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State Counsellor opens Ethnic Cultural Festival-2020

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in her capacity as the chairperson of the Border Areas and National Races Development Central Committee, delivered an opening address at the Ethnic Cultural Festival at the Kyaikkasan Grounds in Yangon yesterday.

Also present at the opening ceremony were Vice President U Henry Van Thio and wife Dr Shwe Hlwan, union ministers, the Union Attorney-General, Chairman of the Peace Commission, the Chief Minister for the Yangon Region, Kayah State Chief Minister, deputy ministers and their wives, regional and state ministers, MPs, representatives from self-administered zones and regions, ethnic delegations and cultural troupes, regional and state ethnic cul-

tural and literature organizations, ethnic entrepreneurs, diplomats, representatives of the UN agencies, invited guests and officials.

First, the State Counsellor, Vice President U Henry Van Thio, Union ministers and entourage visited the booths set up at the festival.

Afterwards, school children and Kayan ethnic singer Naw Gu Gu entertained the dignitaries with a song titled "Peace is a must" composed by Thit Lwin Aung (Loikaw).

Afterwards, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U Henry Van Thio, Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Nai Thet Lwin, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Kayah State Chief Minister U L Phaung Shoe and

ethnic entrepreneurs opened the festival.

Next, the State Counsellor delivered an opening address.

In her speech to the Myanmar Ethnic Cultural Festival event, the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said: "Today event is held for the second time to conserve the beauties of mountains, rivers and landscapes of the country and to preserve its traditions and customs. It is hoped that ethnic traditional apparel and produce can be exported to foreign markets. It aims to assist in the peace process. It is also to promote ethnic traditional cultures and tourism. Kayah traditional dance show is the main feature.

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi delivers the speech at the Myanmar Ethnic Cultural Festival at the Kyaikkasan Grounds in Yangon yesterday. PHOTO: MNA





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Vice President U Henry Van Thio opens Ethnic Cultural Festival



Vice President U Henry Van Thio, Union Ministers, Ministers and officials open the Ethnic Cultural Festival at the Kyaikasan Grounds in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

VICE President U Henry Van Thio, Chairman of the Ethnic Affairs, Public Management and Services Committee, made an address at the opening ceremony of the “Myanmar Ethnic Cultural Festival” held at the Kyaikasan Grounds, Yangon yesterday morning.

Present on the occasion were Vice President’s wife Dr. Shwe Hlwan, Union Ministers Dr. Pe Myint, Thura U Aung Ko, Dr. Myo Thein Gyi, U Ohn Maung and Nai Thet Lwin, Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo, Peace Commission Chairman Dr. Tin Myo Win, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Kayah State Chief Minister U L Phaung Sho, Deputy Ministers, states/regions ministers, representatives of the Self-Administered Zones, Hluttaw representatives, ethnics associations, ethnics cultural groups, states/regions literary and culture associations, Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association, distinguished guests, and persons-in-charge.

First, Vice President U Henry Van Thio, Union Ministers U Ohn Maung and Nai Thet Lwin, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Kayah State Chief Minister U L Phaung Sho and persons-in-charge cut the ribbon to open the Myanmar Ethnic Cultural Festival.

Next, Vice President posed for a documentary photo together with the attendees.

In his address, Vice President said the Myanmar Ethnic Cultural Festival is convened to aim at the development of ethnic areas, travelling, village/tract-based tourism, local prod-

ucts, and the exchange of views and knowledge between ethnic nationals. It is also to promote their unity and solidarity among others, he added.

He continued to say Myanmar is a Federal Union where various ethnic nationals are living together. So unity is very important among all ethnic nationals. Depending on unity, peace process can be accomplished throughout the country, then the development of all ethnic areas can be executed.

He added ethnic nationals is varied and diverse in the country so there are different views between them. All should remove them and proceed with the same ideas and concepts. Therefore, all can collaborate and work together in the nation building though there are diversities.

At present, the Government is leading, along with the entire ethnic nationals, to implement the emergence of a Federal Union. In so doing, their mutual understanding, unity, national reconciliation, and peace process should be strengthened. Then, a peaceful democratic Federal Union can be built precisely, he added.

He stressed that the State is supporting basic needs for the economic development of ethnic nationals. The market economy is being exercised in the country while the private sector is also very important. The third goal of Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan has been laid down to create job opportunities and to develop the leading role of the private sector.

He urged businessmen to invest more in ethnic areas where

they can get not only profits but also development prospects in manufacturing and servicing industries. The state is adopting policies for the development of micro- and macro-economics while the work processes are eased for the beginners of businesses, he added.

Myanmar is a beautiful and peaceful country where all ethnic nationals have their adorable customs, their traditional cultures, and their featured foods. Those all are attracting factors towards both local and international visitors. Ethnic nationals should promote tourism and its service work; They should innovate their work to drive their value-added products and a higher standard of services not only locally but towards foreign markets. If local products are on foreign markets and tourism in ethnic areas becomes success-

ful, economies are booming and employment opportunities can be created for local communities, he said.

Ethnic nationals should continue to preserve their customs and traditions, cultures, arts, and historical legacies. They all should strive, hand in hand, to build a modern, developed, democratic, Federal Union. They should also implement not only their local economies but peaceful interests of the nation, he urged.

Next, Union Minister for Ethnic Nationals Affairs Nai Thet Lwin, Chief Ministers U Phyo Min Thein and U L Phaung Sho, the Patron of Myanmar Ethnic Nationals Entrepreneurs Association Dr. Tin Myo Win spoke in greeting on the occasion.

Then, Vice President and others were present at the “Ka-

ethobo” Kayah victory pillar erecting ceremony and spread the scented water around the pillar.

“Kaethobo” ceremony depicts unity, mutual assistance, loving kindness, and fine quality of customs among Kayahs. They aimed to have good weather and ample harvest of rice and other crops, to keep natural disasters away, to strengthen the unity among ethnic nationals, to develop the country, and to raise the spirit of next generations to preserve their traditional cultures.

While the pillar erecting ceremony was held Kayah cultural troupe, together with a drum and flute group, performed their traditional dances and music.

Then, Vice President inspected the Kachin traditional culture booth, Kayah traditional culture booth, Kayin traditional culture booth, Chin traditional culture booth, Bamar traditional culture booth, Myanmar Timber and Woodwork Traders Association’s forestry produce booth, Mon traditional culture booth, Rakhine traditional culture booth, Shan traditional culture booth, Kokant traditional culture booth, Danu traditional culture booth, Naga traditional culture booth, Palaung traditional culture booth, Pa-Oh traditional culture booth, “Wa” traditional culture booth, Ethnic Nationals Entrepreneurs Association’s booth, and Ministry of Ethnic Nationals Affairs’ booth. Vice President, Union Ministers, Kayah State Chief Minister, Deputy Ministers, and ethnic nationals traditional culture troupes posed for a documentary photo.

—MNA

(Translated by Aung Thura)



Vice President U Henry Van Thio visits the Naga ethnic booth showcased at the Myanmar Ethnic Cultural Festival in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor opens Ethnic Cultural Festival-2020



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi enjoys the performance of ethnic people at the Ethnic Cultural Festival-2020 in Yangon yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

FROM PAGE-1

A special feature was for Kachin in the previous year. I understand that we will prioritize each ethnic national every year. Our nation composes of over 100 ethnic nationals. Each and every individual ethnic national lives together for long in harmony as well as in weal and woe. We all shall build a dignified Union with a pure good-will and determination.

Ethnic nationals are brothers and sisters of the Union. Union spirit can bring about unity. It also leads to living in harmony and solidarity despite the differences in race, language, and religion. We all are a Union and it is highly important that we should cherish our Union and our land, and value our Union to build a peaceful unified developed nation.

It is the time for all ethnic nationals need to have more unity, mutual respect and assistance among them. Moreover, each and everyone should build and lift their individual qualities like spirit, discipline, education, diligence, and honesty. I wish to see you all as peace-makers based on mutual respect and assistance.

It is meaningful that colourful people get together at the event to develop ethnic nationals. I'm confident that with natural resources, environmental beauties, traditional apparels, and local-made products, based on innovative and modernized methods, they will promote village-tract-based tourism, step by step, both for domestic and international guests.

To end my speech, when we talk about the same blood it's

really not the vane in human's body. It means the blood flows in our minds. Our mind is the same and alike. The blood in the vane might be the same but we can't name it as the same blood unless blood in the mind is the same. Looking at this Union, we can see how beautiful our Union or our country is and how priceless it is.

Earlier, all will notice a background show of our country while a song "Peace is a must" is being sung. Nature is a beauty but it becomes ugly due to man-made problems. I hope we can remove them with our same blood or mind.

To accelerate the continuous development work in the country, it is necessary that all ethnic nationals should collaborate in the implementation of a democratic federal Union with their loving-kindness, good-

will, discretion, and courage. I'd like you all to participate in this great task. Each individual should exert their good spirit of what they can do in the work. Whatever minimal work every one of us can do, please so do. I believe we can multiply those minimal works towards our goal soon. Hence, we, in collaboration with ethnic nationals, are striving for peace within the Union. Please support and assist us in this task. We need support from the bottom of your heart. You use your brain and consider the way to success. To realize a unified peaceful and developed Union, I'd like to request your discretion and support.

