THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VI, No. 259, 7th Waxing of Pyatho 1381 ME www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com Wednesday, 1 January 2020

2020 New Year Message from President U Win Myint

(1 January 2020)

Dear esteemed fellow citizens,

May you all enjoy the best of health and peace of mind on the auspicious day of the New Year 2020.

Our Union Government has been working strenuously with the collective strength of the people, by laying down firm noble goals and programmes for sustainable peace, prosperity and development for a happy and prosperous life of the citizens.

We have been making unrelenting efforts for the emergence of the Democratic Federal Union Constitution that guarantees equal rights, peace and development which have been yearned for so many years by all ethnic national citizens.

I believe that we can successfully overcome the hardships and challenges that the country is facing today due to certain circumstances by holding onto truth, justice and honesty and transparency.

I wish to appeal to all citizens to participate with our Union Government as we work on the tasks of Union Peace, building a Democratic Federal Union and development programmes.

At this auspicious time of the New Year, may all citizens be blessed with auspiciousness and good fortune. May there be peace and prosperity as Metta (loving-kindness) envelops the whole country.

Thank you all.

2020 New Year Message from Vice President U Myint Swe

DEAR ethnic national brothers and sisters living in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar,

On the auspicious occasion of the 2020 New Year, I send these good wishes with Metta. May all ethnic national brothers and sisters and our motherland the Republic of the Union of Myanmar be free from harm; may all of you be able to gain the long-awaited national reconciliation and peace in no time, and be able to build the happy and prosperous State.

In this New Year, may all ethnic nationals and people enjoy best of health and peace of mind.

2020 New Year Message from Vice President U Henry Van Thio

I extend my greetings and my best wishes that from the auspicious New Year Day of 2020 onwards, may all our ethnic nationals enjoy best of health and peace of mind, and all the blessings. May you all be able to overcome the challenges and difficulties that you will encounter in the New Year based on the experiences gained from the past by building mutual respect, good will, understanding and trust among ethnic national brothers and sisters of the Union; and may you all have access to good opportunities within your reach. SEE PAGE-6

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New Year Message of Bhamo Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa

AS a new year wish, I want to share eleven ways of cultivating loving kindness among the creatures taught by the Buddha.

This is the way to cultivate loving kindness, according to the Metta Sutta:

1. 'May all beings be well and safe, may their hearts rejoice.
2. 'May all beings who have a sense of fear or not — be well and safe, may their hearts rejoice. There are two kinds of creatures. Those who have not yet gained insight into the true nature of existence and has not yet achieved nirvana can feel fear. But, those who have achieved nirvana are no longer need to feel fear.
3. 'May all beings who are long, medium or short — be well and safe, may their hearts rejoice.'
   There are three kinds of creatures. It can be considered that kinds of snakes are long, turtles and mice are short and human beings and cattle are medium.
4. 'May all beings who are big, small or medium-sized— be well and safe, may their hearts rejoice.'
   Those creatures like elephants and whales are big, ants and insects are small and others are medium-sized.
5. 'May all beings who are small, subtle or gross — be well and safe, may their hearts rejoice.'
   People can be considered in three types. Gross or fat, small and subtle. And also other creatures are the same.
6. 'May all being who are visible or invisible — be well and safe, may their hearts rejoice.'
   There are two kinds of creatures. For example human beings and animals are visible but there are also unseen creatures.
7. 'May all beings who are residing near and far — be well and safe, may their hearts rejoice.'
8. 'May all being who have come to be or are yet to come, (without exceptions) — be well and safe, may their hearts rejoice.'
   Those who have achieved nirvana will never reborn. Other remaining people will reborn or will come again.
9. 'Let one not deceive another person, anywhere at all.'
10. 'Let one not despise another person, anywhere at all.'
11. 'In anger and ill-will, let him not wish any harm to another."

Chairman of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, Bhamo Sayadaw Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa.

One's wish harm to another is leading to dangers of others.

Let one cultivate boundless thoughts of loving kindness towards all beings following the above eleven ways.

If loving kindness prevails among the creatures including human beings, the world and the people will be at peace. I wish all the people in the world make use of the 11 ways of cultivating loving kindness for health, peace, and love in the new year.

Just as a mother would protect her only child with her own life, the people treat each other friendly and amicably, and the leaders also rule the country with loving kindness. I wish the peoples of Myanmar and the world be healthy, kind each other and gain insight into the true nature of existence.

New Year Message from Sitagu Sayadaw

Sitagu Sayadaw

"Appamadena Sampadetha" which encompasses all three genres of Buddhist scriptures or Tipataka.

The Buddha delivered this message twice a day. Its precise meaning is "to be mindful of world and life'. In fact, mindfulness is a gatekeeper of physical and mental actions. Anyone who can control oneself with mindfulness is a real victor.

Although King Kosala closely associated with Buddha in his lifetime, he could not restore himself to a good life. However, King Asoka became a great devotee in Buddhism after he practiced the sermon of mindfulness from Novice Nigodha. King Anawrahta who established the first Myanmar Kingdom became a committed supporter of Buddhism after hearing the Appamada Dhamma from Ashin Arahan.

Myanmar is a common land for its citizens.

Great diligence is essential for preventing the country from disintegration and for creating its prosperity.

Review the past with consciousness--- "Appamadena Sampadetha"

Preview the future with constant attention—"Appamadena Sampadetha"

Like the old leaves are substituted with new ones, the old year is farewelled with "Appamadena Sampadetha", and the New Year is also greeted with "Appamadena Sampadetha".

All are advised to live in "Appamadena Sampadetha"

Sitagu Sayadaw

2020 New Year Message from Dr Bhaddanta Nandamala Bhivamsa, Rector of Sitagu World Buddhist University and University of Abhidhamma

Bhaddanta Nandamala Bhivamsa.

May all the human being in the universe be healthy, happy and wealthy commencing 2020 New Year period and beyond.

All the Myanmar nationals fully expect peace and prosperity. They have not fulfilled their expectation until now due to the lack of sufficient mindfulness to avoid immoral deeds.

By developing mindfulness, peace and prosperity will be achieved by avoiding bad deeds and practicing moral deeds.

If immoral deeds are performed and good deeds are ignored, then adverse consequences would be suffered and people will remain far away from good results.

May all people hold mindfulness for individuals or community wellbeing starting from international New Year 2020.

2020 New Year Message from Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat.

On the auspicious occasion of the New Year I extend my good wishes and greetings to all ethnic national brothers and sisters for their good health, well-being and auspiciousness.

Dear esteemed ethnic national brothers and sisters,

At this time, internal peace, national reconciliation and national unity are things which are urgently needed for our country. If we all cooperate and work with understanding and trust based on a balanced view, we would surely be able to build a peaceful, prosperous and developed Democratic Federal Union.

We wish to report to all our ethnic brothers and sisters that our Pyithu Hluttaw is also striving for creating a Democratic Federal Union through national unity and national reconciliation to secure lasting peace desired by all the people.

May all the ethnic nationals and people be able to collaborate with our Hluttaw by shouldering any duties entrusted upon you for peace, building the Democratic Federal Union, and national development. May you all be able to work strenuously with unflagging zeal and determination with all your physical and mental capabilities for the perpetuation of the Union

I extend these good wishes for your good health and well-being and for all your wishes to be fulfilled in the 2020 New Year.

Thank you all.

2020 New Year Message from Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than.

I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to all our esteemed ethnic nationals of the Union, our people, our dear brothers and sisters and all our Myanmar citizens living overseas. May you all be filled with peace, happiness and bounteous joy on the auspicious occasion of the New Year! May all your wishes come true!

