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President delivers congratulatory speech at 4th anniversary of Second Hluttaw



President U Win Myint delivers the speech at the ceremony to mark the 4th anniversary of Second Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO:MNA**

PRESIDENT U Win Myint made a congratulatory speech at the ceremony to mark the 4th anniversary of Second Hluttaw, held at the dining hall of Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The event was also attended by Vice Presidents U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo, Constitutional Tribunal Chairman U Myo Nyunt, Union Election Commission U Hla Thein, former Speaker of First Amyotha Hluttaw U Khin Aung Myint, Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung, Union Ministers, Union Attorney-General, Union Auditor General, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, Central Bank

of Myanmar Governor, Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman, Deputy Ministers, Chairpersons of Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw affairs committees, Hluttaw representatives, departmental heads, and invited guests.

In his congratulatory speech, President U Win Myint extended greetings to all the attendees at the event, and explained rules and restrictions in Hluttaw laws and bylaws in raising questions and tabling motions, and duties, responsibilities and rights of Hluttaw representatives. The President also advised Hluttaw representatives to perform their duties well for the country and people and exercise their rights as the role of legislative pillar is very important and delicate.

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State Counsellor opens Football for Schools Programme in Yangon



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi signs the signature on the football to mark the Football for Schools Programme at the Thuwunna Artificial Turf Grounds in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

A FOOTBALL for Schools Programme, jointly organized by the ministries of education, and health and sports, was inaugurated by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at the Thuwunna Artificial Turf Grounds in Yangon.

Union ministers, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker, members of the Yangon Region cabinet, and representatives of the FIFA, AFC, AFF and Myanmar Football Federation, teachers and students attended the opening ceremony.

First, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi unveiled the Football for Schools Programme. The Union ministers, the Yangon Region Chief Minister, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker, members of the Yangon Region Cabinet and representatives of the football federations kicked off footballs

to open the ceremony. Afterwards, the State Counsellor posed for the documentary photo together with the schoolchildren and disabled athletes.

Following the ceremony, the State Counsellor and officials viewed record of football activities displayed at the regional and state booths. Next, they signed their signatures on the footballs to mark the Football for Schools Programme.

Afterwards, the State Counsellor and party enjoyed the performance of Life & Dance Group and watched the Football for Nation video clip. Afterwards, President of the Myanmar Football Federation U Zaw Zaw detailed about the Football for Schools Programme, and Mr Youri Ram Djaorkaëff, CEO of the FIFA Foundation made a key note remark.

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Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves securing Polish loan for rubbish recycling project in Yangon

THE Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw held its 4th day meeting of 15th regular session yesterday, approving to get Euro 50 million ODA loan from the Government of Poland for rubbish recycling project in Yangon municipal area.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat announced the record of Hluttaw on reforming residential quarters and townships in Yangon Region. The motion was sent by the President's Office.

Regarding the ODA loan plan, Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry U Maung Maung Win said arrangements for selling byproducts from the rubbish recycling project.

The Deputy Minister said about 30 tons of CNG from the project will be sold for vehicles each day through a dispenser unit and to brick factories and food production factories, 40 tons of liquefied carbon dioxide to soft drink factories and to cold storage and freezing warehouses for fish/meat and vegetable, 180 tons of refuse derived fuel to cement factories and boiler factories.

He also explained financial matters of the loan such as interest rate and currency exchange value.

While the proposed project could process only 1,000 tons of rubbish, the remaining waste products could be generated

electricity with European technology and recycled with the assistance of the Republic of Korea.

The Deputy Minister also discussed the requirements of regular reports on implementing the project during the term of 67-year loan, the average term of machine parts for 30 years, the expected income and paying interest, maintenance works, repairing machine parts and routine inspections.

The Deputy Minister also requested approval of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw for getting the Euro 50 million loan.

The Hluttaw then approved the motion through the votes of 534 favours, 12 against and 8 abstentions.

The Hluttaw representatives also discussed the first section of Joint Public Accounts Committee (16/2019) Report on the document of Union Auditor General Office for the period from April and September 2018.

MP Daw Cho Cho from Ottwin constituency urged the government ministries and organizations to implement the report with serious actions and to update the developments to the Hluttaw.

MP U Khin Cho from Hlingbwe constituency called for effective and proper use of budgets to avoid misuse and waste, and requirements for capacity building of staff members at various levels of auditor general



The 4th day meeting of Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw being convened in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.
PHOTO: MNA



Deputy Minister U Maung Maung Win. **PHOTO: MNA**



MP Daw Cho Cho **PHOTO: MNA**



MP U Khin Cho **PHOTO: MNA**

offices.

The report was also discussed by MP U Okka Min from Thanintharyi Region constituen-

cy 8, MP U Tin Tun Naing from Seikkyi/Khanaungto constituency and U Aung Kyaw Kyaw Oo from Hline constituency.

The fifth-day of Hluttaw session will be held on 4 February.—Aung Ye Thwin , Aye Aye Thant
(Translated by Aung Khin)



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than receives Vietnamese Ambassador

AMYOTHA Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than received Ambassador of Viet Nam Mr Ly Quoc Tuan at the Amyotha Hluttaw guest hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they

Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than holds talk with Vietnamese Ambassador Mr Ly Quoc Tuan. **PHOTO: MNA**

cordially discussed promoting friendship relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Viet Nam and strengthening of inter-parliamentary communications.

Also present at the meeting were Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Tha Aung and officials from Amyotha Hluttaw office.—MNA

(Translated by TTN)

President delivers congratulatory speech at 4th anniversary of Second Hluttaw



Photo shows the attendees at the 4th anniversary of Second Hluttaw in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat. **PHOTO: MNA**



Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than. **PHOTO: MNA**

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He added to take proper consideration for both the essence laws and their definitions, to learn respective background histories in drafting laws which should include state policies.

President U Win Myint continued saying proper use of terms and terminologies of legislative pillars in legal debates of parliamentary meetings through constructive approaches, following decisions of majority in the parliament in accordance with democratic practices.

The President concluded his speech, saying fundamental importance of personal reforms for national development.

Then, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat and Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than made speeches. The President, Vice Presidents, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker, and Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker enjoyed lunch together with those present at the event.—MNA
(Translated by Aung Khin)

Coronavirus: Central committee holds first meeting

THE central committee on prevention, control, and treatment of the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) held its first coordination meeting yesterday at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

The committee was formed by the Office of the President on 30 January to quickly respond to infections in Myanmar, in accordance with the guidelines, besides looking into surveillance, preparations, and treatment.

Speaking at the meeting, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin said the coronavirus infection, which started in Wuhan, China, was declared a global emergency after the reported death toll reached 213 in China yesterday.

Globally, about 9,800 people have been infected with the vi-

rus, and the World Health Organization yesterday declared it a global health emergency.

The State Counsellor directed the formation of the central committee which will work towards preventing any infections and deal with the repercussions of any infection.

The central committee has been tasked with 12 responsibilities. The Union Minister said the purpose of the coordination meeting was to discuss future works and plans so as to overcome current challenges and repercussions of the infection in the long run.

Afterwards, representatives of ministries attending the meeting exchanged views on the surveillance situation at the Myanmar-China border gates and international airports,



Union Minister U Kyaw Tin addresses the coordination meeting on prevention, control, and treatment of the 2019 novel coronavirus. **PHOTO: MNA**

raising awareness about the disease among the people, real-time measures for preventing fake news, and plans for bringing back Myanmar citizens, including students, from Wuhan, China.

The meeting came to an end in the afternoon.—MNA *(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)*

State Counsellor opens Football for Schools Programme in Yangon

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Next, Myanmar Junior Creative troupe, which took part in the American Got Talent, performed their shadow dance.

