender music concerts and ended decades-long bans on cinemas and women drivers.

Until three years ago, the religious police elicited widespread fear in the kingdom, chasing men and women out of malls to pray and berating anyone seen mingling with the opposite sex. — AFP ■



Saudi restaurants have long been segregated into a family section for customers accompanied by women and a singles area for men. **PHOTO:AFP**

French strike chaos deepens in crucial week for Macron

PARIS (France) — France’s transport chaos deepened Monday on the fifth day of a nationwide strike over pension reforms, ramping up tensions at the start of a crucial week in President Emmanuel Macron’s battle with trade unions.

With only two of the Paris metro’s 16 lines running as normal and suburban trains also heavily disrupted, many commuters slipped behind the wheel to try to get to work in torrential rain, causing major gridlock.

By 9 am, the tailbacks in the



With many having opted to work from home last week and only now returning to the workplace, this week will test public support for the strike. **PHOTO: AFP**

Paris area ran to 600 kilometres (370 miles), twice the normal level, the Sytadin monitoring website said.

Large queues formed at bus stops following an announcement that one out of two buses would be running but striking workers blocked seven out of 25 bus depots, leaving more travellers stranded.

With many having opted to work from home last week and only now returning to the workplace, this week will test public support for the strike.

A poll Sunday in the Jour-

nal du Dimanche newspaper showed 53 per cent of the French supporting the strike or expressing sympathy for their demands, up six points in a week.

Unions have called a second day of mass protests for Tuesday, a day before the government unveils the full details of its plans for a single points-based pension scheme that does away with dozens of more advantageous plans enjoyed by train drivers, sailors, lawyers and other professions. — AFP ■

SEA Games: Myanmar vs Cambodia football match to be aired live

THE bronze medal match between the U-22 men's football teams of Myanmar and Cambodia will be broadcast live on Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV), MRTV Sports Channel, and Myanma Radio at 2 pm today (10 December). — MNA

Myanmar athletes bag 11 more medals at 30th SEA Games

MYANMAR athletes bagged 11 more medals in seven sports yesterday at the 30th SEA Games, according to the official website of the Games.

Myanmar athletes took two silver medals in boxing and billiards, and nine bronze medals in boxing, taekwondo, wrestling, karatedo, archery, billiards, and

athletics.

The silver medals were claimed by Nwe Ni Oo in boxing (featherweight, 57-kg, F) and Nay Thway Oo in billiards (English billiard singles, M).

Myo Ko won a bronze medal in wrestling (Greco Roman, 55-kg, M), Moe Mine Nyi Nyi in athletics (20-km race walk, M), and Wunna Tun in wrestling (Greco Roman, 60-kg, M).

Su Su Hlaing got a bronze medal in archery (Individual Compound, F), Win Nway Nway Zaw in karatedo (over 61-kg, Kumite, F), and Naing Latt in boxing (bantamweight, 56-kg, M).

Aye Nyein Htoo took the bronze medal in boxing (light

flyweight, 48-kg, F), Kay Thi Khaing in wrestling (50-kg, F), and Dhaysi Oo Julius in taekwondo (Under 49-kg, fly, F).

Myanmar was in eighth place on the medal-table of SEA Games on 9 December with 3 gold medals, 18 silver medals, and 48 bronze medals, making up 69 in total. — Kyaw Khin

Myanmar, Cambodia to fight for bronze medal at 30th SEA Games today

THE U-22 men's football teams of Myanmar and Cambodia will vie for the third place in the 2019 Southeast Asian Games at 2:30 pm (Myanmar Standard Time) today at the Rizal Memorial Stadium in Manila, the Philippines.

The match will be followed by the gold medal match between Indonesia and Viet Nam at the same stadium.

In the 2017 SEA Games, Myanmar had lost to Indonesia by 1-3 in the third place playoff. In the gold medal match, Thailand had beaten Malaysia 1-0 to claim the champion title.

The Myanmar U-22 men's football team underwent an official training session yesterday at the Rizal Memorial stadium. — Kyaw Khin

Russia banned from Olympics, World Cup over doping



International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach. PHOTO: AFP

for a period of four years," WADA spokesman James Fitzgerald said.

Under the sanctions, Russian sportsmen and women will still be allowed to compete at the Olympics next year and the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics but only if they can demonstrate that they were not part of what WADA believes was a state-sponsored system of doping.

It will be up to FIFA to stipulate how a team of Russian players can take part in the qualifying matches for the 2022 World Cup.

Euro 2020, in which the Russian city of Saint Petersburg will host four matches, is not affected by the ban because it is not defined as a "major event" for anti-doping purposes.

"They are going to have prove they had nothing to do with the non-compliance, (that) they were not involved in the doping schemes as described by the McLaren report, or they did not have their samples affected by the manipulation," Fitzgerald said. — AFP ■

Dortmund star Witsel has surgery after domestic accident

BERLIN (Germany) — Borussia Dortmund midfielder Axel Witsel will miss the rest of the year after needing surgery for a facial injury sustained in an accident at home, his club said Monday.

"We couldn't talk to him yesterday (Sunday) because he was in intensive care in hospital," said Dortmund coach Lucien Favre, while a club spokesman said Witsel fell at home but gave no further details.

"He won't be able to play for the rest of the year, but he is already at home," added Favre.

"It's a shame for him and us,

he's an important player. Hopefully he is back as soon as possible."

The 30-year-old Witsel will miss Dortmund's final Champions League group game at home to Sparta Prague on Tuesday.

They must better Inter Milan's result against Barcelona at the San Siro in order to reach the last 16.

The Belgium international will also be sidelined for the next three league games.

Dortmund are third in the table, five points behind Bundesliga leaders Borussia Moenchengladbach. — AFP ■

LAUSANNE (Switzerland) — The World Anti-Doping Agency on Monday banned Russia for four years from major global sporting events including the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, over manipulated doping data.












WADA's executive committee, meeting in Lausanne, handed Russia the four-year suspension after accusing Moscow of falsifying laboratory doping data handed over to investigators earlier this year.

Not only will Russia be ruled out of the next Olympic cycle, but Russian government officials will be barred from attending any major events, while the country will lose the right to host, or even bid, for tournaments.

"WADA's executive committee approved unanimously to assert a non-compliance on the Russian anti-doping agency



Midfielder Axel Witsel (R) helped Borussia Dortmund to a 5-0 win over Fortuna Duesseldorf on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP

2019 Southeast Asian Games medal tally updated					
COUNTRY		GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE	TOTAL
	PHILIPPINES	137	102	106	345
	THAILAND	84	91	102	277
	VIETNAM	79	78	94	251
	INDONESIA	69	76	102	247
	MALAYSIA	51	52	67	170
	SINGAPORE	50	43	59	152
	CAMBODIA	4	6	31	41
	MYANMAR	3	18	48	69
	BRUNEI DARUSSALAM	2	5	6	13
	LAO PDR	0	5	23	28
	TIMOR-LESTE	0	1	5	6