Following her address, damsels of the 2020 Miss Myanmar Ethnic in ethnic attires performed.

Afterwards, State Coun-

sellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U Henry Van Thio, Union ministers, Peace Commission Chairman, chief ministers form regions and states and deputy ministers posed for documentary photos together with members of the regional and state cabinets, ambassadors, diplomats and resident representatives of the UN agencies; together with ethnic entrepreneurs and officials; and Dr Shwe Hlwan, wife of Vice President U Henry Van Thio, wives of Union ministers and wives of deputy ministers and damsels of the 2020 Miss Myanmar Ethnic separately.

Afterwards, the State Counsellor and entourage were entertained with the theme song and ethnic dances performed by ethnic dance troupes. —MNA

(Translated by Aungthu Ya)



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi poses for a group photo with Ambassadors from Foreign Embassies in Myanmar, diplomats, UN Resident Representatives for Myanmar at the Ethnic Cultural Festival. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor meets with youth of Training School in Thanlyin



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with the trainees at the Thanlyin Youth Training School in Yangon yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, accompanied by Union Minister U Min Thu and officials, visited Thanlyin Youth Training School, run by Social Welfare Department of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement on Kyaikkauk Pagoda Road at Amhuhtan Ward, in Thanlyin Township, Yangon Region at 10 am yesterday.

The State Counsellor was welcomed by Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye, Chief Minister of Yangon Region U Phyo Min Thein, Deputy Minister U Soe Aung, cabinet members of regional government and youths of the training school.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi looked around the school and cordially conversed with the trainees.

At the briefing hall, Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye reported to the State Counsellor on salient points of the school. The State Counsellor looked into the requirements through departmental coordination.

Then, the State Counsellor gave advice to the trainees. She said I have come here to identify the situation and the requirements of the school, its requirements, the better ways for its improvement and the extent of success in realizing its aim of caring for the trainees.

But the teachers in the centre alone cannot bring success as your efforts are of vital importance. You must try hard. You may have different backgrounds, but you must change yourselves, and never come back again to this centre. So, you will have to take care of yourselves and make self-improvement. Will, that is the first thing you all need. You all must think for yourselves, especially to avoid doing the same mistake again. Surely, trainers in the centre will render help as much as they can. Trainee population here is very high. Initial aim was to accept 150, but the actual figure now is over 400. So, you need to help your trainers. A centre like this is not to administer punishment, but to help the youth. Most people see it as a punishment centre. But you should not see it as a punishment centre. You just see the centre as a place to correct you.

So, make use of the advantages here and improve yourselves in the best way, because in the end, you will realize that the only person who can help you is you. Whatever efforts a person makes he cannot help you like you can for yourselves. You must have a goal and self-confidence. You must realize this, and try to reach your goal. Where there's a will there's a way! So, you need the will and efforts. But it won't be

easy to reach your goal. You must realize your wish. You need time and ways and means to materialize your wish. So you all should have the belief that you can correct yourselves.

Most of you arrive here for drug cases. Drugs are not playthings. They are not things to be tested. Some try to taste them, as their friends are abusing drugs. Some youths are lured into drug abuse. As soon as you know the taste you are already addicted, and drug addiction brings a lot of evil consequences. You need

the determination to quit drugs. Relying on drugs means you are not relying on yourselves. You are like depending on an outside element. Instead of thinking that this little drug will give you peace of mind, you must rely on yourselves. You must have the resolve and trust in you. Reckless actions lead nowhere.

Stimulant tablets are neither heroin nor No. 4. But they cause a serious problem. A person will face ill consequences even after he has quitted the stimulant drug addiction. There is no proper

treatment method till now. So, do not harm yourselves with drugs. Drug addiction ruins a person's life. In addition to harming you, drug addiction also causes problems in a society. So, you should think twice before starting this evil habit.

Drug addiction is followed by a series of criminal activities. A drug addict will rob or steal money whenever he needs. So he will be punished for his crimes. So, it hurts him a lot. But you can correct yourselves at any time. The only thing required is the resolve. The second you make your decision is the first step towards changing yourselves. Never lose your spirit even if things do not go accordingly. You must try again, because you have the chance to do so. Opportunities appear every second all along your life. Never lose your spirit even if you fail. You need to get more efforts under your belt to reach your goal.

Life is a struggle. Life is not boring, because your qualifications improve through these struggles. You can help your society. Youth have an invaluable advantage, and it is time. They have future as they have 50 or 60 more years to live. Old people have less remaining time. So, time is the strength of youth. So you should not misuse your strength. You should wisely use your time. You should use your time for the betterment of your life. You can help others only when you are enjoying a good life. Time is precious. You must be born to help your family at one time. Man cannot survive alone. He needs society.

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visits the Thanlyin Youth Training School in Yangon. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor admonishes youth of Training School in Thanlyin

FROM PAGE-4

He must have a community that will help one another. His life will be meaningless if he cannot pay something back to his community. So, you all should try to contribute something to your community.

When I asked if you had any requirement, some answered that they did not have any. But there must be requirements. You should train yourselves to frankly discuss your problems with youth trainers. But your demands and requirements must be reasonable. They must be positive. Some demands seem simple, but they may have insincere intention. You should stay away from such practices as honesty is the best policy. I wish you all to step ahead, correct yourselves and achieve success through honest ways. Never lose spirit. You youths have the tool which is called time. Correctly use this tool and enjoy a worthy life. Please do not waste your time.

Here you have less time. You may be here for six months or a year or one and a half year to the most. One-and-a-half-year is not a long time. It's not easy to change a person in this time. It will be more difficult if the time is less than six months. The main aim of such centres is to change the mindset of youths to prevent them from turning to the wrong side again. But it isn't easy to change the mindset of a teen in less than six months. But his ardent involvement can bring progress. There can be progress even if it is not a total success in changing him. So, try hard for progress.

Young people eat food daily, and they grow up gradually. Likewise, if that try to change their mind bit by bit, one day they can make a big difference. So, you should try daily. It's not a day's work. Like you need the daily diet, you need daily efforts. In this way, you should help your trainers. The centre has only 16 trainers. In fact, there should be 24, and that number is still low. Reinforcement should be made to the most possible degree. So, they can fulfill the needs of youths more.

But the actual need is your involvement. Helping them will also benefit you a lot. Your qualifications will improve, and the functions of the centre will be much better. You will have more confidence and will to take re-

sponsibility. You should have the spirit of taking responsibility for yourselves and your community. You should try to be open with your trainers when it comes to your requirements. But I am not sure the trainers would agree with it or not. But what I want is a frank and transparent relationship between the trainers and trainees. If trainers have the problems for this kind of relationship on their part, they should explain it.

Necessary support is guaranteed. I have discussed with Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye the lack of an extra place for sports activities at the centre. Sports and physical exercise make you pleasant and healthy. So we are finding a place for such activities. The centre has no vacant place for playing football. So the centre cannot provide sufficient care. We are trying to fulfill those requirements, and the youths here should also join hands with us. Everybody is responsible for his life because no one is going to take this responsibility. You should understand this.

Learning your own school lessons or eating your food or doing your own business is also included your responsibility. So take your own responsibility. It is no good if your life is under other's control. A life under other's control will not be pleasant and independent. You should seriously consider this. You must have the courage to shape your future.

So you should be serious whenever you are dealing with a business. Here I would explain the definition of perseverance. Normally it means making efforts for success. It has four stages. The first stage is the aim. It is just an aim and not an action. The second stage is the beginning, but it depends on the third stage. The determination to continue the work even in the face of difficulties is the third stage. But the final stage is the courage to restart even in the face of failure. That is the highest part of perseverance. So, you need the perseverance in rebuilding your life. First you make a determination, continue according to the determination, overcome all difficulties, and raise your spirit to resume your quest even after the failure caused by the growing difficulties.

Take your own responsibility. Never let your life falls into other's hands. Never let your life falls under the influence of



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with members of the Yangon Region Government.
PHOTO: MNA

lifeless objects. If you fail to do so, you will be nothing. If you cannot take your own responsibility you will be unworthy. Everybody can take his own responsibility, but he needs the will, nerve and perseverance. So try hard, and put forward every requirement. There are boxes for sending written suggestions. But the suggestions should be appropriate and polite. A human value depends on politeness and morality. Some count rudeness and roughness as strength. Actually, it's not the strength, it's the weakness. Ask politely and know your value. You must think of yourself worthy and also act accordingly.