After the performance, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivered an address. Speech Delivered by the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

May I say, Mingalabar to you. I am of the opinion that we should all work together not only to promote the football sports in our schools but also the morale of our students. Learning doesn't end with studying within the four walls of the classroom, but it aims at creating a man, everybody, almost to the perfection. Studying doesn't make a perfect man. Sports also plays an important role. As you all know, among various sports and games, football is the most popular sports in our country. Why should we give support to this sport? Because sports develop us both physically and mentally. Especially, when you play football, you need to be both physically and mentally strong. The spirit of collaboration and cooperation is very important. All the players must cooperate so that they can win victory. All must pay respect to each individual strength. You can't survive with your own talent alone. That's why we give support to this sport. I believe we can develop the morale of our youths.

As U Zaw Zaw has said in his presentation, the video clip shows how the children's morale can be developed. For example, to stop getting addicted to the computer



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visits the photo exhibition at launching of Football for Schools Programme yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

games, to give up the bad habits of smoking and drugs, the importance of sports is highlighted here. In our schools, there are a variety of sports and games, what attracts many kids is football. Maybe, it's the most favourite.

This doesn't mean this sport is meant only for boys. Girls also like it. I am very proud of our girls who can play this sport very well. I had a few minutes to talk to the coaches and experts who have come all the way to devel-

op the skills of the sports, the teams and our players. And I put a question to them: What is the strength of our football players? And what is the weakness? They replied, It's the stamina that's their weakness. Of course, we already know that. I often talk about this point with U Zaw Zaw because our young people have not been brought up with sufficient nutrients, and as they grow up, at the age of twelve, whatever diet they are fed with, they are

different players lacking stamina, if compared with those who have had an opportunity to eat nutrient food. There's the weakness of our children.

Well, then what is the next weakness? A coach says we need many coaches. I think we can fulfil this need. But how can the coach give training to the young players who lacked enough nutrients when they were young? The coach, now engaged in giving trainings, told me that the strong point of our young player is the morale. So our young players may be weak in one aspect while we need to fulfil more on the other side. We also held discussions over the aspect of morale.

What made me recall was a journalist's interview with a marathon runner, a gold medalist in the Olympic Games: You know you are given credit for what? While others were losing stamina before reaching the finishing line, you made use of every ounce of energy and made a race. As far as I understand, normally, when a runner is getting close to the finishing, the lungs are getting painful intolerably. So how did you train yourself to overcome that pain?" The gold medalist replied, How would I overcome the pain? No way. Train yourself so that you get used to that pain."

That's the right attitude we

all should adopt. That's the way we should train our young players. Because it's too late for them to be fed with nutrients for some better effects, we may feed them with nutrients, and at the same time, we must nurture them. To nurture their morale is very important.

I'd like all parents and coaches and authorities concerned to make contributions for that. Some parents do not realize the values of sports and games. Some think going to school is just for study, not to play. We need to change this kind of attitude. Schooling is making a perfect citizen. That's what we mean by 'education'. To make a perfect citizen, what can we do so as to develop all round development for serving the world? There's sports that is a sort of tool that can nurture our valuable children.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all those involved to make a success to the Football for Schools Programme. I am grateful to FIFA, Asian Football Confederation and ASEAN Football Federation. I also thank the President of Myanmar Football Federation U Zaw Zaw for making this programme a success. You all have come together and worked together to hold this programme.

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with school children at the opening ceremony of Football for Schools Programme in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor opens Football for Schools Programme in Yangon



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi poses for the group photo with dignitaries at the opening ceremony of the Football for Schools Programme in Yangon yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

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Especially, I would like to say thanks to our esteemed special guests from FIFA because you gave me promise when we met in Bangkok that you would come to Myanmar and that Myanmar must be the first country where the Football for Schools Programme is first launched. One month late, but I do forgive you. Any way I am grateful to you because what I value most is keeping promise. Keeping a promise is building trust between two persons, the trust between the one who makes a promise and the other who accepts that promise. Whatever we do, whatever business we do, if we want to succeed, trust among the partners is very important. So I said I am grateful to you.

Secondly, you came and did your best to make it a success. That's why I think the Football for Schools Programme will be a success. One coach told me, one problem is the time constraint.

No sufficient time for the training for the school children. Well, our school children also have to learn according to the school curriculum and complete the course. We have to give time for them in other matters such as morale and morality. I replied, we will negotiate with the Ministry of Education to make it a success because it is a must. If it is not applicable to all schools, it should be tried out in some schools, and we shall see to what extent we did it.

Playing football is something more important than what I've just said in the case of our country. Our country is the Union composed of various national races speaking various languages. Accordingly, there must be mutual understanding among us, and the spirit of discrimination must find no room here. Playing football can nurture such spirit of unity through cooperation and collaboration. A good footballer is viewed by people as a good athlete, with no

tinge of discrimination over what nationality he or she is or what language he or she speaks or what religion he or she professes. Besides, every athlete has his or her own strength, as well as weakness. This he or she has already found out when young. Then he or she will pay respect to other people. There will be no room for the egoistic attitude like "I am the only one who is the best." A player may play best as an striker, but he can't be a good goal keeper. Then he will accept his weakness. So this kind of spirit that develops the morale is very important for the Union that is composed of various nationalities.

This kind of sport will promote not only the morale of the players, but as U Zaw Zaw said, also the spirit of the spectators. We must accept whether it is a victory or a defeat. I always stress that we should adopt the attitude of composing ourselves as the winners while we should accept our defeat with grace.

As long as we can't bear this, either winning or losing the match, there can't be progress in our life. It's no good to pick up a fight if we lose, or show our haughty fists when we win the match. That's not the good sporting spirit. So not only the players but also the audience must value this sporting spirit and get themselves accustomed to that.

In our country we shall hold many football matches, and we shall see how our people have proved their sporting spirit. I believe our people will be our source of strength. So our government will do our best to give support to the success of the Football for Schools Programme, and I'd request you all to make your contributions, too. I'd request not only the players but also teachers and parents, as well as our people, to make your contributions to this programme.

Following her address, Mr Youri Ram Djaorkaeff, Mr Colin

Raymond Gibson of Asian Football Confederation, Maj-Gen Khiev Sameth of the Asean Football Federation exchanged their commemorative gifts.

Afterwards, President of MFF U Zaw Zaw donated 10,000 footballs to schools through State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi.

Present at the ceremony were by Union Minister for the Office of the Union Government U Min Thu, Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe, Chief Minister for Yangon Region U Phyo Min Thein, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker U Tin Maung Tun, members of the Yangon Region Cabinet, MPs, representatives of the FIFA, Asian Football Confederation, ASEAN Football Federation and Myanmar Football Federation, teachers and schoolchildren.—MNA

(Translated by Dr Zaw Tun)

Union Minister U Ohn Win receives WWF Director

UNION Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win received a delegation led by Dr Christy Williams, Director of World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), at his ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to selecting site for establishing a wildlife conservation school in North Zarmari Wildlife Sanctuary in Bago Region, design and curriculum preparation and choosing lecturers, plans for constructing the school, and achieve-

ments in reducing illegal poaching of wild elephants and ongoing tasks.

They also exchanged views on opportunities for presentation of framework for environmental conservation, and policy, strategy and plans for climate change, technical assistances on construction of roads for long-term durability, cooperative programmes for eliminating illegal wildlife trade, and signing a five-year MoU extension. —MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)



Union Minister U Ohn Win holds talk with the delegation led by Director of World Wide Fund for Nature, Dr Christy Williams in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Union Minister attends central-level meeting on coronavirus

A central-level daily coordination meeting on surveillance and control of coronavirus was held yesterday at the Ministry of Health and Sports in Nay Pyi Taw.

Speaking at the meeting, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe said the current measures taken by Myanmar authorities are in line with the suggestions made by the World Health Organization for preventing human-to-human infections after the WHO declared the new coronavirus outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

He stressed the need to accelerate current efforts on prevention and control as coronavirus infections are rising in China.