Seasons change, ringing out the old year and bringing in a new year. In the year of our Lord, year in and year out, Year 2020 is a New Year bringing the meanings of extraordinariness and perfection, we all welcome this New Year with joy and delight.

From the occasion of the New Year, we citizens may learn salutary lessons over our strengths and weaknesses from the past, as well as over the hardships and challenges that we had faced. These hardships and challenges, we hope, will enable us to seize opportunities for future success.

Playing our respective roles, renouncing our deeply held Egos, we should undertake and dispatch our duties with loving kindness. We should keep our morality intact, and exercise our good will. I pray that we stand together, united, in times of emergency, and face any obstacle with the spirit of the Union, already ingrained within the hearts of all our ethnic nationals.

Since collaboration and collective work is the key to success, I wish to urge all ethnic nationals to build a modern, developed, Democratic Federal Union, which is both peaceful and prosperous, with your collective strength.

I extend these New Year greetings and my best wishes to all our citizens to be blessed with a peaceful and beautiful future from 2020 onwards. May you all be able to keep the teachings of all religions in your hearts!

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing's New Year Message

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

I would like to wish all the ethnic people residing in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar great auspiciousness in the new year of 2020.

The year 2019 is past, and now we are entering the 9th year of our journey on the road to a multi-party democratic system. In the past, there were achievements and challenges that we had to tackle. The year 2020 will be an important year for our country's peace and politics. The Tatmadaw will do its best.

I wish all the country's people, with rationalization, join hands with the Tatmadaw in 2020. I again wish for the people's health and wealth.

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Rakhine Chief Minister meets locals in Yanbye Township

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu addresses the meeting with departmental officials and local people in Rakhine State. **PHOTO: MNA**

RAKHINE State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu held a meeting with departmental officials and common people at Ramawadi Hall in Yanbye Township, Rakhine State, yesterday morning.

In delivering speech, the Chief Minister emphasized importance of peace and stability, socio-economic development for local people and their coordination. U Tun Lin Aung, the Officer of Township General Administration Department, briefed on development projects in Yanbye Township from 2011-2012 to 2018-2019 financial year.

The locals also discussed the needs for health, education, transportation and electrification sectors, and the officials coordinated discussions.

The Chief Minister also presented K2 million for repairing a bridge on Yanbye-Laytaung road, and he inspected the construction of home for the aged in the township.—Aung Naing (Yanbye IPRD) *(Translated by Aung Khin)*

2020 New Year Wishes of Peace Negotiators

By: Ye Gaung Nyunt
Photo: Phoe Htaung

THE Year 2019 has retired, and the New Year 2020 will see the General Election and series of peace negotiations.

The following excerpts are wishes of peace negotiators of Myanmar.

U Hla Maung Shwe.

Saw Mya Yarzar Lin.

Khun Myint Tun.

U Myo Win.

U Hla Maung Shwe

Secretary of Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee and Member of Peace Commission Advisory Board

I would like to convey a New Year's good message that we could increase momentum of peace process beginning early 2020. The first formal meeting will be held in the second week of January, and the Ethnic Armed Organizations signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) will work together for holding Union Peace Conference, while the Peace Commission and the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC) will negotiate with non-signatories in NCA in 2020. May all the citizens be happy and healthy in 2020, and secure a peaceful life. I would also like to invite all to take part in the peace making process.

Saw Mya Yarzar Lin

Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team, Secretary of Arakan Liberation Party (ALP) and the UPDJC

May all the ethnic people be happy and wealthy in 2020. Peace is very important for our country. Our people will suffer great miseries if we could not secure peace. Rakhine issue is more serious. Conflicts must be ended for public security. All the stakeholders in ceasefire process are urged to consider about the welfare of country.

Khun Myint Tun

Vice Chairman of Pa-O National Liberation Organization

There are two significant points in the ongoing peace process. The first one is the process relies on political dialogue. The second one is based on public participation. Both political dialogue and political reform are simultaneously required for peace. These processes must not be entrusted only to the leaders and armed organizations. All the people must take part in the process.

U Myo Win

Vice Chairperson of All Burma Students' Democratic Front and member of UPDJC

We will exert more efforts in national reconciliation and internal peace. All the stakeholders in peace process need to consider the public welfares in the new year. Grudge and aggression must be reduced in favour of peace for the country. We are working for holding a peace conference before 2020 General Election. We will continue working with the next administration beyond the elections.

New Year Wishes of Religious Organizations

By: Min Thit (MNA)
Photo: Hla Moe

U Thaung Htike, the Chairman of Myanmar Interfaith Friendship and Unity Group (Central)

There are different communities with diverse faiths in Myanmar. However, they are responsible for peace and prosperity of the country through mutual respects unity among each other.

U Thaung Htike.

U La Chu Man.

Most Revd Stephen Than Myint Oo.

Al haj U Aye Lwin.

U Sammy Samuels.

U Tin Zaw Min.

U La Chu Man

Executive Member of All Myanmar Gorkha Hindu Association

May the whole country enjoy peace and unity. It will come to realize only through peaceful mind of individuals. All the citizens are now thirsty for peace. It is the way to peace which can promote Myanmar into one of the developed nations in Asia. I wish all the people could overcome all the obstacles in marching to a democratic State.

Most Revd Stephen Than Myint Oo

Myanmar Anglican Communion and the Chairman of Myanmar Council of Churches

I expect the Year 2020 could bring into blessings of country. I prayed for unity, peace settlement, tranquility and sympathy in 2020.

The meaning of tranquil encompasses peace for both external and internal affairs.

Al haj U Aye Lwin,

Chief Convener of Islamic Centre of Myanmar and core member of Religion for Peace Myanmar Interfaith Organisation

May all the citizens of different faiths enjoy peace and prosperity. Our State leader has exposed the beauty of Myanmar to the world. Diversity is beauty. It is also strength. She is trying to interpret to the world that diversity is not an offence. As per her promise, we, all the fellow citizens, may transform diversity into a strength to raise prestige of Myanmar by building up understanding, patience and magnanimity to each other.

U Sammy Samuels

Jewish community Musmeah Yeshua Synagogue

Myanmar is a country with diverse communities. We must see this diversity as a strength and beauty in moving forward in the future of the year 2020 and beyond.

U Tin Zaw Min

Member of All Myanmar Baha'I Faith Federation

May all Myanmar citizens enjoy peace, prosperity and happiness under the common rules for mankind with loving-kindness and peaceful co-existence in building up better world, nation and community.

Find solution based on discussions and negotiations

Our ethnic brothers and sisters must find a solution based on discussions and negotiations free from mistrust and firm in faith. From there, we can proceed in lasting solidarity for the emergence of a Constitution that is fitting for our country and in accordance with democratic practices and federal principles.

(Extract from Message of Greetings sent by President U Win Myint to the 71st Anniversary of Independence Day Ceremony on 4 January 2019)

New Year Wishes of Businesspersons for 2020

Interviewed by: Thi Thi Min, Min Thit (MNA)
Photo: Nay Lin

Wunna Kyaw Htin Sithu U Aung Ko Win.

U Zaw Min Win.

U Chit Khaing.

Wunna Kyaw Htin Dr Khin Shwe.

U Ko Ko Htwe.

U Maung Weik.

Wunna Kyaw Htin Sithu U Aung Ko Win, Patron of Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI)

On this auspicious New Year eve I would like to first wish physical and mental wellbeing on all the citizens of Myanmar.