Every man is worthy. It's not easy to be a man. In religious treatises, we have learnt that to be born as a human is more difficult than a pin falling from heaven and a pin ascending upwards touch one another. So, you should lead a worthy life. I have a lot of knowledge of the school during my visit in the morning. So I have come to know what sort of requirements are here. Some can be solved in a short time. But others will take time. Moving this centre to another place won't happen in a short time. But we can appoint more staff in a short period. We will fulfill other short-term requirements. But we will have to take time for the long-term requirements. Finally, I am proud and happy to know that you youth trainees try hard at your lessons. You will have to improve your life through efforts. So, continue to make efforts. I wish you all a better future.

The State Counsellor presented donations to the school through the principal U Thitsa.

The school focused on child protection included in infant care and development and child protection, one of the tasks of the Social Welfare Department.

The YMCA youth care team was set up on 3 October 1929 with the aim of caring and educating street youth in Yangon. The team opened a centre at No. 320 Anawrahta Street on 1930. It was then moved to Boundary Road (Dhammazedi Road) in 1939 as a temporary youth care centre. The new Yangon youths centre was set up at No. 64 Kaba Aye Pagoda Road in 28 May 1955 under the support of the Ministry of Social Welfare. It was transferred to the Social Welfare Department on 30 November 1962 under the name "Kaba Aye Youth Training School." It was then moved provisionally to centre for children with disabilities at No. 65 Kyaikwaing Pagoda Road on 25 March 2011. It has become Thanlyin Youth Training School after moving to the current place in Thanlyin Township on 14 March 2012.

The school can accommodate only 150 trainees. The new Child Rights Law enacted in 2019 raises the age of youth to under-18. As the number of youths who need care increases by three times, the school needs more space and staff.

In the afternoon, the State Counsellor met the Chief Minister and cabinet members of Yangon Region Government at the

office of the region government.

Union Ministers U Min Thu, U Soe Win, U Thaung Tun, Dr. Aung Thu, U Thant Sin Maung, U Win Khaing and U Han Zaw, Deputy Minister U Hset Aung, departmental heads and officials were also present.

At the meeting the State Counsellor inquired about the progress in accelerating efforts to ensure the rule of law and community peace in Yangon Region, sufficient potable water supply, development of power, energy and industrial sectors, development of urban and road transport, human resources development and better employment opportunities, urban and housing development, modernization of old and new towns in line with the city characteristics, growth in national trade and foreign investment, stronger health and education foundation and higher momentum in the development undertakings. The Yangon Region Chief Minister presented a report on the progress of work, and Union Ministers submitted sector-wise supplementary reports.

In response, the State Counsellor said it is a must for the Yangon Region Government to solve the public problems in a transparent way. The core of the success is the extent of available strength. The issuance of transparent, comprehensive and simple public announcements is the important duty of the region government. —MNA

(Translated by TMT)

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MoHS launches nationwide Rotavirus vaccination programme

MINISTRY of Health and Sports launched vaccination against Rotavirus and diphtheria and tetanus with its National Immunization Programme yesterday in Hlinethaya Township, Yangon Region.

The ceremony was formally opened by Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe, Permanent Secretary Prof Dr Thet Khaing Win, Director-General of MOHS Dr Thar Tun Kyaw, Director General of the Public Health and Treatment Department Dr Soe Oo, Pyithu Hluttaw MP Daw Phyu Phyu Thin and WHO Resident Representative Dr Stephan Paul Jost and Resident Representative of the UNICEF Ms June Kunugi.

Speaking at the ceremony, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe expressed delight for launching of the immunization programme, calling the day as an important milestone for his ministry and the people for adding Rotavirus vaccine to the programme as the 12th vaccine against the disease.

Rotavirus is a very contagious virus that causes diarrhea. It's the most common cause of diarrhea in infants and children worldwide, A rotavirus infection usually starts within two days of exposure to the virus.

The Union minister also an-



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe observes Rotavirus vaccination at the opening ceremony of National Immunization Programme in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

nounced that the ministry will give anti-diphtheria/Tetanus vaccination to children aged 18 months and above.

“Besides, Human papilloma Virus Vaccine against the cervical cancer will be given to girls aged between nine and ten years old in July and August, 2020, and the vaccine will becomes the 13th vaccine,” said the Union Minister.

“Giving Rotavirus vaccination for two times to a child costs seven dollars in total,” he said, adding that the Union Govern-

ment is carrying out national immunization programme at the cost of US\$ 10 million yearly.

He also thanked GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance for funding the campaign. He urged the parents and authorities to co-operate in national vaccination programmes. The Rotavirus vaccination was held in Hline-thaya Township yesterday which is populated with the people from different parts of the country.

Afterwards, Dr Stephan Paul Jost and Ms Juhne Kunugi also made remarks about the

vaccination programme.

After the ceremony, the Union minister visited the booths and presented the gifts to children who will receive the vaccination.

Severe diarrhoea is the third most common killer of children less than five years old in Myanmar. According to WHO, Rotaviruses causes acute gastroenteritis among infants and young children. It is associated with profuse watery diarrhoea, projectile vomiting and fever.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)



UNSG's Special Envoy on Myanmar departs from Yangon

A delegation led by Ms Christine Schraner Burgener, UN Secretary-General's Special

UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Myanmar, Ms Christine Schraner Burgener, being seen off by Director-General U Aung Myo Myint. **PHOTO: MNA**

Envoy on Myanmar, departed from Yangon yesterday.

U Aung Myo Myint, Director-General of Strategic Studies and Training Department, and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs saw off the UN delegates at the Yangon International Airport.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Sagaing authorities to spend over K 26 bln on upgrading road facilities

IN a bid to develop the transportation and communications sector in rural areas in Sagaing region, a rural areas development project will be carried out in 2019-2020 fiscal year (FY), with a budget of K 26,764.5 million from the Sagaing region government fund, said Daw Than Than

Htway, the Deputy Director of the Sagaing Region Rural Road Development Department.

In 2019-2020 FY, the department will upgrade a total of 596.051 kilometers of roads, at a cost of K 20,777.061 million. The upgrading of the roads will include 33.7016 kilometers of

concrete road, 21.094 kilometers of asphalted road, 127.664 kilometers of gravel road, 96.09 kilometers of earthen road, and 318.487 kilometers of land road.

In the bridge sector, the department will upgrade 230 bridges, which are 1686.53 meters, in total, at a cost of K 5,987.439 mil-

lion. The bridges will include 57 concrete bridges of 798.5 meters, two wooden bridges of 13.5 meters, 35 water bridges of 629.41 meters, 121 box culvert bridges of 182.6 meters and 15 other bridges of 62.52 meters.—Win Oo (Zayyardine) (Translated by Hay Mar)

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China coronavirus: Watermelon, muskmelon exports plunge, prices drop by half

By Nyein Nyein

ON account of the coronavirus outbreak, exports of watermelons and muskmelons to China have dropped, leading to prices plunging by half, said U Naing Win, chair of the Myanmar Watermelon and Muskmelon Producers and Exporters Association.

“At this time last year, 700 trucks of watermelons were seen at Muse gate. Now, trading is not going well, even if 200-300 trucks enter the border market. The effort will be in vain if China does not buy them. The local consumption is quite low, and so, the domestic market will not cover the current yield rate. Earlier, Thirimingala Market’s demand was 10 trucks per day. Now, only one truck of watermelons is being sold, and the situation is the same at Danyingon market. The weather is cool and other seasonal fruits such as tangerines and plums are abundant in the market. The consumption of watermelons and muskmelons is low, especially in the January to mid-February period. Growers are worried about the market

situation owing to the Wuhan coronavirus,” said U Naing Win.

“The harvest season of watermelons and muskmelons is on now. Prior to the Chinese New Year holidays, China purchased about 700 truck loads of watermelons. Now, they are not even buying 300 truck loads. The price has dropped by half,” he said.

“Earlier, a watermelon truck was worth 40,000 Yuan. Now, the price has fallen drastically to 7,000 Yuan. The price of watermelons is ranging from 7,000-15,000 Yuan per truck. Though the muskmelon price has dropped, it is not that low, ranging from 3,500-6,500 Yuan per ton,” said U Naing Win.

To tackle the problems faced by watermelon and muskmelon growers, the Yangon Region Chief Minister met with officials from the Myanmar Watermelon and Muskmelon Exporters and Producers Association.

The regional government will arrange a place if growers want to sell them at the Myanmar Ethnic Culture Fest, which will be held next month. The government will draft a long-term plan for growers, too.

“The Yangon market is not



Trucks loaded with watermelons wait for passage at the Muse 105 Mile Trade Zone . PHOTO : THANT ZIN (MUSE)

hopeful. Even 20 trucks of watermelons will not be sold. We cannot let the watermelons perish for no reason. We can only wish for the eradication of the infectious virus and for the border market to reopen. If there are other foreign markets, it will be good,” said Ko Zaw Min, an exporter to China.

“To penetrate other markets, we must seek help from the Trade Promotion Department under the Ministry of Commerce,” said U Naing Win.