As the number of travelers from countries affected by the coronavirus, including China, declines, the chances of an out-

break in Myanmar will reduce, said the Union Minister.

He called for making greater efforts towards active surveillance and contact-tracing in Myanmar. He also stressed the need to heighten the reporting and messaging system in regions and states so that the Ministry of Health and Sports can quickly respond to infections.

He said it was also important to communicate systematically, in cooperation with the Myanmar Medical Association and Generalists Association, in surveillance and prevention works. Then, the minister gave instructions on obtaining surgical masks, N95 masks, protective equipment, and primer probe and PCR kits through the local office of the WHO.

The attendees of the meeting discussed measures taken for



Central-level daily coordination meeting on surveillance and control of coronavirus being held in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

bringing Myanmar students back from Wuhan, China, exchanging information through video con-

ferencing and teleconferencing and preparation for exchange of information and sharing med-

icines and medical equipment.—MNA (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)



SWRR Union Minister receives Canadian Ambassador

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye received a delegation led by Ambassador of Canada Mr Francois Lafreniere at his ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they

discussed matters related to social protection and social services, implementation of natural disaster management and rehabilitation processes, cooperative efforts of international organizations including state/region governments and red cross society to effectively provide humanitarian assistances in the conflict regions including Rakhine State, implementation of the advices on Rakhine State, and the conditions of closure of IDP camps and systematic resettlement of returnees in ac-

cordance with the national-level strategy after it had been confirmed.

They also discussed women's development and protecting of women from violence, implementation of children's rights, and the condition of cooperation from the Canadian development agencies on drawing up the laws, by-laws, policies and strategies related to human rights of disabled persons and older persons.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye shakes hand with Ambassador of Canada Mr Francois Lafreniere in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

MNHRC inspects prisons, labour camps, detention rooms in Mandalay

A delegation of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) led by its members U Tin Aung, U Kyaw Myint and U Kyaw Soe inspected the Mandalay Central Prison, the Meiktila Prison and the labour camps of 24th Mile, Htone Bo (female), Htone Bo (male 1 and 2) and Phaya Ngasu under the Correctional Department of Mandalay Region from 28 to 31 January.

During the inspection tour, they also inspected the detention rooms of Meiktila District/Township courts, rooms for detainees on medical care in custody at 200-bed Hospital, Meikhtila, and detention rooms of Meikhtila police stations.

The group inspected the prisons and detention facilities in accordance with the prescribed rules of the commission. They also met with the individual inmates, and asked them if their rights were violated or not and their fundamental human rights are acquired.

The members of MNHRC recorded the investigations. Their suggestions about the investigations will be reported to the related departments in order to take necessary actions, according to Myanmar National Human Rights Commission. —MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)



Myanmar National Human Rights Commission members inspect the prisons in Mandalay Region yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Local gold prices remain high on strong global cues; cross K1.22 mln

WITH gold prices on the rise in the global market, the price of the yellow metal in the domestic market has climbed again to cross K1.22 million per tical (0.578 ounces, or 0.016 kilograms), according to gold traders.

On the afternoon of 31 January, pure gold fetched K1,222,500 per tical in the domestic market, while the price of gold was pegged at US\$1,572 per ounce in the global market. On 30 January, the domestic gold price rose to K1,227,900 per tical, tracking an increase in global gold price to \$1,578, as per market data.

“Gold price is likely to see an upward trend. At present, gold is enjoying a steady demand in the local market,” said a market observer. The domestic gold price is positively related to the global gold price, which is currently experiencing some volatility. Global gold prices were pegged

at over \$1,477 per ounce on 21 December and two weeks later, they climbed to \$1,569 per ounce, and have remained high since.

Despite a strong global gold market, the US dollar is weakening against the local currency. The US dollar exchange rate stood at K1,505 on 21 December, and it has extended its drop to touch K1,463-1,467, according to the gold market.

With global gold prices on the uptick, the domestic price hit fresh highs in 2019, reaching K1,000,000 per tical between 17 January and 21 February, crossing K1,100,000 (22 June to 7 August), climbing to 1,200,000 (7 August-4 September), and then reaching a fresh peak of K1,300,000 on 5 September.

According to gold traders, the lowest recorded price for gold in June was K1,223,800 (14 September) and the highest was



A customer buying gold necklaces at a gold shop in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

K1,307,000 (5 September). In October, the gold price touched the lowest level of K1,211,500 on 1 October and the highest level of K1,229,000 on 10 October. In

November, the price moved in the range of 1,219,400 (2 November) and K1,173,000 (28 November), and the price reached the lowest level of K1,170,800 (3

December) and the highest level of K1,197,800 (28 December) in December, according to gold traders.—GNLM
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Fishery exports cross \$320 mln



Workers work at a fish factory in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

EXPORT earnings from the fisheries sector during the period between 1 October and 24 January in the 2019-2020 financial year reached US\$326.15 million, an increase of \$46.9 million from the year-ago period, according to statistics released by the Commerce Ministry.

Myanmar exports fisheries products, such as fish, prawns, and crabs, to markets in 40 countries, including China, Saudi Arabia, the US, Japan, Singapore, Thailand, and countries in the European Union. However, Myanmar’s fisheries export volume is much lower compared to neighboring countries.

The Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF) is making concerted efforts to increase fishery

export earnings by developing fish farming lakes which meet international standards and adopting advanced fishing techniques.

The MFF plans to establish fish lakes, aqua feedstuff processing factories, cold storages, and packaging factories, in cooperation with foreign experts. There are over 247,000 acres of fish farms and 240,000 prawn breeding farms across the country.

Myanmar exported 340,000 tons of fishery products worth \$530 million in the 2013-2014FY, 330,000 tons worth \$480 million in the 2014-2015FY, 360,000 tons worth \$500 million in the 2015-2016FY, 430,000 tons worth \$600 million in the 2016-2017FY, 560,000 tons worth \$700 million in the 2017-2018FY, and over 580,000

tons in the 2018-2019FY, according to the Commerce Ministry.

An MFF official said the federation has asked the government to tackle problems faced in the export of farm-raised fish and prawns through G2G pacts and ensure smooth freight movement between countries to bolster exports. According to the MFF, integrated poultry and fish farming cannot ensure food safety, which is a requirement for export. Therefore, the federation has asked for the formulation of a law to restrict that kind of mixed farming. Fish farming must be conducted as a large-scale project to gain access to Project Bank loans, according to the federation.—GNLM
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Over 2,000 tons of linseeds exported to Ruili in Oct-Dec

A total of 2,134 tons of Myanmar linseeds (*Hygrophila phlo-moides*), worth an estimated US\$2.805 million, were shipped from Muse gate to Shweli (Ruili), a major border crossing between China and Myanmar, in the first three months of the current fiscal, according to data released online by the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar linseeds exports were pegged at 4,226 tons, worth \$6.209 million, in the 2017-2018FY, 3,901 tons, worth \$5.722 million, in the 2018 mini-budget period, and 10,163 tons, worth \$13.293 million, in the 2018-2019FY, according to data released by the ministry.

Besides China, the seeds are also demanded by India as they can be used to make traditional medicines and cosmetics.

Earlier, the plants were found growing in natural habitats. Now, farmers have begun growing them as they have become a lucrative herb.

Farmers sow linseeds in March and April. They can be harvested after four months.

The seeds are produced through sun-drying, smoking, or grain drying.

At present, merchants are quoting K2,500-3,000 per viss (1.6 kg) for linseeds. The prices of the seeds range from K1.8 million to K2.1 million per ton in Shweli, depending on the quality. A steady demand for Myanmar linseeds helps maintain the price. There is no price manipulation in the market, said market observers.