The Union Government is working hard to establish a modern and developed democratic nation and I wish for us citizens to help by using our collective strength and becoming responsible and accountable citizens.

In the auspicious New Year eve, all ethnic brothers and sisters should be united and have mutual respect and love on one another while building peace. I pray for everyone to be safe from natural or any kind of disasters. I wish for young people to be protected from the dangers of drug abuse. May the nation and its people have their socioeconomic livelihood developed further. May the full legal protection entitled to all citizens proliferate and may fairness and justice prevail.

May the education system reach modern international standards. May all citizens receive full comprehensive health protection. May everyone have the right to exercise freedom that does not infringe on national values, traditions, customs and image. May the New Year rejuvenate body and mine and shoulder national and public benefits.

May the efforts and strength of the Union government and the people become united and aid in resolving domestic and foreign challenges and difficulties, so that we may move forward towards a peaceful, modern and developed nation in the new year.

U Zaw Min Win, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry

I wish all the best of our citizens and international partners who support Myanmar with good intentions. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, which is leading private business sector of the country, is steadfastly collaborating with the government and international partners for peace, stability and prosperity of the country and socioeconomic development of the people.

It is also appreciated that the government is closing working together with private firms in implementing sustainable economic development of the country through the development of private sector.

I would like to express my sincere wishes for active cooperation of Myanmar businesspersons, including members of UMFCCI and partner organizations, in upcoming new year, and for the interests of the State, public and private business firms.

U Chit Khaing, President of Myanmar Apex Bank

I would like to make a wish for peace in the country to end the feelings of insecurity and mishaps suffered by the people. Only peaceful environment could attract the influx of local and international investments. While the country is suffering from the impacts of armed conflicts, it is very important for the country to enjoy peace.

Foreign investment is a key driver for economic development of the country, and it can attract foreign investments and create employment opportunities. More technology transfers are likely to be seen together with foreign investments. I would also suggest that local businesspersons are advised to do their investments also in agricultural and other sectors, instead of all-out investments in a single sector, for the benefits of country.

There is a need for greater diversity in our society. I have many university friends from different faiths such as Hinduism, Muslim and Christian. We associated with each other in friendly mood. A paradigm shift has occurred in this country. The problematic situations have impacted common people. As every citizen is responsible for creating a new modern nation, all are advised to participate in this process. I wish our posterity could enjoy a better life in the future as we have grown older.

Wunna Kyaw Htin Dr Khin Shwe, Chairman of Zaykabar Company Limited

The year has changed from 2019 to 2020. The State Counsellor is leading the country with sincerity. It must be recognized, and we must also consider how to improve our country, especially for the grass-roots level. As the development of our country is ranked at lower positions in the world, everybody is responsible for development of this country. We need to foster unity in 2020. The lack of peace will hinder economic development of the country. Peace is related with economy, politics and social affairs. We hope a more peaceful and developed nation. People in conflict areas will seriously expect peace.

The developed countries are moving on three pillars of peace, cooperation and progress for mutual interest. All must participate in peace-making process.

U Ko Ko Htwe, Chairman of Taw Win Family Company Limited and Chairman of Myanmar Business Association

I wish a more prosperous and peaceful Myanmar in 2020. Wishes must be followed by efforts. It is important to work together in implementing better situations for people and country. The government plays a leading role in doing so.

The government needs to enhance currency flows of the country in stimulating the country's economy. Immediate measures must be taken to develop land management, agriculture, livestock and agriculture. The Myanmar Business Association is preparing for a report on these issues to liberate from poverty line and to make reconciliation in the country.

U Maung Weik, the Chairman of Say Pai Development Limited

I wish Myanmar people could enjoy more favourable and satisfactory outcomes with healthier and happier experiences in 2020.

(Translated by Aung Khin)

2020 New Year Message from Vice President U Henry Van Thio

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I also hope that from our endeavours exerted with the strength of unity, we will be able to achieve good outcomes and effective support towards achieving Union Peace and establishing the Democratic Federal Union, yearned by the people.

Since the path and future of our Union, built by the unity of our ethnic nationals, depends upon the actions of our ethnic nationals and people, may you all become good citizens who will step up efforts to uplift the interests of the nation, and the reputation and integrity of all our ethnic nationals. May all your good wishes be fulfilled. ■

New Year messages from entertainment industry

Interviewed by Myat Sandi

Multiple Academy Award winner Director U Kyi Soe Tun.

Myanmar Motion Picture Organization Chairman Director Nyi Nyi Tun Lwin.

Author Juu.

Singer Aung Htet.

Singer Ni Ni Khin Zaw.

Actor Zenn Kyi.

Director Christina Kyi.

MULTIPLE Academy Award winner Director U Kyi Soe Tun

May all the people of Myanmar be safe from sinister thoughts. May everyone live long and healthily, have their wishes fulfilled and spread love and compassion everywhere.

Myanmar Motion Picture Organization Chairman Director Nyi Nyi Tun Lwin

May all citizens have no problems in their livelihoods and continue on the track of genuine democracy in 2020.

Author Juu

May all of Myanmar be free of grief and filled with peace, serenity, and wholesome health in the new year.

Singer Aung Htet

May all music lovers possess lasting mental and physical wellbeing in 2020. May you all be successful in everything you set out to do. And may everyone possess a happy and fulfilling family life.

Singer Ni Ni Khin Zaw

May all the people of Myanmar and the whole world possess even more peaceful and fulfilling lives in 2020.

Actor Zenn Kyi

May all of Myanmar be free of animosity. May Myanmar achieve peace quickly and be reborn as a roaring tiger of Asia within a decade. May everyone be free from ill intentions.

Director Christina Kyi

May everyone be filled with happiness in 2020. May your wealth multiply and may disaster avoid you. May Myanmar be peaceful and everyone coexist in harmony. ■

Over 600 local, foreign artists to reveal integrity of Bagan from 7 to 11 Jan

OVER 600 local and foreign artists and sculptors will gather in Bagan to exhibit their works from 7 to 11 January, 2020 at the Bagan Archaeological Museum honouring the World's Heritage Bagan.

Organized by Myanmar Artists and Sculptures Asiayone (Central) and the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, "Art Expo Bagan 2020" will showcase works of 620 artists including those from 20 countries.

During the five-day period, an Online Art Trading Platform will be introduced and veteran artists will also demonstrate the basic steps for painting and sculpturing.

The first everlargest gathering of artists at the world's heritage site is aimed at revealing and conserving the historical cultural heritage through the soft power of the arts.

During the period, the artists will create outdoor paintings and exchange artistic skills in efforts to enhance their life style.—GNLM

Bagan by Myanmar prominent impressionist Dr Lun Gywe.

Japan to launch project to boost farm productivity in Myanmar

TOKYO — Japan will launch a 390 million yen ($3.6 million) project in May in Myanmar to boost irrigation and agricultural management as part of efforts to increase productivity and eradicate poverty in the Southeast Asian country.

Development of the agriculture promotion system, the improvement of the rice value chain, among other things, will be conducted in six townships in the Shwebo District of the Sagaing Region, home to some of the largest irrigated farmland in Myanmar.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Myanmar government signed an agreement for the project in the Myanmar capital Nay Pyi Taw last week.

The two sides also aim to secure a stable water source by establishing a water management organization for farmers and improve profitably by obtaining a geographical indication tag for Shwebo Pawsan, a high-end variety of local rice.

Farmers thresh rice with the help of a machine in a paddy field in Kangyidauk, Ayeyawady. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

The project, designed to improve the income and management skills of farmers, runs from May 2020 to November 2024, according to JICA.