“Other foreign markets have not proposed watermelon and muskmelon purchase. Myanmar’s watermelons are exported to Hong Kong through China. Therefore, the trade channel is blocked. Singapore buys only three or four containers. We would like to expand the market to Qatar and Dubai as they can offer a good price. But, there is no demand from them. The Trade Department needs to help traders link with foreign buyers,” he

added. Watermelons and muskmelons are considered export items to China and a large quantity of the fruits will be harvested until May-end.

Myanmar exports more than 800,000 tons of watermelons and 150,000 tons of muskmelons every year. At present, only 200,000 tons of watermelon and a small volume of muskmelons have been shipped to external markets.

(Translated by E'i Myat Mon)

Sale of beans to China declines because of Coronavirus outbreak

THE sale of beans to China has declined because of the Coronavirus outbreak in China, according to Mandalay depot.

“The prices of the goods declined because of this virus. The green gram price had fallen to K 10,000 per bag earlier this month. Now, the price has risen a bit. Currently, the price of Chi-

na imported beans is dependent on the virus. If the Coronavirus outbreak can be stopped, the market will return to normal,” said U Thein San, an executive of Mandalay Commodity Depot.

The green gram (Shwe Wah) bean price has declined to K 120,000 per bag from K 129,000-130,000 per bag. The price of rice

beans has declined to K 60,000 from K 78,000, while the price of groundnut beans has fallen to K 2,800 from K 3,000 per bag. However, the price of beans is rising a bit, according to Mandalay Depot.

“In Chinshwehaw and the Muse border, traders are selling beans at a slightly higher price. Then, they keep the beans in the border areas’ warehouses. These days, we can export only a small amount of beans to China. About 90 per cent of the beans could not be exported. The vehicle charges have also increased because of the outbreak of China’s Coronavirus,” said Ko Soe, a trader from Mandalay-Muse Bean Depot.

Previously, the demand for beans needed 70 or 80 vehicles per day (one vehicle contains 700 bean bags). These days, the demand for beans needs only 25 or 30 vehicles per day. In order to prevent the spreading of the Coronavirus, the Mandalay depot will close to control travelling by tourists.—Tin Zar Hlaing

(Translated by Hay Mar)



Merchants evaluate various kinds of bean in Mandalay. PHOTO : AUNG PHYO KYAW

Tomato prices drop in Yenangyoung

LOCAL farmers are unhappy with the falling prices of tomato in Yenangyoung Township, Magway Region, as there are high supplies of tomato in Yenangyoung, according to local farmers. Tomato is grown mostly in Phaungkataw, Pinwa, Mh-anmyay and Kyankinekyang village-tracts in Yenangyoung Township.

“There is a high tomato supply this year, compared to last year, so local farmers don’t receive a good price. The whole-

sale price of tomato is K 450 per viss. If we sell tomato in Myoma market, we will earn K 600 per viss. We get only K 100,000 if we grow three acres of tomato. So, we don’t have any profits”, said Daw Win Win from Kyankinekyang village-tract.

The price of tomato declined in Yenangyoung because the tomato from Kyaukpadaung Township entered the Yenangyoung retail market.—Hsan Nyoungt (Yenangyoung) (Translated by Hay Mar)



Tomato is mostly grown village-tracts in Yenangyoung Township. PHOTO : HSAN NYOUNT (YENANGYOUNG)

National Rotavirus immunization programme calls all hands on deck

THE Ministry of Health and Sports launched a Rotavirus vaccination campaign with its National Immunization Programme yesterday.

Rotavirus is a common cause of severe diarrhoea among children under five years old and is responsible for about one-third of the cases of hospitalized children in the country, health officials said during a recent panel discussion.

The launching ceremony was held yesterday in Hlinethaya Township, which is populated with people from different parts of the country who are at risk of viral infection due to its dense population.

To achieve success in the national immunization programme, parents are obliged to bring their children to health centres for vaccinations and policy makers are urged to prepare for increased participation of health organizations, families, media and institutional leaders in the programmes.

The Rotavirus vaccine, along with proper sanitation, hand washing practices, ORS and zinc supplements, will go a long way in reducing the mortality and morbidity due to diarrhoea in children.

The government was also committed to increasing the full immunization coverage and ensuring that the benefit of life-saving vaccines was provided to every child.

Rotavirus diarrhoea can be prevented through vaccinations. Other diarrhoea can be prevented through general measures, such as good hygiene, frequent hand washing, safe water and safe food consumption, exclusive breastfeeding and vitamin A supplements.

In Myanmar, one-fourth of the diarrhoea cases in children are caused by the virus, and also contaminated water was a major cause of outbreaks, common in the rainy season in heavily populated areas, such as Ayeyawady, Mandalay and Yangon regions. Diarrhoea remains a major health problem in the country.

The [rotavirus] vaccine is effective at protecting between 40 and 60 percent of severe cases and has become the 12th vaccine for children.

To prevent cervical cancer, the health ministry is also planning to offer the Human Papilloma Virus Vaccine as the 13th vaccine to girls aged 9 and 10 in July or August this year.

To achieve success in the national immunization programme, parents are obliged to bring their children to health centres for vaccinations and policy makers are urged to prepare for increased participation of health organizations, families, media and institutional leaders in the programmes. The national immunization programme calls for all hands on deck to ensure the vaccination coverage rate can be increased to the full per percent in order to protect children from preventable diseases.

To achieve success, the immunization campaign needs to not only include the planning processes, but also the battle against disinformation and misconceptions about the safety of vaccinations.



Int'l community provides aid to China to support anti-epidemic efforts

THE international community has been pouring in aid to China to support its efforts to prevent and control the outbreak of the novel coronavirus.

The Pakistani government has allocated 300,000 medical masks, 800 hazmat suits and 6,800 pairs of gloves from the stocks of public hospitals around the nation and transported the aid to China.

The medical supplies from Pakistan arrived in China on Saturday afternoon.

South Korea also offered large amounts of medical and anti-epidemic materials to China, including 2 million face masks, 1 million medical masks, 100,000 hazmat suits and 100,000 pairs of goggles.

These supplies are being transported to the virus-hit central Chinese city of Wuhan in shipments.

The governments of Russia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Kazakhstan, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Austria, Australia, Algeria, Iran and Turkey among other countries have also offered donations of anti-epidemic medical supplies to express their firm support for China's fight against the epidemic.

Confirmed new cases

New cases of infection with a

novel strain of coronavirus, which emerged in the Chinese city of Wuhan, are being reported daily around the world.

In China, at least 259 people have died and 11,791 people have been infected across the country, according to the government on Saturday.

Dozens of cases have also been confirmed in several countries in the Asia-Pacific region as well as states in Europe, North America and the Middle East.

Meanwhile, a group of Pakistani students and community members stranded in Urumqi city, the capital of Xinjiang province in China's far northwest, due to suspension of flights in the wake of the new coronavirus outbreak have been granted an 11-day visa extension by authorities in Beijing.

In the intervening time, tech giant Apple on Saturday announced it has temporarily shut all its retail stores and offices across mainland China till February 10 as part of preemptive measures amid the outbreak of the deadly coronavirus that has killed more than 250 people and infected more than 10,000 others.

Apple said that the measure will come into force from Sunday till midnight of February 9, Russia Today reported. However, online stores of the company will remain open. In its advisory, the com-

pany also restricted employees from travelling to the East Asian country. Some other multinational companies have also suspended business trips to China, or limited it to critical operations, according to media reports.

Closed borders

Countries around the world have closed their borders to arrivals from China, as officials work to control the rapid spread of the coronavirus.

Australia will deny entry to foreign nationals arriving in the country over the next two weeks from the coronavirus-hit mainland China, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced on Saturday.

While the Australian citizens, permanent residents and members of their immediate families have been exempted from the ban, they will be asked to "self-isolate" for 14 days from their date of departure from China, Morrison added, as reported by The Sydney Morning Herald. Morrison said that the decision in this regard -- which has been taken after a meeting of the Chief Medical Officers of all states and territories on Saturday -- is aimed at substantially reducing "the volume of travellers coming from mainland China".

Australia and the US said they would deny entry to all foreign visitors who had recently



A worker produces protective suits at a factory in Nantong in China's Jiangsu province. PHOTO: AFP

been in China, where the virus first emerged in December.

Earlier, countries including Russia, Japan, Pakistan and Italy announced similar travel restrictions.

But global health officials have advised against such measures.

"Travel restrictions can cause more harm than good by hindering info-sharing, medical supply chains and harming economies," the head of the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Friday.

The WHO recommends introducing screening at official border crossings. It has warned that closing borders could accelerate the spread of the virus, with travellers entering countries unofficially.

In other recent developments:

- China asked the European Union to facilitate the sending of medical supplies from member countries
- Vietnam Airlines suspended all flights to China, Hong Kong and Taiwan
- Other airlines, including Qantas, Air New Zealand, Air Canada and British Airways, cancelled or scaled back flights
- North Korean leader Kim Jong-un offered his condolences in a letter to China's

president

- Hotel chains, including Hyatt, Radisson and Hilton, extended their cancellation policies for guests travelling to China
- Apple said it would temporarily close its stores in China
- The UK announced it would pull dozens of Foreign Office staff out of the mainland
- Russia said two Chinese citizens had been placed in isolation after they tested positive for the virus
- Germany, Italy, and Sweden confirmed further cases in Europe
- Singapore closed its borders to all travellers from China

Ways to treat coronavirus patients

China has found effective ways of treating critically ill patients who are affected by the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), renowned Chinese epidemiologist Li Lanjuan told Xinhua.