Exporters do not need to obtain an export-import license for shipping Myanmar linseeds. A two per cent tax is levied per ton, which comes to about \$1,352. The Trade Department of Myanmar has been making efforts to reduce trade barriers in China.

In Myanmar, the seeds are used in traditional medicine, and they are widely used in cosmetics in China.

The natural habitats of Myanmar linseeds are Mandalay, Magway, Sagaing, Bago, and Ayeyawady region. —GNLM
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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Don't panic, but be prepared

WITH the first person-to-person transmission of the new coronavirus reported in the US, the World Health Organization on Thursday declared the virus outbreak a global health emergency.

The WHO has deemed the outbreak a public-health emergency of international concern, which points to an increase in the number of coronavirus cases. This indicates that global public-health authorities now consider the respiratory virus a significant threat beyond China, where it originated last month. The move could further heighten the global response to the outbreak.

Since the WHO declaration, China, other governments, and multinational businesses have taken emergency measures to limit the virus's spread, including halting some travel to China.

At least 18 other countries or territories have also reported a small number of coronavirus cases. According to the WHO, Finland, India, and the Philippines have reported cases of people who traveled to Wuhan contracting the virus.

The health authorities are obliged to provide accurate and relevant information to the public in a timely manner, but clearly need to avoid creating panic, which can exacerbate a developing situation or create a problem outright where there isn't one.

The authorities need to make sure that true and official information reaches the people in real time to curb the spread of fake news and misinformation.

Officials must ensure there are signages in appropriate places and that public places, schools and government offices are briefed and on the alert.

The health authorities are obliged to provide accurate and relevant information to the public in a timely manner, but clearly need to avoid creating panic, which can exacerbate a developing situation or create a problem outright where there isn't one.

For individuals, the measures are the same as those recommended during flu season: washing hands frequently, coughing into one's elbow, and staying home if one is sick.

Airport screenings, quarantines, and reduced travel into and out of China seem like prudent courses of action. All are measures currently in place. There's no need to succumb to hysteria, but this is a situation that bears close monitoring.

■ ■ ■

WHO declares global virus emergency as death toll hits 213

THE UN health agency on Thursday declared an international emergency over the deadly novel coronavirus from China - a rarely used designation that could lead to improved international co-ordination in tackling the disease.

World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said Thursday that the novel coronavirus outbreak has become a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC).

"Our greatest concern is the potential for the virus to spread to countries with weaker health systems," World Health Organization (WHO) chief Tedros said as he declared a "public health emergency of international concern".

"This is not a vote of no confidence in China," he said, emphasising repeatedly that the measure was intended to help other countries less able to cope and praising the Chinese government for taking swift action to tackle the outbreak.

"We must all act together now to limit further spread.... We can only stop it together," said Tedros, who travelled to China this week and met with President Xi Jinping.

The authorities need to make sure that true and official information reaches the people in real time to curb the spread of fake news and misinformation.

Officials must ensure there are signages in appropriate places and that public places, schools and government offices are briefed and on the alert.

The health authorities are obliged to provide accurate and relevant information to the public in a timely manner, but clearly need to avoid creating panic, which can exacerbate a developing situation or create a problem outright where there isn't one.

For individuals, the measures are the same as those recommended during flu season: washing hands frequently, coughing into one's elbow, and staying home if one is sick.

Airport screenings, quarantines, and reduced travel into and out of China seem like prudent courses of action. All are measures currently in place. There's no need to succumb to hysteria, but this is a situation that bears close monitoring.

The authorities need to make sure that true and official information reaches the people in real time to curb the spread of fake news and misinformation.

Officials must ensure there are signages in appropriate places and that public places, schools and government offices are briefed and on the alert.

Tedros noted that Chinese President Xi Jinping personally commands and deploys the prevention and containment efforts.

"The speed with which China detected the outbreak, isolated the virus, sequenced the genome and shared it with WHO and the world are very impressive, and beyond words. So is China's commitment to transparency and to supporting other countries," he said.

"In many ways, China is actually setting a new standard for outbreak response," he added.

That reflects not only China's high sense of responsibility for the lives and health of its own people, but also its strong support for global disease prevention and control, he said.

Tedros said he believes that China will effectively contain and eventually defeat the epidemic, adding that China's efforts to combat the disease deserve respect and appreciation, and are worth learning.

In fact, many of the prevention and containment measures China has taken far exceed relevant requirements for dealing with emergencies, and the measures China has taken are good not only for that country but also for the rest of the world.

"Further, restrictions may in-

terrupt needed aid and technical support, may disrupt businesses, and may have negative effects on the economies of countries affected by the emergencies," the committee said.

But it added that "in certain specific circumstances, measures that restrict the movement of people may prove temporarily useful" - a possible reference to lockdowns within China that have affected millions of people.

WHO stopped short of declaring an emergency last week because its emergency committee was divided over the issue.

More than 8,200 people have been infected with the virus - almost all of them in China - and 171 have died.

The WHO said there have also been 82 confirmed cases in 18 other countries, including cases of onward transmission in Germany, Japan, the United States and Vietnam.

The WHO has called a public health emergency of international concern only five times since the relevant legislation took effect in 2007 - for swine flu, polio, Zika and twice for Ebola outbreaks in Africa.

The designation, which is reviewed every three months, allows the WHO to issue global recommendations that the international community is expected to follow.

Governments, companies and people around the world have already been escalating efforts to contain the illness, which is believed to have emerged from an animal market in the central Chinese city of Wuhan.

Many countries have urged their citizens not to visit China, while some have banned entry for travellers from Wuhan and Russia said it was closing its far eastern border with China over the outbreak.

Now the situation is still developing and more research is needed, and particularly countries with fragile health systems should enhance their responses, said the WHO chief.

That is the main reason behind the PHEIC declaration, he said, adding that considering global health security, it is also a necessary step to achieve a scientific, rational and calm response based on evidence, and to help other countries take scientific, reasonable and appropriate measures to prevent the epidemic.

Tedros also said there was "no reason" for any of the international travel or trade restrictions announced in recent days, such as flight suspensions, border closures and quarantine for apparently healthy travellers.

Top airlines including Air France, British Airways and Lufthansa have suspended or cut back services to China.

The WHO's Emergency Committee, an advisory body of international experts, said in a statement that evidence had shown that restricting movement of people and goods during public health emergencies "may be ineffective and may divert resources from other interventions".

"Further, restrictions may in-

terrupt needed aid and technical support, may disrupt businesses, and may have negative effects on the economies of countries affected by the emergencies," the committee said.

But it added that "in certain specific circumstances, measures that restrict the movement of people may prove temporarily useful" - a possible reference to lockdowns within China that have affected millions of people.

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World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus speaks during a press conference following a WHO Emergency committee to discuss whether the Wuhan virus outbreak that began in China constitutes an international health emergency, on January 30, 2020 in Geneva. **PHOTO: AFP**

the clinical spectrum of the disease and its severity, the extent of human-to-human transmission in the community and in health-care facilities, and efforts to control the outbreak. This mission will provide information to the international community to aid in understanding the situation and its impact and enable sharing of experience and successful measures.

The Committee wished to re-emphasize the importance of studying the possible source, to rule out hidden transmission and to inform risk management measures.

The Committee also emphasized the need for enhanced surveillance in regions outside Hubei, including pathogen genomic sequencing, to understand whether local cycles of transmission are occurring.

WHO should continue to use its networks of technical experts to assess how best this outbreak can be contained globally.

WHO should provide intensified support for preparation and response, especially in vulnerable countries and regions.

Measures to ensure rapid development and access to potential vaccines, diagnostics, antiviral medicines and other therapeutics for low- and middle-income countries should be developed.