About 60 percent of the Myanmar people engage in agriculture, with agriculture, forestry and fisheries accounting for about 30 percent of the country's gross domestic product.

However, the development and dissemination of agricultural technologies are not that advanced in Myanmar, with its rice yields standing at 3.50 tons per hectare, lower than the 5.54 tons per hectare in Vietnam, 5.15 tons per hectare in Indonesia and 4.34 tons per hectare in Bangladesh, JICA said.

Myanmar's Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation's Department of Agriculture will carry out activities related to agricultural promotion, while the ministry's Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department will engage in participatory water management activities.

Japan has already started repairing irrigation facilities as well as bridges and roads in the Shwebo district as part of another assistance project, according to

Shareholders of YBS public companies asked to wait for share dividend payout

By Nyein Nyein

THE shareholders of YBS public companies need to wait to receive a dividend payment, said U Phyo Min Thein, Yangon Region Chief Minister.

"We are working together for providing public transport services. We have established public companies for the bus service. The regional government has contributed K35 billion each in two public companies. The shareholders of those companies want immediate dividend payout. The companies cannot earn high profits within three years. Even if they retain profits, they have to reserve for future expenses as they have just started running. The companies might suspend their dividend payments and there might be a waiting period before the dividends are paid," said U Phyo Min Thein.

"We also want short timeframe for return of capital. We expect a five- to eight-year timeline for return of capital. We will make sure not to lose K35-billion in equity in the incumbent government's term," he said.

"As there is still no better option for public transport than bus service, businessmen like to do that kind of business," said the Chief Minister.

This photo shows YBS buses running through on the busy road in downtown area in Yangon. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

"The Yangon Region government established the Yangon Bus System (YBS) to provide better transport services. Some bus lines might make losses, while some earn good profits. Bus operators cannot run only profitable routes. Therefore, the public company has been organized and the ownership is shared by shares. Earlier, under the All Private Bus Lines Control system, some buses were eyeing only large crowds and there was no systematic bus operation. So, we are changing this," said Chief Minister.

At present, the Yangon Urban Public Transport Company (YUPT) is the biggest service provider in the Yangon Bus System, providing services to many bus lines. The Yangon Region government has also bought shares in the company, along with about 300 shareholders. But, about 200 shareholders recently asked the Yangon Region government to review the dividend policy of the YUPT, according to the Yangon Region Transport Authority.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Regional trade touched nearly $1 bln in Oct, reports Ministry of Commerce

THE value of Myanmar's regional trade with ASEAN countries through the sea route and border gates was estimated at US$998.18 million in the month of October in the 2019-2020 financial year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The ministry reported that imports surpassed exports in regional trade, with exports reaching $371.26 million and imports valued at $626.9 million.

Since April, Thailand has been Myanmar's largest trade partner in ASEAN, with trade valued at $473.57 million, followed by Singapore ($250.96 million), Indonesia ($99.13 million), and Malaysia ($91.96 million). Viet Nam has emerged as the nation's fifth largest trade partner, with bilateral trade estimated at $71.24 million.

Meanwhile, Myanmar's bilateral trade with the Philippines was $8.5 million, Cambodia $2.6 million, while trade with Laos stood below $1 million $1.27 million. There was no trade with Brunei.

Myanmar's main export items included agricultural and fishery products, as well as minerals, while imports included food and beverages, electronic tools, motor vehicles, and consumer goods. Apart from its main trade partner China, Myanmar's external trade was mostly carried out with regional trade partners. Trade with countries in the European Union, however, remained uncompetitive, compared with regional trade partners. – GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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1 JANUARY 2020
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Our New Year resolution should be total peace

TODAY is the first day of the year 2020. We just said goodbye to the old year and welcomed the new year.

We encountered good and bad conditions in the past year from which we must learn or take lessons.

If we look at the past year, our country faced challenges, including armed conflicts, stalled peace dialogues, and accusations against our nation in the International Court of Justice.

At the same time, we achieved success in many sectors and improved the socio-economic life of the people.

In the new year, the general elections, which are a part of our democratic transition, will be held.

We must continue our efforts towards ending armed conflicts and bringing peace to the country to build a federal democratic Union.

In the new year, we must strive with energy and zeal for internal peace, which is an important factor for the establishment of the Democratic Federal Union, which is the aspiration and hope of all ethnic national brothers and sisters; development of the socio-economic status of the people; and, rule of law.

> Our new year resolution should be "total peace" in 2020, for the people who have yearned and longed for peace for many years. Although their dreams have dimmed, their desires and hopes are still as bright as ever.

Our country is a Union with diverse ethnicities and religions. Hence, only through a unified march for peace can we develop our country because there is "strength in unity".

Since the time we gained independence, we have lost much energy due to armed conflicts. Because there was no peace, there was no stability, and we lagged in many areas of development.

As a result, our country became one of the least developed countries. The universe, which is changing every second, and today's world will not wait for our country.

On the new year day, we should ask ourselves: are we going to leave behind the same country with armed conflicts for the new generation, or are we going to leave behind a unified and strong country that is worthy of others' respect?

The year 2020 is a valuable period that should not be squandered.

Only a regime cannot make a country a success. It cannot bring about national development alone.

Only with the participation of the people can these things be achieved.

We wish to remind all of the people and ethnic armed groups and organizations not to waste this opportunity. Do not be timid to take a step forward. What we have to fear is the fear that lingers in our minds.

Our new year resolution should be "total peace" in 2020, for the people who have yearned and longed for peace for many years. Although their dreams have dimmed, their desires and hopes are still as bright as ever.

Let us step forward bravely together with them.

RING OUT THE OLD, RING IN THE NEW

By Maung Hlaing

ON the night of 31 December, 2019, when the clock struck twelve, people all over the world bid farewell to the old year. They sang the old favourite song "Auld Lang Syne" in chorus.

Today, the old year is gone and we have ushered in the New Year AD 2020. Almost all the nations across the world may be celebrating the NewYear's Day--the first day of the calendar year. Although Myanmar people have their own traditional New Year's Day, youngsters happily participate in the celebrations of the World New Year's Day. The celebrations are both festive and serious in most countries in the world.

The ways of celebrating the New Year Festivals or the New Year's Day are different. As far back in history as we can tell, people have celebrated the start of a new year. May I recount some traditional celebrations from my jottings I have made.

According to a fable, believe it or not, the ancient Babylonians celebrated the New Year's Day by forcing their king to give up his crown and royal clothing. They made him get down on his knees and admit all the mistakes he had made during the past year. This idea of admitting wrongs and finishing the business of the year is found in many societies. So is the idea of making resolutions, a promise to change our ways.

In accordance with their traditional customs and ways of living, the designation of new year is also different. The people of ancient Egypt began their new year in summer. That is when the Nile River flooded its banks, bringing water and fertility to the land. They held religious ceremonies because their ceonomic life depended on the annual flooding.

The people of ancient Babylonia and Persia began their new year on 21 March, the first day of spiring.

Some American Indians began their new year when the nuts of the oak tree became ripe. That was usually in summer. The ancient Mesopotamians held their new year at the time of the spring rains.

Many ancient peoples started the new year at harvest time. They performed rituals to do away with the past and purify themselves for the New Year.