China's National Health Commission said Saturday that 11,791 confirmed cases of novel coronavirus infections had been reported in 31 provincial-level regions and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps

by the end of Friday. A total of 243 patients had been cured and discharged from hospital.

Measures to treat patients in critical condition are known as the "four fights and two balances," said Li, an academican with the Chinese Academy of Engineering, who heads the State Key Laboratory for Diagnosis and Treatment of Infectious Diseases.

"The first is to fight the virus. We found that if we start antiviral treatment a day earlier, the rate of patients in critical condition decreased by 10 percent, and the mortality rate fell 13 percent," she said in an exclusive interview by Xinhua Wednesday.

"The second is to prevent shock through supplementing a saline substance. The third is to prevent hypoxemia and multiple organ failure. The fourth is to prevent and fight secondary infections. We adopt antiviral treatment in the early stage, and use antibiotics when secondary infection occurs," she said.

The "two balances" refer to maintaining water electrolytes, acid-base balance and micro-ecological balance, Li said.

REFERENCES:
AFP; ANI; Aljazeera; BBC; Xinhua 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 Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 1st February, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is generally fair over the North Bay and East Central Bay and a few cloud to partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 2nd February, 2020: Likelihood of isolated light rain in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Mandalay and Yangon Regions, Shan, Chin and Kayah States and generally fair 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: Slight decrease of night temperature in Upper Sagaing Region, Kachin and Chin States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2nd February, 2020: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2nd February, 2020: Fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2nd February, 2020: Generally fair weather.

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French gendarmes and health personnel prepare the holiday resort where the 200 Wuhan evacuees will be staying for two weeks. PHOTO: AFP

How your clothes become microfibre pollution in the sea

PARIS (France) — From the polar ice cap to the Mariana Trench 10 kilometres below the waves, synthetic microfibres spat out by household washing machines are polluting oceans everywhere.

The world has woken up over the last year to the scourge of single-use plastics, from bottles and straws to ear swabs and throw-away bags, resulting in legislation to restrict or ban their use in dozens of countries.

A lot of this visible debris winds up in the sea, where it gathers in huge floating islands called gyres, entangles wildlife from turtles to terns, and hangs suspended in water like dead jellyfish.

But a major source of marine pollution -- microscopic bits of polyester, nylon and acrylic -- has up to now gone largely unnoticed, experts say.

Most people don't realise it, but "the majority of our clothes are made from plastic," said Imogen Napper, a researcher at the



A major source of marine pollution -- microscopic bits of polyester, nylon and acrylic -- has up to now gone largely unnoticed. **PHOTO: AFP**

University of Plymouth.

"We wash our clothes regularly, and hundreds of thousands of fibres come off per wash," she told AFP, "This could be one of the main sources of the plastic pollution into the environment."

"How do we remove something that is so small?", she added.

A 2015 report from the Ellen McArthur foundation estimat-

ed that half-a-million tonnes of microfibres leached into waterways every year, with 53 million tonnes of new textiles produced annually.

The average family in the United States and Canada unleashes more than 500 million microfibres into the environment each year, according to the Ocean Wise organisation. — AFP ■

Greta Thunberg puts Africa's climate activists in media spotlight



Greta Thunberg watches fellow eco warrior Vanessa Nakate, speaking from Kampala, after she was cropped out of a photo of young activists. **PHOTO: AFP**

STOCKHOLM (Sweden) — After a racism debate in Davos on the invisibility of African climate activists, Greta Thunberg held a press conference Friday with fellow eco warriors from Kenya, Uganda and South Africa to stress the importance of their voices.

Vanessa Nakate of Uganda was at the heart of a viral debate at the World Economic Forum in Davos after she was cropped out of a news agency photo of young

activists, including Thunberg, taken after a press conference.

A 23-year-old graduate in business administration, Nakate was the only black person and only African in the photo shoot.

She accused the Associated Press of racism in cropping her out.

The agency said the photographer had modified the photo for composition purposes and later apologised, calling it a "terrible mistake". Nakate said

she did "not want to talk about" the incident, other than to say that "it was quite a frustrating moment."

"This is the time for the world to listen to the activists from Africa and to pay attention to their stories... This is an opportunity for media to actually do some justice to the climate issues in Africa," Nakate told reporters via video link from Kampala.

She was joined on separate screens by Ayakha Melithafa and Ndoni Mgunu of South Africa and Makenna Muigai of Kenya, who spent an hour answering questions from journalists gathered at Greenpeace Sweden's offices.

'We are the most impacted'

So far, Africa is relatively blameless when it comes to climate change.

The continent is home to 17 percent of the world's population and more than a quarter of its nations, but only accounts for about five percent of the greenhouse gas emissions pushing the planet toward runaway warming. — AFP ■

Relative of extinct tortoise located in Galapagos

QUITO (Ecuador) — A scientific expedition to the Galapagos Islands has discovered a tortoise with a "strong" genetic link to a presumed-extinct subspecies made famous by the popular Lonesome George, national park officials said Friday.

George, the last known member of the *Chelonoidis nigra abingdonii* Pinta tortoise species, died in 2012 in captivity aged over 100 after refusing to provide any offspring.

The Galapagos National Parks (PNG) said the expedition had discovered a young, female specimen deemed "a high-importance find because it has a strong genetic component of the species '*Chelonoidis abingdonii*'."

She "could be a direct descendant of a pure individual, which could still be alive somewhere," the park said.

Park rangers and scientists from PNG and the Galapagos Conservancy found an additional 29 tortoises -- 11 males and 18 females -- that share part of their genetic makeup with the *Chelonoidis niger* Floreana subspecies, also thought to be extinct.

Researchers chose Wolf Volcano for their expedition because whalers and pirates who would eat the animals were thought to have dumped some of the tortoises there in the past to lighten their ships' loads.

The Galapagos Islands, located 620 miles (1,000 kilometers) off the coast of Ecuador in the Pacific Ocean, were made famous by Charles Darwin's studies of their breathtaking biodiversity.

The park says there are 10,000 to 12,000 tortoises on the volcano. — AFP ■



Lonely George, the last giant tortoise of the Pinta species, is seen at Galapagos National Park on Santa Cruz Island in June 2006. **PHOTO: AFP**

Space freighter departs Int'l Space Station

WASHINGTON — A Northrop Grumman cargo ship departed on Friday the International Space Station (ISS) after docking with the space lab for more than two months.

The Cygnus cargo spacecraft was unberthed from the station at 9:36 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (1436 GMT), heading for a destructive reentry. Cygnus is a non-reusable spacecraft. It will burn up during reentry into the Earth.

Ground controllers remotely unbolted the unpiloted cargo

spacecraft from the Earth-facing port of the Unity module and maneuvered it into release position.

Then, they sent commands to the Canadarm2 robotic arm to release the craft, according to NASA. This was a new release position for departure operations, allowing for easier drift away from the station's robotic arm.

At the time of release, the station was flying about 250 miles (400 kilometers) over the South Pacific just off the West Coast of Chile. — Xinhua ■

China’s isolation grows as virus toll reaches 259

BEIJING (China) — China faced deepening isolation over its coronavirus epidemic on Saturday as the death toll soared to 259, with the United States and Australia leading a growing list of nations to impose extraordinary Chinese travel bans.

With Britain, Russia and Sweden among the countries confirming their first infections, the virus has now spread to more than two dozen nations, sending governments scurrying to limit their exposure.

The United States toughened its stance Friday by declaring a national emergency, temporarily barring entry to foreigners who had been in China within the past two weeks.

“Foreign nationals, other than immediate family of US citizens and permanent residents... will be denied entry into the United States,” Health Secretary Alex Azar said.

Australia said it was barring entry to non-citizens arriving from China, while Australian citizens who had travelled there would be required to go into “self-isolation” for two weeks.

Vietnam suspended all flights from mainland China and Hong Kong effective from Saturday. Taiwan also initially appeared on the list of banned routes but references to the self-ruled island were later removed.

Similar expansive restrictions have been announced by countries including Italy, Singapore, and China’s northern neighbour Mongolia.

The United States, Japan, Britain, Germany and other nations had already advised their citizens not to travel to China.

Britain said Saturday it was temporarily withdrawing some diplomatic staff and their families from across the country, a day after the US State



The coronaonavirus is causing panic around the world. PHOTO: AFP

Department ordered embassy employees to send home family members under the age of 21.

‘Unkind’

Beijing insists it can contain the virus and called Washington’s advice against travel to China “unkind”.

“Certainly it is not a gesture of goodwill,” foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said.