WHO should continue to provide all necessary technical and operational support to respond to this outbreak, including with its extensive networks of partners

REFERENCES:
AFP, Xinhua, WHO, UN news updates

■ ■ ■

2020, 73rd Anniversary Union Day National Objectives

1. All ethnic nationals to preserve and protect for non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of National Unity and Perpetuation of Sovereignty.
2. To work on the peace process till success is achieved based on Union spirit.
3. To strive with the collective strength of all ethnic nationals for rule of law, a fair justice system and the security and safety of all citizens.
4. To prevent/protect all people from the danger of narcotic drugs as a national duty and thereby uplift their standard of living.
5. Emergence of a Constitution which will be in alignment with a genuine Democratic Federal Union.

Myanmar Gazette Head of Service Organization confirmed

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed U Than Zaw as Director-General of the Oil and Gas Planning Department under the Ministry of Electricity and Energy on expiry of the one-year probationary period from the date he assumes charge of his duties.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 31st January, 2020)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 1st February, 2020: Light rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin and Northern Shan States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw, Magway, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions and partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-6) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of isolated rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1st February, 2020: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1st February, 2020: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1st February, 2020: Partly cloudy.

WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND: Weather will be partly cloudy in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay Region and generally fair in Yangon Region.

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish **“Letter to the Editor”** that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Coronavirus: Chinese visitor with fever quarantined in hospital

DUE to the outbreak of 2019-nCoV infection in China and infection in some countries, Myanmar health authorities are beefing up surveillance at the international airports and waterway, and border gates in regions and states.
After being informed by the pilot of a flight of China Southern Airlines which runs between Yangon and Guangzhou that a passenger with flu-like symptoms was taking the plane which landed Yangon

around 11 am, Myanmar health authorities checked the flight.
A 56-year old Chinese national with a fever was found on the plane. The man who came from Guangzhou said he didn’t travel around Wuhan where the outbreak of 2019-nCoV originated.
The Chinese visitor was taken to the Wabagi Infectious Disease Hospital in Yangon for further observation, and has been placed in an isolation room. Though he didn’t have

the symptoms of the novel coronavirus announced by the World Health Organization, he is suffering from a fever and sore throat. Therefore, he has been put in quarantine for treatment at the hospital in order to prevent spreading the virus in Myanmar.
A total of 79 people – 78 foreign visitors, 7 crew and two Myanmar citizens – were on board. The two Myanmar nationals who have the symptoms with fever on board were also

disembarked and isolated at the Wabagi Hospital.
The specimen from the Chinese national would be sent to a laboratory for coronavirus testing through the National Liborary (Yangon) in cooperation with WHO. Health authorities said the passengers and crews on the plane need to be quarantined for two weeks. However, they turned back to China of their own volition.
— MAN
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

MV Boudicca cruise ship visits Myanmar

THE MV Boudicca cruise ship of Fred Olsen Cruise Lines based in Britain arrived at Wilmar Myanmar Port Terminal in Thilawa Port in Yangon from Phuket, Thailand yesterday. Officials welcomed the guests who have just arrived and artistes gave a traditional dance performances.
The voyage is organized by Myanmar Voyages International Tourism Co Ltd with the supervision of Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and assisted by Ministry of Transport and

Communications.
The ship carried 530 passengers and 363 crew members. The Medical team of Myanma Port Authority made coronavirus screening measures at the port.
The visitors went sight-seeing in Dala, Thanlyin and Kyauktan of Yangon, Bago and Bagan. The cruise ship will depart for Colombo Port of Sri Lanka at 6 pm on 1 February 2020.—MNA
(Translated by TTN)



The MV Boudicca cruise ship of Fred Olsen Cruise Line based in Britain arrives at Thilawa Port in Yangon yesterday. PHOTO: MNA



Journalists collecting news in Maungtaw yesterday. PHOTO:MNA

Local, foreign media gathers news in Maungtaw

A group of local and foreign journalists visited Nyaung Chaung Village and Pa Din Village in Maungtaw Township, and interviewed the villagers of the two villages yesterday.
In the afternoon, they arrived back in Sittway from Maungtaw, and flew back to

Yangon in the evening.
The media group includes journalists from Frontier Myanmar, Black Night Media, AL Jazeera English, BBC, RFA, MRTV and MITV. That was 35th batch of media personnel visiting Maungtaw since 2016. —MNA
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

MIC to launch online portal for investors with help of GIZ

By Nyein Nyein

WITH the assistance of the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) will roll out an online platform where investors can apply for MIC permits and endorsements, said U Thant Sin Lwin, Director-General of

the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).
The MIC and GIZ are jointly developing the online investment application system to facilitate the investment process, he said.
“Investors would be able to upload their application form, collect data, and make enquir-

ies through the digital platform, under the Myanmar Investment Law. Investors would not need to come to office.
We will provide all necessary information online with the help of GIZ,” said U Thant Sin Lwin.
To implement the online investment application system, GIZ will spend from the fund

allocated to Myanmar.
At present, it is mandatory for companies to register on the online registry system MyCO, under the Myanmar Companies Law, which was enacted in 2017. Although companies can file applications manually, all of them are opting to file them online, said officials.
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin receives EU Ambassador to ASEAN

U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for International Cooperation of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar received Mr. Igor Driesmans, Ambassador of the European Union to ASEAN in Jakarta on 31 January 2020 at 9:30 a.m. at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they cordially exchanged views on matters relating to expanding areas of cooperation between

ASEAN and the European Union, enhancing ASEAN-EU Dialogue relations to a Strategic level, providing possible assistance by the European Union to the works of ASEAN in creating a conducive environment in Rakhine State for facilitating repatriation process and strengthening bilateral relations between Myanmar and the European Union. —MNA



Union Minister U Kyaw Tin holds talk with Ambassador of the European Union to ASEAN in Jarkarta, Mr Igor Driesmans in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Ministry of State Counsellor Office holds press conference

THE Ministry of State Counsellor Office held a press conference at the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Director-General U Zaw Htay explained the ongoing situations in the country and answered the questions of media personnel during the press.

He talked about the meeting between State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in her capacity as the Chairperson of National Reconciliation and Peace Centre, and the leaders of New Mon State Party who reported the organizational reform of their party.

He also explained automobile import permits for civil service staff who near retirement, however, the Ministry of Commerce has been instructed to delay the plan for reviewing of senior government officials.

The Director-General also elaborated the final report of Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) was sent to the President on 20 January, and the President has sent the full version

of the report to the Union Attorney General and the Commander in Chief of Defence Services. The President Office has issued announcements on this issue on 21 January, and made instructions to the Office of Commander in Chief of Defence Services and the Office of Union Attorney General on 21 January.

The President's Office has released a brief report, and the Office of Judge Advocate-General also announced it will conduct an investigation. The Office of Union Attorney-General made announcement to do investigation and legal actions. A team was formed on 24 January for investigations and legal actions based on the ICOE report.

The duties of this team is to take legal actions against members of ARSA who caused conflicts in Rakhine State and its culprits, to file lawsuits against members of police force who committed crimes in their duties, to investigate crimes of civilians in Rakhine conflicts, to find ways

for legal solutions, including filing lawsuits of communities in northern Rakhine state for the locals, to arrange for the process of justice that meets the transition period of Myanmar and to implement additional tasks assigned by the President. The President's Office released the developments on ICOE on 25 January.

Regarding coronavirus, China approved outbreak of this virus on 7 January. The Ministry of Health and Sports of Myanmar has been conducting screening tests at the international airports in Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw and border gates. Among 19 Chinese citizens who were staying in a hotel in Botahtaung Township, Yangon, one who has visited Wuhan city was found ill. He was taken to Yangon General Hospital for treatment. He was diagnosed with normal fever. A resident of Lweje was reportedly coming from Wuhan on 11 January, and he was checked for medical services on 26 January and found well without any fever. He was

restricted in the house for two weeks. On 27 January, a woman who entered Myanmar through Ruili-Muse border crossing was examined for high body temperature. He was found suffering from ordinary fever. Another incident was that a patient who was taking medical treatment at the Pabbhathiri Hospital after returning from Kyegaung. The patient was also found suffering ordinary fever.