Myanmar people do have a Happy New Year. However, our new year is ushered right in the midst of a scorching summer with citizens enjoying the fun. The noisy revellers who have yelled their lungs are out in three or four days of fun. Noise making is another ancient custom in the new year celebrations. The noise is considered necessary to chase away the evil spirits of the old year. People in some countries do different things to make a lot of noise. They may hit sticks together, beat on drums, blow horns or explode fireworks. (In Myanmar, we had such practices when we were in our childhood days. On the first day of the new year, after the monks had chanted, or recited protective verse from Buddhist scriptures, people did the practice of expelling evil spirits from the neighbourhood. It was called "Taw-htoke Pwe" in which people beat on buckets, hit sticks and blow horns to make noises.)

Now, almost everyone in the world celebrates New Year's Day on 1 January. People celebrate by holding family parties, giving presents and visiting friends. In homes of some countries, the New Year's Day is celebrated with ceremonial house-cleaning, feasting and exchanging visits and gifts.

Modern customs on New Year's Day, indeed, include visiting friends and relatives; giving gifts; attending religious services; and making noises with guns, horns, bells and other devices. People write New Year's message on decorated papers. Mostly, large numbers of people go to New Year's Eve parties. At midnight, bells chime. Seriens sound. Fireworks are let off. Everyone shouts "Happy New Year!" And the New Year's Day has come round once again.

People in some countries celebrate this day even as a holiday. Formerly, this day was not a holiday for us in Myanmar. In the time of the popular government, however, we get two consecutive days--31 December of the year and 1 January of the new one. Today, as before, people all over the world will observe the New Year's Day in many different ways.

As we have stepped into another new year, the year 2020, we have left behind the old year 2019 with pride and satisfaction. Just as we ring out the old year and ring in the new year, we usually take stock of what has been achieved individually, in groups, or governaments and nations. Generally, there have been advances in all spheres of human endeavours in all countries regardless of region and size.

If we cast a glance at a panoramic view of the world in 2019, the old year saw economic downturn, financial shock waves, tax hikes, spending cuts, soaring prices, food insecurity, fuel insecurity, the spread of epidemics, the scourge of terrorism, problems of illegal immigrants, natural disasters, regional wars and so on in some countries including have-nots. Due to the trade wars being launched between the super powers, small nations were in the throes of economic instability. The fact no one can deny is that the entire world has come under the threats of climate change that has caused a growing number of natural disasters.

Climate change is already hurting the global economy and will cost hundreds of billions of dollars annually by century's end unless drastic action is taken to cut carbon emission. According to AFP reports, the year 2019 is set to be the second hottest year in history. In 2019, Greta Thumberg, a Swedish teenager, became a global star nominated for a Nobel Prize. Because of her efforts, millions of young people took part in weekly demonstrations demanding climate action.

As for Myanmar, although the year 2019 saw tangible results of the reforms of the democratic government, there occurred some incidents and natural disasters. The most unfortunate tragedy occurred in August in Paung Township, Mon Sate where about 70 people were killed and nearly 30 injured in a landslide.

The year 2019, indeed, was an eventful year in the history of Myanmar. Gambia, on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has filed a case against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The case is nothing but a challenge for us. It is also an issue of national interest affecting all the nationals residing the length and breadth of Myanmr. The oral proceedings on the Gambia's report for the indication of provisional measures took place at the ICJ on 10,11, and 12 December respectively. However, the State Counsellor, in her capacity as the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs contested the case to defend the national interest of Myanmar.

Blood is thicker than the water. So goes the saying. It is heartening to see that people from all walks of life, those in the Union as well as those living abroad, are expressing stronger supports for the State Counsellor and her leadership in the endeavour to contest the case at the ICJ. Ordinary laymen, service personnel from government departments, Hluttaw representatives, school teachers, representatives from civil organizations and philanthropic organizations participated in the rallies to support the State Counsellor.

What we vividly see is the unity in diversity. It is the strength of unity that lies within and without can surely refute the allegations. Regarding the ease, we hope for the best but, must prepare for the worst, standing together with the State Counsellor. Although the old year left an inheritance of some evils, we could see some considerable successes in efforts to develop Myanamr in the political, economic and social fields. As we have gained successes, we have also had shortcomings in some of our efforts in the past year. True to human nature, we want to look ahead with hope to consolidate the successes and continue to build our country into a peaceful and prosperous society.

Whatever it may be, in 2020, we are going to see one-hundred-kyat notes with the portrait of Bogyoke Aung San, the architect of independence of Myanmar. Such currency notes have disappeared from the sight of the people for ages. Downtown Yangon, sooner or later, will get our National Library in the new year. We will see another historic general elections that will take place in the eventful year of 2020. The country is going to the polls in the new year to select a popular government.

Good things as well as bad things will accompany us into the new year. We have no choice to accept tham. It depends on the luck of the draw. However, we need to transform the bad into good, and the good into better. Doubtlessly, the old year is the legacy of the new year. We have to take lessons from the past year and endeavour to make greater progress in the future. Today, service personnel including white-collar and blue-collar workers still enjoy their holiday. From today onwards, we must resume the tasks we have committed to.

Build up your strength for the new year!

Happy New Year!!

2020, 72nd Anniversary Independence Day National Objectives

1. All National Ethnic Races to defend and protect with "collective strength" to ensure Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of the Unity of National Ethnic Races and Perpetuation of National Sovereignty.
2. To give priority and work for transformation of the rule of law and justice sector which is important for stability, peace and development of the State.
3. To work on amendment of the Constitution, which is the basic foundation for building a Democratic Federal Union.
4. To build and create conducive environments for Union citizens which can elevate their sense of duty and improve their capabilities while the Democratic Federal Union is being built.
5. Emergence of a peaceful and prosperous Democratic Federal Union by implementing the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan.

New Year's Message from United Nations Secretary-General

FROM here at the United Nations, I join you in welcoming the New Year.

We enter 2020 with uncertainty and insecurity all around. Persistent inequality and rising hatred. A warring world and a warming planet. Climate change is not only a long-term problem but a clear and present danger.

We cannot afford to be the generation that fiddled while the planet burned. But there is also hope. This year, my New Year's message is to the greatest source of that hope: the world's young people.

From climate action to gender equality to social justice and human rights, your generation is on the frontlines and in the headlines. I am inspired by your passion and determination. You are rightly demanding a role in shaping the future. I am with you. The United Nations stands with you — and belongs to you.

2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. We are launching a Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals, our blueprint for a fair globalization. This year, the world needs young people to keep speaking out. Keep thinking big. Keep pushing boundaries. And keep up the pressure.

I wish you peace and happiness in 2020.

Thank you.

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Printed and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

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Global Fund contributes $10 mln, Access to Health Fund $1 mln for fighting against TB

For fighting tuberculosis (TB), the Global Fund shelled out US$10 million for 2018 and 2019, while the Access to Health Fund provided $1 million for 2019 and 2020, according to the National Tuberculosis Eradication Programme.

The Ministry of Health and Sports has announced that people need to provide information about those living with TB, whether they are receiving treatment at private hospitals or clinics or not, and private laboratories also need to submit reports on the outbreaks of diseases, so the number of TB patients can be determined.

For the fight against TB, the government allocated K14 million in the 1995-1996 financial year, K 5.57 billion in the 2016-2017FY, K 4.24 billion in the 2017-2018FY, and over K 4 billion in the 2018-2019FY. In 2017, the Global Fund provided $19 million, while the Three Millennium Development Goal Fund (3MDG) provided $1.2 million for TB eradication efforts.

With an increase in the TB rate in Yangon Region, the region's Public Health Department is carrying out urban TB treatment and control programs in 13 townships.

Out of 6,000 TB patients who do not have access to treatment yet in Yangon Region are included in the normal TB patients and drug-resistant TB patients.