The US emergency declaration also requires Americans returning from the ground zero Chinese province of Hubei to be placed in mandatory 14-day

quarantine, and health screening for American citizens coming from other parts of China.

The virus emerged in early December and has been traced to a market in Hubei’s capital Wuhan that sold wild animals.

It spread globally on the wings of a Lunar New Year holiday rush that sees hundreds of millions of Chinese people travel domestically and overseas.

In a bid to stop the contagion, the government has extended the holiday through this weekend and urged people to avoid public gatherings.

Many provinces and cities have called on companies to remain closed for another week after the holiday ends on Monday.

The economic fallout continued Saturday as Apple announced that “out of an abundance of caution” its China stores would be closed until 9 February. — AFP ■

Viet Nam says suspending all China flights over coronavirus

HANOI (Vietnam) — Viet Nam has suspended all China flights as part of “strengthening measures” against the coronavirus outbreak, its civil aviation authority said in a statement on Saturday.

The step applies to all airlines “which have routes between Vietnam and China” and also includes Hong Kong and Macau, the directive posted on its website said.

An earlier version included Taiwan but references to the island had been removed late Saturday.

Viet Nam is the latest country to impose extraordinary travel barriers after the virus spread to two dozen nations and killed 259 people in China where it originated in the city of Wuhan.

The United States temporarily barred entry to foreigners who had been in China within the past two weeks and Australia said it was barring entry to non-citizens arriving from China.

Italy, Singapore and Mongolia have also taken similar sweeping precautions.

The World Health Organization declared the coronavirus out-



A couple wearing protective facemasks pose for photos by the Hoan Kiem Lake in Hanoi on 31 January 2020. PHOTO: AFP

break a global health emergency on Thursday but did not advise international trade of travel restrictions.

Viet Nam’s announcement came after the country confirmed its sixth case of the coronavirus.

A 25-year-old hotel receptionist working in Nha Trang contracted the SARS-like pathogen after coming into contact with Chinese tourists who were later diagnosed with coronavirus.

She was also the first domestic infection for a Vietnamese national with no known history of

travel to China.

Three of the country’s six cases were Vietnamese nationals who had travelled to Wuhan.

The receptionist’s health is “stable, no fever or cough”, a hospital staffer told AFP on condition of anonymity, adding she had “no history of travel to China recently”.

Viet Nam has joined Thailand, China, Germany, Japan, South Korea, France and the United States as the only countries with confirmed domestic coronavirus infections. — AFP ■

Union Budget is people’s budget: Anurag Thakur

NEW DELHI (India) — Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Anurag Thakur said here on Saturday that Union Budget 2020-21 is people’s Budget.

“This budget is for new India, young India. This budget is people’s budget in the true sense,” said Thakur while talking to ANI. “The focus is on rural India, agriculture and on doubling the farmer’s income,” he said.

“103 lakh crores have been

given for the infrastructure sector. Will this not create jobs? Employment will be generated with the boost in the economy,” said the Union Minister.

In the longest Union Budget speech in history, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman today talked about tax regime, finance, agriculture, irrigation, water, sanitation, healthcare, education, infrastructure, women, digital connectivity among others.

— ANI ■

Policy for Data Centre Parks soon: Sitharaman

NEW DELHI (India) — Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday termed ‘data as the new oil’ while asserting that Analytics, Fintech and internet of things (IoT) are changing the way we deal with our lives.

Minister in her address in Parliament said government will bring out a policy to enable private sector in building Data Centre Parks throughout the country. The government has also allocated Rs 6000 crore to Bharatnet Programme in 2020-21.

She said that 1 lakh gram panchayat will link with Fibre to

the Home (FTTH) connections through Bharatnet.

In her speech, she mentioned that Knowledge Translation Clusters will be set up across different technology sectors including new and emerging areas.

She also proposed to provide early life funding, including a seed fund, to support ideation and development of early-stage Start-ups.

Presenting 2020-21 budget the minister announced an outlay of Rs. 8000 crore for the National Mission on Quantum Technologies and Applications over a period of five years. — ANI ■

Britain embarks on its future outside EU

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Britain began an uncertain future outside the European Union on Saturday after the country greeted the historic end to almost half a century of EU membership with a mixture of joy and sadness.

There were celebrations and tears on Friday as the EU's often reluctant member became the first to leave an organisation set up to forge unity among nations after the horrors of World War II.

Little has changed as of Saturday as the UK is now in an 11-month transition period negotiated as part of the divorce.

Britons will be able to work in the EU and trade freely — and vice versa — until December 31, although the UK will no longer be represented in the bloc's institutions. But legally, Britain is out.

Thousands of people waving Union Jack flags packed London's Parliament Square and sang the national anthem to mark that reality as Brexit became law at 11 pm (2300 GMT) — midnight in Brussels.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson — a figurehead in the seismic 2016 referendum vote to leave — held a private party in his Downing Street office with a clock projected on the walls outside counting down the minutes to departure.

In an address to the nation, he hailed a “new era of friendly cooperation” acknowledging there could be “bumps in the road ahead” but predicting the



A farewell message was projected onto the White Cliffs of Dover, on the southern coast of England. **PHOTO: AFP**

country could make it a “stunning success”.

“The most important thing to say tonight is that this is not an end but a beginning,” he said.

At a “Big Brexit Bash” in the market town of Morley, northern England, Raymond Stott said he was “glad it’s all over” after years of political gridlock and acrimony. “We will look after ourselves. We don’t need Europe,” said the 66-year-old.

Deep divisions

However, Brexit has exposed deep divisions in British society and many fear the consequences of ending 47 years of ties with their nearest neighbours.

Some pro-Europeans, including many of the 3.6 million EU citizens who have made their lives in Britain, marked the occasion with candlelit gatherings.

There was a sombre atmosphere among passengers on one

of the last ferries to leave the European mainland pre-Brexit and make the 42-kilometre (26-mile) journey across the English Channel.

“It’s very depressing what’s happening today,” said Alessio Bortone, an Italian who has lived in Britain for 10 years.

Some Britons in southern Spain celebrated in bars but for many pro-Europeans Friday marked a day they hoped would never come.

Brexit has also provoked soul-searching in the EU about its future after losing a country of 66 million people with global diplomatic clout and the financial centre of the City of London.

French President Emmanuel Macron described it as a “historic warning sign” that should force the EU and its remaining nations of more than 440 million people to stop and reflect.— AFP ■

Impeachment trial paused, top Democrats rush to Iowa for 11th hour campaigning

CLINTON (United States) — Four US senators running for president paused their impeachment trial duties Friday to dash to Iowa, joining top rivals for a final weekend of campaigning before the state’s all-important vote launches the Democratic Party’s nomination contest.

After a Senate vote Friday paved the way for President Donald Trump’s acquittal of charges of abuse of power and obstruction of justice, the impeachment trial was put on hold, allowing all candidates to enjoy a breathless final 72 hours of campaigning before the Iowa caucuses.

Polls show a tight contest in the heartland state, where former vice president Joe Biden this week has been taking his “Soul of the Nation” bus tour to all corners

in hopes it will help him cross the finish line in the top spot on Monday.

Former Indiana mayor Pete Buttigieg, who is running in the same moderate lane as Biden, is also on the ground, arguing it is time to turn the page to more forward-looking, galvanizing leadership.

Biden, 77, “is making the case that this is no time to take a risk on someone new,” Buttigieg, who at 38 is less than half Biden’s age, told a crowd at the Masonic Temple in the town of Clinton, Iowa.

“I would argue, this is not the time to take the risk of falling back on the familiar or relying on an old playbook that helped get us to this point,” Buttigieg said.— AFP ■



Democratic White House hopeful candidate Joe Biden, the former vice president, greets a voter during a campaign event on 31 January 2020 in Burlington, Iowa. **PHOTO: AFP**

Amended UN draft resolution calls for withdrawal of mercenaries in Libya

UNITED NATIONS (United States) — The United Kingdom sent its fellow Security Council members an amended draft resolution on Libya Friday, calling for the withdrawal of mercenaries from the country, according to the text, seen by AFP.

The draft expresses the Council’s “concern over the growing involvement of mercenaries in Libya,” despite commitments made on January 19 at an international summit in Berlin, including “ceasing all support for and withdrawing all armed mercenary personnel.”

The text also urged all member states “not to intervene in the conflict or take measures that exacerbate the conflict.”

According to diplomats, Russia strongly opposes any mention of mercenaries in the text. No date has yet been set for a vote on the resolution.

Libya has been mired in chaos since a 2011 NATO-backed uprising that killed longtime dictator Moamer Kadhafi, with two rival administrations vying for power. The conflict deepened last year when military strongman Khalifa Haftar, who controls much of the south and east of Libya, launched an assault in April to seize Tripoli, the base of the UN-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA).

Haftar has the backing of Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Russia while the GNA is

supported by Qatar and Turkey.

The first version of the British draft, dated January 24, contained no mention of armed foreign fighters.