While a resident in Pynthar village was getting medical treatments at Meiktila Township Hospital after he returned from China on 1 January. He was placed in a special room as he was supported to be infected with coronavirus after the X-ray scan showed an injury on the lung. But he fled from the hospital by a motorcycle taxi, and he is being given medical treatment at ICU of the Meiktila hospital.

The government has formed a committee for prevention, control and treatment of pneumonia caused by the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) on 30 January.

Discussions are underway to take back 63 Myanmar students from Wuhan city. The President's Office has instructed to use a special flight for getting them back, and it has been instructed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

They will arrive back at Mandalay airport on 2 February, and they will be closely monitored at Kandawnadi Hospital in Mandalay under the management of regional government. The air plane will also be sanitized at the airport.

Media personnel raised

questions about the interim decisions of ICJ, instructions on ICOE report, measures on coronavirus, possible meeting between the government and ethnic armed organizations, peace prospect of government in 2020, arrest of the absconding, suspension of automobile imports, efforts of government to release U Huwe Tin,

U Zaw Htay answered the questions, saying the official announcement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the provisional measures of ICJ, the measures did not include rights for legal action on Myanmar, ICJ made only four decisions on the six requests of the Gambia, the broadcast of discussion led by Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe, there is no genocide case in Myanmar, possibility of decision in this case, no comment on provisional measures, hiring international lawyers, the State Counsellor has insisted there is no case of genocide in Myanmar at the court hearing of ICJ, the court just announced Article 2 and 3 signed by Myanmar, these were provisions of convention, not the demands of the Gambia.

Instructions for ICOE has been mentioned on the President's Office website, parade ceremony will be decided by the heads of State, the ethnic armed organizations have been informed to prevent transmissions of coronavirus, instructions have been made to arrest the absconding, the Ministry of Health and Sports is closing monitoring on prevention of coronavirus, the release of MP U Hwe Tin is being worked with the organizations which have influence on the AA.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Director-General U Zaw Htay answers the questions raised by journalists during the press conference. **PHOTO:MNA**

Pompeo vows US support for Ukraine ‘will not waver’

KIEV — US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Friday Washington’s support for Ukraine was unwavering during a delicate visit to the country at the heart of the US impeachment process.

After talks with Pompeo, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said he appreciated US support, but that Washington should be more involved in resolving his country’s conflict with Moscow-backed separatists.

Ukraine is walking a careful line in its relations with the United States — keen to maintain US backing in the war but wary of being further entangled in US domestic politics.



Ukraine would like more help dealing with separatists. PHOTO: AFP

Pompeo is the most senior US official to visit Ukraine since the start of the impeachment process against US President Donald Trump, who is accused of withholding military aid to push Kiev into investigating his Democratic rival Joe Biden.

Pompeo said there could be no doubts about Washington’s support for Ukraine, calling it “a bulwark between freedom and authoritarianism in eastern Europe”.

“The United States sees that the Ukrainian struggle for freedom, democracy and prosperity is a valiant one. Our commitment to support it will not waiver,” he said at a press conference with Zelensky.

Zelensky, who allegedly faced the pressure from Trump in a July 25 phone call, called on Washington to “be more actively involved in the peace process in eastern Ukraine” and to appoint a special representative on the conflict.

Washington has been an important backer of Ukraine in its conflict with the separatists in the country’s east, providing both military aid and diplomatic support.

That support is at the centre of the impeachment process, with Trump accused of withholding \$400 million in assistance to demand dirt on Biden, whose son was on the board of a Ukrainian company.—AFP ■

Top Iraq cleric urges elections ‘as soon as possible’

BAGHDAD — Iraq’s top Shiite cleric called Friday for parliamentary elections “as soon as possible” to ease the political crisis gripping the country since anti-government protests erupted four months ago.

His appeal echoed that of the demonstrators in Baghdad and across the mainly-Shiite south who have demanded a snap vote and an independent figure to replace the current caretaker premier.

In a sermon delivered by his representative in the shrine city of Karbala, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani said it was “imperative to speed up holding early elections so that the people will have

their say”. He said Iraq must “accelerate the formation of a new government” and “take the necessary steps to hold free and fair elections as soon as possible”.

Parliament has passed a new electoral law but it failed to address most of the protesters’ specific demands and President Barham Saleh has yet to sign it into effect. And while pressure from Sistani and the street forced Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi to resign in December, he has stayed on in a caretaker capacity as political parties have yet to agree on a consensus replacement. According to Iraq’s constitution, parliament’s largest bloc must nominate a prime

minister within 15 days of legislative elections. The candidate is then tasked by the president with forming a government within one month. But Iraq is in a legal grey area, as the constitution makes no provisions for the premier’s resignation and the 15-day period since Abdel Mahdi stepped down has long since expired.

This week, Saleh told the deeply divided parliament it had until Saturday to name a candidate, otherwise he would nominate someone unilaterally. As the clock ticked, political parties were in crisis talks to agree on a replacement but the absence of two key powerbrokers has complicated the meetings.—AFP ■



Iraqi protesters, who first took to the streets on October 1, have been demanding snap elections and an independent figure to replace caretaker premier Adel Abdel Mahdi. PHOTO: AFP



Israel’s Iron Dome air defence system intercepts and destroys many rockets fired from Gaza. PHOTO: AFP

Israel strikes Hamas targets after new Gaza rocket fire

JERUSALEM — Israeli aircraft struck Hamas targets in the Gaza Strip early Friday in response to new rocket fire from the blockaded territory, the army said.

Three rockets were fired at Israel overnight without causing any casualties. Two were intercepted by air defences, a statement said.

Israel swiftly retaliated against Hamas, the Islamist movement which rules Gaza and which Israel generally holds responsible for all rocket fire from the territory, regardless of who launches it.

The military struck “Hamas targets in the south of the Gaza Strip”, the army said.

Israel has deployed additional troops to the Gaza border area since US President Donald Trump unveiled a controversial new peace plan on Tuesday that

was angrily rejected by the Palestinians.

One rocket was fired from Gaza on Wednesday evening, again drawing retaliatory strikes against Hamas targets in the south of Gaza.

Hamas has over the past year gradually shaped an informal truce with Israel, under which the Jewish state has slightly eased its crippling blockade of the enclave in exchange for calm.

But Israel in November assassinated a senior leader of the Islamic Jihad militant group in Gaza, sparking a flare-up in which 36 Palestinians were killed. No Israelis died.

Over two days, Islamic Jihad fired some 450 rockets towards Israel, which unusually largely confined its reprisals to Hamas’s more radical ally.—AFP ■

Markets struggle despite WHO virus declaration

BEIJING — Markets struggled to find their footing in Asia on Friday after the World Health Organization declared a global health emergency over the deadly new virus sweeping China.

After saying last week they needed more information, the WHO invoked the

rarely used designation that experts hope will lead to better international coordination to combat a disease that has already killed 200 people, and sickened thousands more.

But the Geneva-based body stopped short of recommending trade and travel restrictions that

could have had a bruising effect on China — a key growth engine for the world economy. “This is not a vote of no confidence in China,” WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesushe said, praising Beijing for its swift action to tackle the outbreak.