Of the 32,000 patients who died of TB in Myanmar, over 4,000 patients were suffering from both TB and HIV. Myanmar still remains on the list of countries with the highest number of TB patients because of patients not taking medicines regularly, high number of MDR-TB cases, and HIV and TB co-infection.

The ministry is aiming to bring down TB incidence to 40 percent by 2020 and MDR-TB to 5 per cent from 2015 to 2020. In Myanmar, more males are afflicted with TB than females. About 80 per cent of TB patients are aged between 15 and 54. —Aye Cho

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Pilgrims visit significant places in Minbu during the New Year holidays

Pilgrims from across the country visited places of interest in Minbu town, Magway Region during the New Year holidays.

"We vacated some places for pilgrims who stayed at the pagoda overnight during the New Year holidays. Moreover, sunblocks and concrete roads have been upgraded along the Nagaryon Pagoda Road. We invited pilgrims to visit our significant pagoda in Minbu Township," said U Zaw Thein, the chairman of the pagoda's board of trustees.

"I am from a Yangon charity team. We climbed Mount Victoria also known as Nat Ma Taung after making a donation for children in Mindat Town, Chin State. We also made donations to schools for orphans and monasteries. The donations for those schools which we could not reach in Mindat Town were provided through the other monasteries. Our team includes 47 people. We will visit the famous pagodas and the Bogyoke Museum in Natmauk Township during the New Year holidays," said.—Kyaw Soe Win (Minbu)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Pilgrims visit Naga Bwet Taung, the Mud Volcano near Minbu township during their New Year holidays. **PHOTO: KYAW SOE WIN (MINBU)**

Wheat straw hats selling well in Lashio of nothern Shan State

WHEAT straw hats, which are produced by traditional businesses in Ngar Lone Tin Village, ChaungU Township, are selling mostly in Lashio township of Northern Shan State, said Daw Khin Than Win, the owner of Hlaing Myint Moh Wheat Straw Hats Business in the village.

"We have been in the wheat straw hat business in the villages for many years. We send all the finished products across the country. We did not make such good sales earlier, but now our sales have increased because there are only a few wheat straw hat makers in our town. We are sending the wheat straw hats mainly to Lashio because the local people from Lashio are primarily engaged in agriculture. So, they order wheat straw hats, which last long in bad weather conditions," she added. This year, Ngar Lone Tin Village has produced over 300,000 oat hats. The wheat straw hats have been sent to Myitkyina, Bago, Kalay, and Lashio. Of the total hats, over 100,000 wheat straw hats, including Shan hats of different sizes, have been sent to Lashio.—Win Oo (Zayyartine) *(Translated by Hay Mar)*

Workers collect wheat straw hats drying in the sun in Ngar Lone Tin Village, ChaungU Township. **PHOTO: WIN OO (ZAYYARTINE)**

Huawei says it is facing a tough 2020 because of what it claims is a 'strategic and long-term' campaign against the company by the US government. **PHOTO: AFP**

Huawei says 'survival' top priority as sales fall short

BEIJING (China) — Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei said Tuesday that "survival" was its top priority after announcing 2019 sales were expected to fall short of projections as a result of US sanctions.

Huawei, a global leader in telecom networking equipment has been effectively banned by the United States from working with American firms on the grounds that it poses a national security threat — an accusation the company has consistently denied.

Chairman Eric Xu said Huawei's sales revenue for 2019 was likely to reach 850 billion yuan (US$121 billion) — up roughly 18 percent from the previous year.

Though he said "business remains solid", the figure was lower than a previous forecast of US$125 billion. In a New Year's message to employees, Xu said the US government was in the midst of a "strategic and long-term" campaign against the company that would create a "challenging environment for Huawei to survive and thrive".

"Survival will be our first priority" in 2020, said Xu, the current chairman under the company's rotating leadership scheme.

He said Huawei would need to "go all out" to build up its mobile services ecosystem — its answer to Google apps and services — to "ensure that we can keep selling our smartphones in overseas markets".

A bright spot was its smartphone business, posting "robust growth" with 240 million units shipped in 2019.

Huawei has faced obstacles and suspicion from the US and other countries wary of its close relationship with the Chinese government.

US intelligence chiefs state flatly that the firm cannot be trusted and its equipment is a threat to national security — an accusation the company has dismissed. But in a boost to the company, India's telecom minister said late Monday that Huawei will be allowed to take part in trials for the rollout of 5G services in the huge Indian market next month.

Founded in 1987 by former People's Liberation Army engineer RenZhengfei, Huawei was dragged into the spotlight a year ago when Ren's daughter, senior Huawei executive MengWanzhou, was arrested in Canada at the request of the United States.

Washington wants to put her on trial for allegedly lying to banks about violating Iran sanctions. Her extradition hearing begins on 20 January. — AFP

S Korean ex-justice minister indicted: Yonhap

SEOUL — Former South Korean Justice Minister Cho Kuk was indicted for the first time Tuesday on several charges in connection with allegations involving members of his family, Yonhap News Agency reported.

The Seoul Central District Prosecutors Office indicted Cho on 12 charges including obstruction of business and forging fake documents, according to Yonhap.

The development follows a months-long probe into allegations of academic fraud and irregular financial investments surrounding his wife and daughter. Prosecutors in particular claimed that a 6 million won (about $5,180) scholarship that Cho's daughter received from a medical school is considered bribery, the report said.

Cho, who denies all the allegations against him, stepped down in October after about a month in office.

His wife was that same month arrested on a range of charges including embezzlement. She is alleged to have forged a document for her daughter's enrollment into the university where she was a professor. She is also suspected of making questionable investments into a private equity fund. — Kyodo News ■

Former South Korean Justice Minister Cho Kuk leaves the Seoul Eastern District Court following a hearing on 26 December 2019, after prosecutors sought a warrant for his arrest. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Cambodia moves to terminate online gambling

PHNOM PENH — Cambodia implemented a total ban on online gambling Tuesday, ending a three-year-old booming business in the country that catered mainly to Chinese tourists.

The termination will take effect at midnight 31 December, 2019, after which any casinos failing to comply will face punishment by authorities, including the revocation of their license or other possible legal action.

RosPhirun, deputy director general of the Ministry of Finance and Economy and in charge of casinos and online gambling, said the government will conduct inspections at all licensed casinos from 10 January to ensure they are following the government's directive.

The decision to terminate online gambling came after Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen announced in August this year that he would outlaw it at the end of the year, saying it is linked to money laundering and other crimes.

Reports suggest the decision may have also been made following pressure from China, which had asked Cambodia to help put a stop rampant gambling by Chinese players, saying it causes family and social problems.

Following Hun Sen's announcement, tens of thousands of Chinese have left Cambodia, mostly from Sihanoukville, a popular destination for online gambling for Chinese tourists.

By April this year, 86 casinos were operational in Sihanoukville, and unofficial records suggested roughly 70,000 Chinese visitors had flocked to this coastal city. Following the ban, however, several sources suggest the number has fallen by 70 per cent.

Before the announcement of the termination, Cambodia was considered the second biggest online gambling spot among ASEAN countries after the Philippines.— Kyodo News ■

Air Chief formally inducts FIS Dornier aircraft into No 41 squadron

NEW DELHI (India) — Air Chief RKS Bhadauria on Tuesday formally inducted the Flight Information system (FIS) Dornier aircraft into No 41 Squadron at a ceremony at Air Force Station Palam.