On Thursday, UN envoy Ghassan Salame accused “unscrupulous” foreign actors — without specifying who — of continuing to meddle in Libya’s conflict, in violation of the Berlin commitments. Russia is accused of facilitating the arrival of several thousand Russian mercenaries in Libya, while Turkey allegedly brought Syrian rebel fighters into the north African nation. For the past 10 months, the Security Council has been unable to adopt any resolution on the conflict in Libya.

The amended British text “condemns the recent increase in levels of violence and demands the parties commit to a lasting ceasefire.”

It also asks UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to “submit his views on the necessary conditions for, and proposals on effective ceasefire monitoring.”

Unlike the first draft, which only mentioned the importance of the role of neighboring countries and unidentified regional organizations in contributing to a solution, the amended version specifically mentions “the African Union, League of Arab States and European Union.” — AFP ■

British man killed in avalanche on Mt. Pinneshiri in Hokkaido

SAPPORO — A British man was caught in an avalanche while skiing in Hokkaido on Saturday and was later confirmed dead at a hospital, local police said.

The man had been skiing with two others on the south side of Mt. Pinneshiri, in the town of Nakatombetsu, when the avalanche hit the group around 11:40 a.m., according to the police, who have yet to confirm his identity. The two others escaped it unharmed.

Hokkaido’s northern region including Nakatombetsu experienced heavy snowfall on Thursday and Friday, raising the risk of avalanches, a local meteorological observatory said.— Kyodo News ■

China outbreak forces Hyundai to suspend flagship SUV production

SEOUL (South Korea) — Hyundai Motor, South Korea’s largest automaker, suspended the domestic production of its flagship sport utility vehicle this weekend as a result of a supply disruption caused by the deadly virus outbreak in China.

The deadly virus that first appeared in the central Chinese city of Wuhan has resulted in 259 deaths and spread to more than two dozen other countries.

Hyundai’s decision was made following factory closures in China that have led to shortages of

supplies, including the complete electrical wiring system of a vehicle, the Korean automaker said.

“We have cancelled overtime factory hours that had been scheduled for Saturday and Sunday to produce our Palisade vehicle,” Jin Cha, a Hyundai spokesperson, told AFP on Saturday.

The Palisade SUV was the only vehicle that had been scheduled for production this weekend, she added.

The firm is “carefully monitoring the ongoing situation” to make further

decisions to cope with the supply disruption, the spokesperson added.

The spread of the respiratory illness has prompted businesses to shut down in China, and airlines around the world have cancelled flights, prompting concerns about the hit to China’s economy and beyond.

Markets have struggled in recent days as the World Health Organization declared a global health emergency over the virus, with analysts concerned about its impact on world economic growth. — AFP



Factory closures in China due to the virus outbreak has led to shortages of supplies, including the complete electrical wiring system of a Hyundai Motor vehicle. PHOTO: AFP

Amazon highlights taxes paid in pushback against critics

WASHINGTON (United States) — Amazon said Friday it paid more than \$1 billion in US federal income taxes in 2019 as it pushed back at criticism over its corporate responsibility.

A blog post by Amazon sought to highlight its investments and contributions to the US economy, in a move to fend off critics claiming it benefits from taxpayer subsidies.

“Since 2010, we’ve made more than \$270 billion in investments in corporate offices, customer fulfillment and cloud infrastructure, wind and solar farms, eco-friendly equipment and machinery and compensation to our teams,” Amazon said. “These investments are accelerating, and we estimate that they have contributed an additional \$168 billion to the US GDP

since 2010.”

The tech giant, whose market valuation moved back above \$1 trillion following its earnings report Thursday, said it paid more than \$1 billion in US federal income taxes in 2019, along with \$2.4 billion in other federal taxes, including payroll taxes and customs duties.

It said it “collected and remitted nearly \$9 billion in sales and use taxes to states and localities throughout the US” last year and paid over \$1.6 billion in state and local taxes.

Amazon faced criticism over its prior annual reports which appeared to show it paid no federal income taxes in 2017 and 2018, and received some rebates after a tax reform measure passed by Congress—joining several other large corporations whose



Amazon says it paid more than \$1 billion in US income taxes in 2019 as it highlighted its contributions to the US economy a day after reporting its results for the year. PHOTO: AFP

tax bill was cut by the law. Amazon’s statement Friday said it adheres to “all applicable federal and state tax laws,” while noting that it takes advantage of laws that encourage economic investment and job creation. “Over the last decade, no other US-based company has created more jobs than Amazon,” the state-

ment said. “Our investments have led to the creation of over two million jobs in the US.” It said its labor force — now 798,000 worldwide — includes some 500,000 in the United States, where it pays a wage of at least \$15 an hour, above the required minimums in most states.— AFP ■

Market indices tumble after Budget announcements

MUMBAI (India) — Equity indices were on a downward swing during afternoon on Saturday as proposals in the Union Budget 2020-21 failed to cheer investors.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced cuts in income tax rates for individuals and scrapping of dividend distribution tax (DDT) besides a host of measures to reverse the falling economic growth. The S&P BSE Sensex was trading around 40,159-mark, down 563 points, or 1.38 per cent. IDBI Bank share price rose more than 17 per cent after the government announced that it will sell its stake in the bank.

The data available on BSE shows that the government held a 47.11 per cent stake in IDBI Bank as of December 31, 2019, while Life Insurance Corporation of India held a 51 per cent stake.

Hindustan Unilever was also up 2 per cent, SBI and Ultratech Cement rose 1 per cent and were the top gainers in the Sensex.

While on the other hand, Powergrid, Tech Mahindra, and NTPC were all down by 1 per cent were the top laggards

The broader Nifty50 index was trading near 11,813-mark, down 148 points, or 1.24 per cent at 1:45 pm today. — ANI ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI ACCORD VOY. NO. (0025-637S/N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V UNI ACCORD VOY. NO. (0025-637S/N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2-2-2020 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.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S EVERGREEN MARINE
(S’PORE) PTE., LTD

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY. NO. (044 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY. NO. (044 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2-2-2020 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 LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ALVAN VOY. NO. (SCY 1072)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ALVAN VOY. NO. (SCY 1072) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2-2-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT 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 LAND AND SEA
INTERMODAL LOGISTICS SDN BHD LINE

Phone No: 2301185



The 124-mile long Kalay-Falam-Haka Road will be upgraded by the Ministry of Construction. **PHOTO: MOC**

Transport infrastructure upgrades take shape in **Chin State**

By Kyaw Htike Soe

LOCATED in western Myanmar along the border with India and Bangladesh, Chin State is a mountainous region with few transportation links and remains one of the least developed areas of the country. Chin's State development was hampered by poor infrastructure, inadequate transportation network and fewer investments. With an estimated population of 490,000, Chin State consists of 72,723 households from 470 village-tracts.

Transportation barriers and lack of adequate infrastructures such as electricity are the main challenges for local people in Chin State. The local government has been attempting to improve the transportation infrastructure, injecting about 50 per cent of its budget into reconstruction and reinforcement of the road networks, to make operational in all seasons. Total length of rural roads in Chin State was recorded 4,770 miles including concrete, tarred, gravel, and earthen facilities. In ad-

dition, there are 404 wooden, suspension, Bailey and concrete bridges and box culverts in Chin State. The length of roads constructed across Chin State was 1,317 miles in which around 426 miles are managed by the Union Government while more than 890 miles are handled by the local government.

All road networks in Chin State were reportedly repaired by the local government in co-operation with the Ministry of Construction by spending over K91,669 million in the fiscal year 2018-2019. Maintenance work for road networks in Chin State will also be undertaken with the use of nearly K75,000 million in the current financial year, according to a senior official from the local government. Construction of a new road financed by the World Bank is scheduled to begin in October this year, the local government official said. The new road would link Kalay in Sagaing Region with Falam and Haka in Chin State. "The new road marks the first of



The Kaladan River Crossing Bridge Project is slated for completion by the end of March this year. **PHOTO: MG MG KYAWT**

its kind funded by the World Bank in Chin State and the project will be implemented by the Ministry of Construction beginning October this year," he added.

He highlighted that the Kalay-Falam-Haka road is crucial to link Chin State with

other regions and states in the country and once completed, it will contribute to the development of Chin State as well as Sagaing Region. The project will be developed with the use of a US\$ 67 million loan from the World Bank and is part of US\$ 200 million of financial aid

provided to Myanmar after the country experienced floods in 2015, said a representative from the World Bank. The 124-mile long road will be built by the Ministry of Construction. The World Bank and the Ministry of Construction have rewarded Cardno Myanmar Co,

Ltd to conduct environmental and social impacts of the road project with the aim of lessening negative effects on the environment to a certain extent and take grievances of local people into consideration.