China has locked down

a swathe of its centre, effectively quarantining millions of people in their cities and halting travel around the country. “We must all act together now to limit further spread... We can only stop it together,” said Tedros, who travelled to China this week and met with President Xi Jinping.—AFP ■



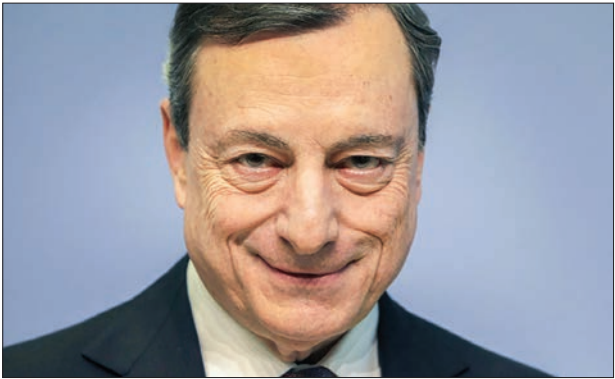
Markets rose after the WHO said there was no need for some of the stringent international travel and trade restrictions imposed in a bid to halt the spread of the deadly new virus. PHOTO: AFP

Medal for former ECB chief Draghi divides Germans

FRANKFURT AM MAIN — Months after the end of his term as president of the European Central Bank, Italian economist Mario Draghi will receive Germany’s highest honour Friday, drawing attacks from critics of his easy-money policy.

How can a man who “deprived millions of German savers of their interest payments” be awarded the Order of Merit? demanded tabloid-style daily Bild.

When Draghi lowered rates last September, Bild dubbed him “Count Draghila sucking our accounts dry”, altering a photo to



Ex-ECB chief Mario Draghi receiving the nation’s highest honour has caused waves in Germany, where the era of ultra low interest rates he ushered in was unpopular. PHOTO:AFP

show him with fangs and a cape.

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier will present the Italian economist with the badge

per cent of respondents did not agree Draghi should be honoured for “services to the international financial system” and the euro single currency.

“His monetary policy may have benefited some countries in southern Europe. But it did not benefit the eurozone and certainly not Germany,” conservative MP Axel Fischer told Bild.

Beatrix von Storch, vice-president of the far-right AfD party, called the medal for Draghi “a shame”.

But the chorus of criticism has never been unanimous.—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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Consignees of cargo carried on M.V BBC DOLPHIN VOY. NO. (1265009) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 3-2-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT-5 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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M.V OCEAN TAIGA VOY. NO. (180)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V OCEAN TAIGA VOY. NO. (180) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1-2-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of SPW-5 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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No	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Type	Registration No
1.	Tam	Thiamethoxam 250g/kg WDG	P2018 - 4270	Provisional
2.	Inka	Indoxacarb 150 g/ L SC	P 2018 - 4350	Provisional

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Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V PACITA VOY. NO. (061 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V PACITA VOY. NO. (061 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1-2-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V OLYMPIA VOY. NO. (003N/004S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V OLYMPIA VOY. NO. (003N/004S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1-2-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/MIP where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIAPTE
LTD

Phone No: 2301185



Ancient cities in Kyaukse plain

By Maung Tha (Archaeology)

KYAUKSE Township on 725.28 square miles of land is sharing border with Ywangan and PyinOoLwin townships in the east, TadaU Township in the west, Myittha Township in the south and Singaing Township in the north.

Currently, Kyaukse Township is constituted with one town, 10 wards and 223 villages of 87 village-tracts. Among 220 stupas and temples, Tamoke Shwegugyi, Shwetheindaw, Shwethatthwar, Shwemuhtaw and Shwethalyaung are famous in Kyaukse Township. On reaching Kyaukse, travellers can pay visits to three ancient cities namely Pinle, Makkhaya and Myinsaing.

Pinle or Mongmaw

Among significant Pyu city states such as Sri Kestra, Beikthanoë, Hanlin, Watee and Tagaung, Pinle city was positioned in Myittha Township of Kyaukse District.

The outermost and innermost walls of Pinle city were in circular shapes and the middle one in a rectangular shape. The diameter of the outer wall was 1.8 miles from the east to the west and 1.6 miles from the south to the north. The whole wall was 5.5 miles in length and it took

position on 222 acres of land.

It was assumed that Pinle was established in the 2nd century AD. The new history of Chinese Tang dynasty compiled by U Yi Sein mentioned nine guard towns of Sri Kestra were Hsipaw, Kanthita, Myingyan, Mweyin, Halin, Thepon, Taungdwingyi, Htigyaing and Htumin, and Htumin meant Mongmaw. Htumin, located on China-Pyu-India trade route, was the largest city among ancient cities in Kyaukse plain.

As coins, strings of black and white beads called Chin beads, elephant statues, cow statues, strings of beads, and bricks with marks were unearthed around Pinle city, it was known that a Pyu culture of the city was not later than those of Sri Kestra, Beikthanoë and Hanlin cities.

Baked earthen reliefs

Baked earthen reliefs discovered at No. 20 mound in ancient Pinle city were not similar in sizes and pictures. The first kind of coins bore a person holding a royal dagger rides a lion with floating two ends of his shawl from chest into air. The relief tablet was 13 inches long and 13 inches wide with 3.5 inches thick. A total of 18 tablets were found in good condition and 19

broken ones.

The second type of relief, 12 inches long and 12 inches wide with four inches thick, depicted head and chest of the standing lion in detail and its mane in floral works. Nine reliefs in good conditions were found together with 20 broken ones.

A total of 13 broken pieces in the third one was not found in good conditions. If the relief tablet was in good conditions, it would be 16 inches long, 14 inches wide and three inches thick. The relief portrayed a human riding an animal like tiger and he wore a turban at his head.

The fourth one was small reliefs with 7.5 inches long, 7.5 inches wide and two inches thick. Floral works were created under four legs of the animal like lion, and its neck was filled with dots. Two reliefs were excavated in good conditions together with two broken ones.

Mekkhaya

Mekkhaya, 413 miles from Yangon and 21 miles from Mandalay, an ancient city in Kyaukse region, is positioned in Singaing Township. Equipment and weapons in Stone Age and Pyu era were found in Singaing Township.

New Twinthin Myanmar

history mentioned after three Shan brothers had arrested King Kyaw Swa of Bagan (1287-1298 AD) in 1298, eldest brother Razathingyan ruled Myinsaing, younger brother Athinkhaya in Mekkhaya and youngest brother Thihathu in Pinle. Mekkhaya was established in 666 ME when King Saw Nit (1298-1325 AD) ruled Bagan in 1304 AD.

Mekkhaya in Bagan era

As King Anawrahta of Bagan established towns to recruit soldiers ranging from 10 to 100,000 in addition to 43 guard towns including Mekkhaya together with Taohn and Myittha in Singaing Township. Guard towns were assigned to check entrance and exit of people in rural and remote areas from the Royal Palace and to levy taxes over the commodities. Mekkhaya was assigned to block Myitnge valley where enemy might enter Kyaukse plain.

The history written by veteran historian Dr Than Tun mentioned salient points of Mekkhaya city. It stated Mekkhaya land with its border lines.

The outer wall of ancient Mekkhaya city was two furlongs long from the east to the west and 2.5 furlongs long from the north to the south. Since its es-

tablishment, Mekkhaya was surrounded by a 56 feet wide moat. Mingala gate was built at the eastern wall. Mekkhaya city was designated as ancient cultural zone in January 2009.

Weapons of Palaeolithic and



Baked earthen relic.

Neolithic ages were found in Mekkhaya region. Stone Age weapons were also found at pagodas in the precinct of Yazagyi in the northwest of the city and around Shinpin SeikU pagodas. Pieces of



Myinsaing Nan U Temple. **PHOTOS: MAUNG THA (ARCHAEOLOGY)**



Mural paintings in Myinsaing era.

stone weapons in Neolithic ages were found there, one furlong north of Epya Village leading to Mekkhaya city.

Research findings of researcher Taik Kyi (Singaing)

mentioned stone inscriptions of Sikhon Monastery and inscriptions on donation ceremony of the mason among 22 stone plaques were found in Singaing Township.

Works and equipment in the Stone Age and Pyu era proved Mekkhaya had been flourishing from the Stone Age to Pyu, Bagan, Pinya, Inwa and Konbaung eras.