"The Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria formally inducted the Flight Information system (FIS) Dornier aircraft into No 41 Sqn, the 'Otters', at a ceremony at Air Force Station Palam today," an official statement read. Meanwhile, the Indian Air Force (IAF) tweeting a picture, said, "#CAS ACM RKS Bhadauria with #No41Sqn, the 'Otters' at the induction ceremony of the Airfield Calibration #Dornier aircraft." "The #HAL produced Dorniers are fitted with state of the art Flight Inspection System (FIS) and Ground Maintenance Support System (GMSS) calibration systems. Acquisition of the two modified Dorniers allows in-house calibration of Nav Aids at #IAF airfields under the MAFI project," IAF said in another tweet. The modified Dornier 228 aircraft have been acquired to undertake in-house calibration of Navigational aids available after implementation of Modernised Airfield Infrastructure (MAFI) at IAF bases. While the first aircraft was delivered in November 19, the second is expected to be delivered in early 2020. —ANI ■

Outgoing WADA President Craig Reedie says the Russian doping crisis is the biggest challenge he has faced in his six years at the helm of the anti-doping agency. **PHOTO: AFP**

WADA better positioned to wipe out drug cheats, chief says

MONTREAL (Canada) — Outgoing WADA President Craig Reedie says the Russian doping scandal shows that clean sport is under attack, but the anti-doping organization now has the tools to better weed out drug cheats.

Taking stock of his six years at the helm of the World Anti-Doping Agency, the 78-year-old Briton insists the group is "stronger" than ever as it faces the "unprecedented" challenge of the doping crisis in Russia.

"Considering the last six years in particular, I am especially pleased to see how WADA responded to the challenges it faced since 2014, in particular the Russian doping crisis," he said in his end-of-term message.

The crisis, he recalled, led to the creation within WADA of an "intelligence and investigations" service, which played "a decisive role" in the recent decision to exclude Russia from major world sports competitions for falsifying anti-doping data.

The Russian anti-doping agency RUSADA announced Friday that it has challenged the exclusion.

Ultimately, it will be up to the Court of Arbitration for Sport to rule on the matter, said Reedie, whose term officially ends Tuesday.

"Throughout this process WADA has shown it has the will, the expertise and the legal tools to stand up effectively to this unprecedented level of cheating and corruption," he said.

WADA decided on December 9 to ban Russia from participating in major international events for four years, including the 2020 and 2022 Olympic Games and the 2022 World Cup.

Only handpicked Russian athletes will be able to participate in the competitions, but under a neutral flag and without the national anthem being played.

WADA estimated that Russia had "manipulated" the data of the Moscow anti-doping laboratory which were transmitted to it at the beginning of the year, an umpteenth rebound in a scandal which started with the revelation in 2015 of an institutional doping practiced since 2011 and involving senior officials, secret agents and trafficked urine vials.

The significant extent of state-sponsored doping in Russia, notably between 2011 and 2015, was revealed in an independent report by sports lawyer Richard McLaren, released in 2016.

The issue has dealt a colossal blow to the status of post-Soviet Russia as a major sports power after hosting events such as the 2013 World Athletics Championships, the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi and the 2018 World Cup.

The Sochi Games later became notorious for the number of doping violations by prominent Russian athletes.—AFP ■

Pro-Iran protesters attack US embassy over deadly Iraq strikes

BAGHDAD (Iraq) — Iraqi supporters of pro-Iran factions attacked the US embassy in Baghdad on Tuesday, breaching its outer wall and chanting "Death to America!" in anger over weekend air strikes that killed two dozen fighters.

It was the first time in years protesters have been able to reach the US embassy, which is sheltered behind a series of checkpoints in the high-security Green Zone.

A stream of men in military fatigues, as well as some women, marched through those checkpoints to the embassy walls with no apparent reaction from Iraqi security forces.

The demonstrators waved flags in support of the Hashed al-Shaabi, a mostly Shiite network of Iraqi armed groups that has received training and weapons from powerful neighbour Iran.

They threw rocks and wrenched security cameras off the walls, ignoring calls over megaphones to leave the embassy compound. In response, US marine guards fired an initial volley of bullets, then switched to tear gas and flash bangs to disperse the crowd.

The Hashed said at least 20 people were wounded. Caretaker prime minister Adel Abdel Mahdi said that the crowds that had stormed the US embassy should leave the compound "immediately."—AFP ■

It was the first time in years protesters have been able to reach the US embassy in Baghdad, which is sheltered behind a series of checkpoints in the high-security Green Zone. **PHOTO: AFP**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV UNI ARISE VOY.NO. (0190-597N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV UNI ARISE VOY.NO. (0190-597N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1-1-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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Phone No: 2301185

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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.

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AGENT FOR: M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE) PTE LTD

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2020

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Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc (left) meets with Myanmar President U Win Myint in Nay Pyi Taw on 17 December, 2019. **PHOTO: VNA**

By Kyaw Htike Soe

Vietnamese enterprises eye promising Myanmar market

MYANMAR is among the first countries which established relations with Viet Nam. Myanmar officially established diplomatic relations with Viet Nam on 28 May, 1975. The two Southeast Asian countries will be celebrating the 45th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties in 2020. Viet Nam and Myanmar have many similarities in culture, religion, history of struggle for national independence, significant geopolitical position in the Southeast Asia Region as well as the national reconciliation.

Myanmar became a key overseas emerging investment market for Vietnamese enterprises due to its consumption trends, low cost of market research, abundant young workforce and relaxed export & import related policies. Recently, Prime Minister of Viet Nam Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc paid an official visit to Myanmar at the invitation of President U Win Myint.

They discussed promoting bilateral relations and cooperation, friendship, and enhanc-

Vietnamese Prime Minister Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc holds the meeting with Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein on future bilateral investments. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds talk with Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on 17 December, 2019. **PHOTO: MNA**

ing political trust through the regular exchange of visits of senior officials and meetings and people-to-people exchanges. President U Win Myint and Vietnamese Prime Minister Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc agreed to achieve the comprehensive cooperative partnership and upgrade bilateral ties to a new level. Vietnamese Prime Minister Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc also met State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and discussed ways to expand all-round cooperation between the two countries.

They had in-depth discussions on a wide of issues including bilateral trade, investment, agriculture, and cooperation in defence and security sectors. They also agreed to take mutually beneficial cooperation to a new level in various sectors and strengthen collaboration that will be helpful not only for the two countries, but also for peace and stability in the region. To ensure peace and security in the ASEAN Region, they pledged to boost bilateral security and defence cooperation by sharing information and experience. Vietnamese Prime Minister Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc welcomed Myanmar's proposal on establishing a Viet Nam Industrial Park in Myanmar and Myanmar companies' presence in Viet Nam. Along with stronger bilateral relations at all levels, mutual trust and understanding between the two governments and peoples has been increasingly deepened.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam attend the senior-level meeting of the two countries. **PHOTO: MNA**

Vietnamese Prime Minister Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc holds the meeting at Mytel HQ, the joint-venture telecoms firm between Myanmar and Viet Nam. **PHOTO: MNA**

The two leaders witnessed the signing and handing over of four cooperation agreements namely, an action plan for implementing the Comprehensive Cooperation Partnership for 2019-2024, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Agriculture and Rural Development Cooperation, and a MoU between the two foreign ministries and an agreement for Myanmar and Vietnamese travelers to visit each other's country for 30 days without visas starting on 1 January, 2020.

They also committed to deepen cooperation on defence and security to make the ASEAN Region secure and stable. The visit of Prime Minister Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc to Myanmar was said to be a success, promoting bilateral collaboration between the two countries to a new level for the sake of the two peoples as well as peace, stability and development in the region and beyond the world.