Myinsaing in the history

Visitors can observe old walls, Thintwe Canal and some tunnels decorated with mural paintings in Myinsaing, four miles from Kyaukse of Mandalay Region.

In the history, King Narapatisithu of Bagan conferred Athinkhaya, Razathingyan and Thihathu titles on three sons of Theingabo and ordered Theingabo to govern Myinsaing Village. King Kyaw Swa ordered Athinkhaya to govern Myinsaing, Razathingyan to Mekkhaya and Thihathu to Pinle. Three brothers lured the king to Myinsaing and then dethroned him. While in Myinsaing, Bagan King Kyaw Swa built a Buddha image gazing Bagan from a hillside. Currently, the Buddha image remains just a mound but its head can be seen at the hillside.

At that time, four Chinese generals led the troops leading to Myinsaing. They arrived at Myinsaing on 25 January 1301. As three brothers showed the head of Bagan King Kyaw Swa after killing, Chinese troops dug a 7,350 feet long, 21 feet wide and 21 feet deep canal later called Thintwe Canal in the night and left there.

There remain 700-year ancient Myinsaing city, rocky caves and mural paintings as historical evidences.

According to the stone inscription carved in 691 ME, at the chamber in front of the pagoda, King Uzzana built a 103 elbows high pagoda on 3rd waxing of Tabaung, 691 era. The stone inscription mentioned the date of building the pagoda on 20 February 1330.

Rocky tunnel and mural paintings in Myinsaing

Mural paintings in Myinsaing era remain at ShweUmin tunnel and Seiktagoke Cave on ShweUmin mountain range in southern part of Myinsaing but the works are dim due to lack of maintenance.

Mural paintings were created on the convex of the central entrance in the tunnel. Mural paintings were illustrated on each plot with eight by eight inches on the walls of the tunnel.

Floral works were created between the plots of paintings. Tampawady U Win Maung wrote that these mural paintings were similar to those of late Bagan era at Nandamanya and Phayathonsu pagodas in Bagan.

As mural paintings in ShweUmin tunnel were similar

to tattoo marks, people from Myinsaing region called the tunnel as tattoo painting tunnel. A Myanmar handicraft research paper stated these mural paintings were depicted in late 13th century AD.

Pictures of 28 Buddhas were illustrated at the walls of Seiktagoke Cave, about one mile east of ShweUmin Tunnel but the works were not in multicolours and in good formation. As the walls of the cave were not smooth, the paintings were not clear.

Some experts assumed as the mural paintings depicting two monks paying homage to the Lord Buddha at the wall of second entrance to Seiktagok Cave were much different from works of 28 Buddhas, these works might be works in late eras. It was assumed that mural paintings from ShweUmin tunnel and Seiktagok Cave might be contemporary.

The mural paintings bore significant works such as corner-shaped chin of the Buddha, larger eyes on the face and relic hair. The paintings used white, red, black and yellow colours. Paintings in Seiktagok Cave did not consist of human and animals.

Based on studies of Tampawady U Win Maung, mural paintings in Myinsaing were depicted with facial structures of human pictures in style of Bagan era. Turban with three leaves of neem, background ray circle and two ends of girdle were in style of Bagan era. Ears without earplugs but just holes might be in style of Myinsaing but works in Bagan era. Pictures of men and women bore bracelets only. Whatever it maybe, paintings in Myinsaing were influenced by works of Bagan era but mixed with that of Inwa era.

Ancient city states in Kyaukse plain which were cultural heritages expressing history of Kyaukse region were significant among observers and researchers.

(Translated by Than Tun Aung)

Reference:

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11 districts of Myittha, a milestone, (Linn Htaik Tin Hlaing, Kyaukse)

Town Singaing from historic Letwin region, (Taik Kyi, Singaing)

Myanmar's ancient city states (U Aung Myint)

Ancient Mongmaw City (Ministry of Culture)

■■■

Shan United goal coach to join Laos national squad

GOAL coach of the U-21 team of Shan United F.C., U Nay Hlaing, recently accepted an offer to join the Laos men's national football coaching team, according to a statement released by Shan United.

With the Laos national team offering the goal coach a one-year contract, Shan United terminated its contract with the coach to allow him to serve on the Laos squad.

"The year-long contract will start from 15 February. I have accepted the position which will add to my experience, and I'm really thankful to Shan United officials who understood this and let me take a decision. They even helped me and terminated my contract with the team," said goal coach U Nay Hlaing.

U Nay Hlaing, 33, was an outstanding student at the Sports and Physical Science School (Yangon) and has played for the Under 14, Under 17, Under 19, and Under 21 national football teams. He has also been on the Trade and Agriculture football team.

After the Myanmar National League was launched in Myanmar in 2009 and until 2017, he served as the goalkeeper for Delta United, Nay Pyi Taw F.C., Ayeyawady United, and Yangon



U Nay Hlaing will join the Laos national football team as goal coach. **PHOTO: SUFC**

United. In 2018, U Nay Hlaing finished the AFC C Coaching Certificate Course and MA Goalkeeping Course. Thereafter, he was signed by Hantharwady United

as its goal coach.

He moved to Shan United in 2019. He is currently attending the AFC B Coaching Certificate course.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Myanmar National League match to be broadcast live on MRTV

THE Week-4 match of the Myanmar National League between Yangon United and Sagaing United, scheduled to be held at 3:30 pm on 2 February at the Yangon United Sports Complex, will be broadcast live on MRTV and MRTV Sports Channel from 3:05 pm. —MNA ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Myanmar Futsal League: Week-18 matches to begin today

THE Week-18 matches of the Myanmar Futsal League will take place today at the National Indoor Stadium II in Yangon.

The matches promise to be colorful with Myanmar Futsal giants facing middle-ranked teams.

The Victoria College Futsal Club, which is the top-ranked team in the league and which is currently leading the standing table, will take on middle-ranked Let Wel Thone Nara Futsal Club at 8 am today.

Next, the Myanmar Imperial University Futsal Club, which is placed second in the league, will meet AMM Brothers F.C.

at 9:30 am.

Third-placed GV Futsal Club will play against Myoma JY Futsal Club at 11 am.

Meanwhile, Dream Team Futsal Club will take on Futsal Chit Thu Futsal Club at 12.30 am, and Winner Futsal Club will challenge Do Do Ko Ko Futsal Club at 2 pm.

The last match for Week-18 of the futsal league will be played between On Doctor Futsal Club and youth team of the Myanmar Football Federation, MFF U-19 Futsal Team, and their match will take place at 3:30 pm. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Myanmar squad prepares for Olympics Qualifiers in Jeju Island

THE Myanmar women's national football team underwent special training yesterday at the Kang Chang-Hak football stadium in Jeju Island, South Korea as part of preparations for the third round of the 2020 AFC Women's Olympics qualifying tournament.

The tournament will kick off on 3 February at the Jeju World Cup Stadium.

Team Myanmar arrived in Jeju Island on 30 January and started physical exercise and training sessions from the next day.

Myanmar has picked a mixed team which includes veteran strikers Khin Moe Wai and Win Theingi Tun, youth

striker Myat Noe Khin, and veteran midfielder Khin Mar Lar Tun.

In the opening match of the Olympics Qualifiers, Myanmar will face host South Korea. The match will start at 4:30 pm Myanmar Standard Time on 3 February.

Myanmar will play against Viet Nam at 4:30 pm Myanmar Standard Time on 6 February.

If Myanmar wins one match and ends another with a draw, it will qualify to the next stage as only three teams are competing in Group A of the qualifiers — Myanmar, South Korea, and Viet Nam, said football experts. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



The Myanmar women's national football team trained yesterday at the Kang Chang-Hak football stadium in Jeju Island, South Korea. **PHOTO: MFF**