Viet Nam is considered one of the top foreign investors in Myanmar with over 20 investment projects. The number of Vietnamese firms in Myanmar has doubled to 200 from that in 2016. In addition two-way trade turnover between Myanmar and Viet Nam amounted to over US$ 1.02 billion in 2019, surpassing the goal of US$ 1 billion that the two countries had earlier set for 2020. Vietnamese investors have injected nearly US$2.2 billion into Myanmar, accounting for 2.8 per cent of the total foreign investment in Myanmar and making Viet Nam the seventh-largest foreign investor among 49 countries and territories investing in Myanmar. Vietnamese investors mainly poured their investments into much-needed infrastructure projects in Myanmar such as telecommunications, tourism, construction, and consumer goods.

Trade volume between Myanmar and Viet Nam was worth around US$ 550 million in 2016, exceeding the goal of US$ 500 million set by the leaders of the two countries. Bilateral trade increased to nearly US$ 830 million, up 51% from 2016. Bilateral trade was valued at US$ 860 million last year, making Viet Nam the ninth largest trading partner of Myanmar. Myanmar moved up 12 places, from the 55th position among Viet Nam's trading partners in 2010 to 43rd in 2017.

Ref; Viet Nam Economic News

First round of Myanmar Futsal League 2019-20 concludes

THE first round of Myanmar Futsal League 2019-20 concluded yesterday with just one match ending in a tie, according to the MFF Futsal Facebook page.

The match between MIU F.C. and VUC F.C. ended with the teams conceding a 2-2 draw.

Meanwhile, On Doctor F.C. beat AMM Brothers F.C. with a score of 4-0, GV F.C. beat Futsal Chithu F.C. by 6-0, Myoma JY F.C. defeated the MFF U19 Team by 4-2, Do Do Ko Ko F.C. drubbed Let Wel Thone Nara F.C. with a score of 6-2, and Winner F.C. prevailed over Dream Team F.C. by 6-0. — Kyaw Khin

Players of MIU F.C. and VUC F.C. vie for the ball at the National Indoor Stadium (2) in Hline Township on 31 December 2019. **PHOTO: MFF FUTSAL**

Fixtures released for MPT Myanmar National League 2020

THE match fixtures for MPT Myanmar National League 2020 were released yesterday, according to the MNL.

The MPT Myanmar National League is being organized by the Myanmar Football Federation and the Myanmar National League.

Twelve teams, including Chin United and ISPE F.C., will participate in the tourney, which will be held from 10 January to 27 September.

The 12 participating teams are ISPE F.C., Shan United F.C., Zwekapin F.C., Yadanarbon F.C., Ayeyawady United F.C., Magwe F.C., Hantharwady United F.C., Rakhine United F.C., Yangon United F.C., Chin United F.C., Southern Myanmar F.C., and Sagaing United F.C.

The home grounds of the teams are Taunggyi Stadium for Shan United F.C., YUSC for Yangon United F.C., Kyauktaine Stadium for Ayeyawady United F.C., Yadanarbon F.C. for Bahtoo Stadium in Mandalay, Grand Royal Stadium for Hantharwady United, Monywa Stadium for Sagaing United, Vesali ground for Rakhine United, Mawlamyine ground for Southern Myanmar, and Mandalar Thiri Stadium for ISPE F.C.

The remaining three teams – Zwekapin United, Magwe, and Chin United —will use the Thuwunna Stadium as their home ground.

In Week-1, ISPE F.C. and Shan United F.C. will face each other at 3:30 pm on 10 January at the Mandalar Thiri Stadium in Mandalay, Zwekapin F.C. and Yadanarbon F.C. will clash at 4 pm on 11 January at the Thuwunna Stadium, while the Ayeyawady United will be pitted against Magwe F.C. at 3:30 pm on 11 January at the Kyauktaine Stadium in Pathein.

Meanwhile, the match between Hantharwady United F.C. and Rakhine United F.C. has been scheduled for 3:30 pm on 12 January at the Grand Royal ground in Bago, Yangon United and Chin United at 3:30 pm on 12 January at the YUSC in Yangon, and Southern Myanmar and Sagaing United at 3:30 pm on 12 January at the Mawlamyine ground.

The first round of the tourney will be held from 10 January to 5 April, and the second round is scheduled from 8 May to 27 September. — Kyaw Khin

Rooney gets starting nod from Derby boss

LONDON (United Kingdom) — England's record goalscorer Wayne Rooney will make his debut for second-tier Derby against Barnsley on Thursday, the club's manager Phillip Cocu confirmed.

Rooney, 34, joined Derby as a player-coach from MLS side DC United but has been ineligible to play for his new side until January.

"If a player with the qualities, career and the experience of Rooney (is available) you have to be very happy and glad he is here," said Cocu after Monday's 2-1 home win over Charlton in the Championship.

"He's fit, he can start but he will need a few games. Expectation will be high when he starts playing but we have to give him a few games to build up his minutes and get in the team.

"So maybe not perfect from the start but it's important he will get in the team as soon as possible so we get a certain shape in our team." Rooney's debut can't come soon enough for Derby.

Their win on Monday moved them into 17th place in English football's second-tier.

However, they are still nine points shy of the play-off spots and 21 behind the two automatic promotion places.

On Monday, teenage midfielder Jason Knight scored his first goals in professional football to give Derby the three points, ending a run of seven games without a win.

Victory came despite the Rams playing most of the match a man down after Krystian Bielik was sent off for a crude challenge on Conor Gallagher. — AFP ■

Ayeyawady United signs Zimbabwean defender Kamhuka for one season

THE Ayeyawady United have signed their second foreign player, Zimbabwean defender Victor Kamhuka, on a one-season contract, according to a statement released yesterday by the football club.

The 29-year old Zimbabwean defender and centre-back player debuted on his national team in 2006.

He also played for South African clubs from 2010 to 2016, India's Pathachakra F.C. in 2017, and the Nepal club Manang Marshyangdi F.C. in 2018.

Then, he moved to Indian first division club Bhawanipore F.C., the team he played with before he signed with the Ayeyawady United.

The Zimbabwean player has signed a contract with the club for the 2020 season. — Kyaw Khin

Zimbabwean defender Victor Kamhuka. **PHOTO: MNL**

Wales' Webb delighted to return home to Ospreys nest

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Wales scrum-half Rhys Webb expressed his "relief" after rejoining Welsh club Ospreys on a two-year contract from next season following his departure from Top 14 outfit Toulon.

The 31-year-old -- who had signed a two-year deal in 2018 with Toulon which had an option of an extra season -- had suffered numerous injuries and increasing competition from France half-back Baptiste Serin.

However, it was largely the fact his family failed to settle in France and returned to Wales that persuaded him to call it a day and return to the team with whom he had spent a decade prior to his move abroad.

"It was difficult to be away from my family and young children," Webb told the Ospreys website.

"I have loved my time in Toulon but it's a relief to come home to the Ospreys, it's where my family are, where I was brought up, and where rugby all started for me.

"To return to play for my home region again is just really special for me and I am so grateful for the opportunity to be able to do that again."

Webb made his Ospreys debut in March 2008 and played 154 times for the south Wales outfit. His 39 tries puts him fourth on the Ospreys all-time try-scorer list.

The move will also permit Webb to try and reignite his Test career which had seen him win 31 Welsh caps — and two British & Irish Lions appearances in the drawn series with New Zealand in 2017.— AFP ■