A bridge crossing the Kaladan River on the Paletwa-Matupi Road in Paletwa Township, Chin State is being built by the Bridge Construction Group – 1 under the Ministry of Construction and the project is reportedly slated for completion by the end of March this year. Local people currently use two road sections as the Kaladan River crossing bridge is under construction. Construction of the bridge commenced in the fiscal year 2017-2018 through the Union Budget. The facility is being constructed mostly from concrete and will be 592 metres (1,942 ft) long and 7.5 metres wide. The waterway under the facility is 115.4 metres wide, and its clearance is 15 meters at the highest water level. The bridge will be able to withstand up to 60 tons of weight and pedestrian walkways on the structure are one meter wide each.

Once completed, residents from nearby areas who once couldn't directly come to Paletwa by motorcar will be able use the new bridge in all seasons with greater ease, thereby contributing to socioeconomic



ic development of the area. In addition, the facility is expected to promote development of trade in Chin State, facilitate swift flow of commodities, reduce transportation charges, and lift socioeconomic status of local people.



Prudential joins hands with MyanCare to provide free digital healthcare access to thousands of families

P **RUDENTIAL** Myanmar Life Insurance Ltd (“Prudential Myanmar”), the wholly-owned business unit of Prudential Corporation Asia, a leading life insurer in Asia, and MyanCare, a pioneering telemedicine company, today announced a first-of-its kind initiative in Myanmar that marks the beginning of an exclusive digital-led strategic collaboration to improve healthcare access for people across the country. Through the ‘PRUCare’ programme, Prudential Myanmar will provide complimentary healthcare consultation to 5,000 families in Myanmar facilitated through the MyanCare mobile application for one year.

As a special gesture to recognise and appreciate the efforts of individuals that play a crucial role in helping build the foundation of Myanmar’s society, the PRUCare programme will identify 5,000 such persons across the country, such as teachers, nurses, social workers, security personnel and janitors, and provide them and their families with unlimited free voice and video healthcare consultations facilitated through the MyanCare mobile application for one year. The programme will be rolled out in phases across 2020.

Using the MyanCare mobile application, these 5,000 users can seamlessly set up appointments for themselves and their family members when the need arises to consult with any of the general practitioners listed



Mr Asit Rath, CEO of Prudential Myanmar and U Zaw Min Tun, CEO of Myan Care shake hands during the signing ceremony of MoU. **PHOTO: PRUDENTIAL MYANMAR.**

in the MyanCare app. Prudential Myanmar will cover all service fees related to the consultations booked and conducted on the MyanCare app.

Mr Asit Rath, Chief Executive Officer of Prudential Myanmar, said, “Prudential Myanmar is committed to improving healthcare access for people in Myanmar by leveraging innovative technology solutions. PRUCare, our first initiative with MyanCare, will allow us to recognise people across the country who work tirelessly to support our society and communities. To reduce their stress and financial pressure of seeking medical consultations for themselves or their family members, we will provide quality healthcare consultations at the click of a button and fully cover

the related fees for a one-year period.”

“This is our first significant milestone that supports our vision of helping people in Myanmar protect their health and grow their wealth and underscores our “We DO Care” spirit. While the current programme with MyanCare will cater to 5,000 families, we aim to extend this initiative to more families across the country in the years to come. Prudential Myanmar is excited to partner with MyanCare and we look forward to launching many more innovative offerings jointly in the coming months and years ahead,” added Mr Asit Rath.

U Zaw Min Tun, CEO of MyanCare, said, “MyanCare is proud to collaborate with Prudential, a leading life insurer in Asia,

to extend the use of the MyanCare mobile application to more people across Myanmar. The imbalance of supply of healthcare services and workload demand has been a major pain point in Myanmar. As many live far away from adequate healthcare services, they hesitate to meet with doctors due to financial, transportation and time factors and only visit the hospital when they have entered the late stages of the illness and their symptoms worsen. Meanwhile, many general practitioners who receive fewer patient visits face limitations in providing healthcare services. Together with Prudential Myanmar, we are trying to change this, by encouraging people to seek medical help with the use of MyanCare,”—GNLM

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Ukraine fighter Naimjon Tuhtaboyev (L) lands a punch on Myanmar lethwei fighter Too Too (R) during the main bout of the World Lethwei Championship. **PHOTO: WLC**

Ukrainian Naimjon claims WLC belt with defeat of Too Too

UKRAINIAN Naimjon Tuhtaboyev defeated Myanmar's lethwei star Too Too with a split decision to claim the World Lethwei Championship belt in the main event of WLC: Battlebones Lethwei Fight at Theinpyu Lethwei Stadium in Yangon on Friday.

Too Too, former WLC champion, relied on his strong kicks, while Naimjon Tuhtaboyev displayed his accurate punches and strikes.

Both fighters finished the fight with no knockouts, as the Ukrainian fighter was nominated as the better fighter of the match and won the championship title.

In the co-main event, Myanmar's Soe Min Aung Luktupfah knocked out Cambodia's Sok Rith in the second round at 1 minute and 31 second.

In the women's Bantamweight fight event, Souris Manfredi of France defeated Tran Thi Lua of Viet Nam in the first round at 1 minute and 51 second.

In the men's Welterweight event, Italian Samuel Toscano defeated Myanmar's Saw Kauing Htet in a split decision.

In the men's lightweight fight, Myanmar's Hein Tun Aung defeated Em Sothy of Cambodia in a unanimous decision.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Myanmar Futsal League: Week-18 sees big victories

WEEK-18 matches in the Myanmar Futsal League concluded yesterday with a huge win by the Myanmar Futsal League top classed teams.

All of the matches were played at the National Indoor Stadium II in Yangon.

Victoria University College Futsal Club trounced Let Wel Thone Nara Futsal Club by a score of 11-1, while Myanmar Imperial University College had a huge win over AMM Brothers Futsal Club by a score of 21-0, and GV Futsal Club defeated Myoma JY Futsal Club by a score of 6-0.

Also, Dream Team Futsal Club won 11-2 over Futsal Chitthu Futsal Club, and Do Do Ko

Ko Futsal Club won by a narrow 4-3 over Winner Futsal Club.

The match between Myanmar Football Federation MFF U-19 Team and On Doctor Futsal Club finished with a 2-2 draw.

After the Week-18 matches, Victoria University College Futsal Club is still leading the scoring table of the Myanmar National League with a record of no defeats, and Myanmar Imperial University Futsal Club is standing in second place with the same points, but a goal difference with the VUC futsal club.

Also, GV Futsal club is sitting in third place with four points less than the top two teams.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)



Players from Shan United (white) and Ayeyawady United (red) vying for the ball at yesterday's Week-4 match at home stadium of Ayeyawady in Patheingyi. **PHOTO: AUFC**

Myanmar National League: Ayeyawady beats defending champions 1-0

AYEYAWDY United defeated current champion of the MPT Myanmar National League, Shan United, 1-0 during the Week-4 match of MNL played at the Kyauk Taing Stadium in Patheingyi yesterday.

The win for Ayeyawady United was mostly dependent upon foreign player Akwa Raphael Success.

The match was entertaining, as both teams are Myanmar National League giants, and the

teams played very aggressively from the kick-off.

The match was scoreless in the first half, as both teams could not convert multiple opportunities into goals.

Ayeyawady United changed tactics in the second half in the striking position, which resulted in the first score of the match.

At the 57-minute mark, Akwa Raphael Success scored the first and winning goal for Ayeyawady United, with a pass

through multiple Shan United defenders.

For the rest of the match, Ayeyawady United's defenders blocked every scoring opportunity by Shan United and ended the match with a single goal.

Following the win, Ayeyawady United has chalked up three consecutive wins and could end their lost history in the previous Myanmar National League season final match against Shan United.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)



Goal keeper of the MFF U-19 futsal team (green) grabs the ball at the match against On Doctor FC at the Week-19 match of the Myanmar Futsal League at Thuwunna Indoor Stadium II in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MFF FUTSAL**



By May Thu Htay
*2nd year Honours Student,
English Specialization,
University of Yangon*

In talking about the poker face, in what conditions do we normally find a person wearing a poker face? What time do you think is the right time for us to reveal our poker face? What kind of person does normally wear a poker face? Simply, A Poker Face is an expression that shows no emotions on a face despite bearing anger, agony and dissatisfaction.

Let me tell you a story about a girl who seems to seclude herself from the society. She always wears a poker face which appears as a sad and stern face so that no one is willing to associate with her. Although everyone is reminded like “Don’t judge a book by its cover”, everyone cannot still resist the temptation of the blurb with the good brief at the first page. It goes the same for people. In this world, although there are many people around the smart ones, there are no one around the one who rarely shows her confidence, smartness, happiness on her face. They tend to draw conclusions that she is someone who is weird and no one comforts her. In fact, she suffers from a disease which lets her cause tense somehow and become sad inside her mind which is why she cannot even smile at a college.

Poker faces should be worn sometimes in today’s society. The people we have to deal with are not sincere enough and they are always awaiting us to push into trouble. Thus, for this kind of people, it is better to show our poker face in interaction with them so that they cannot step on our even small error.

Another is when you are irritated or feel like you are offended, at that moment, one who can wear a poker face is adapting himself into a safety zone. A poker face is the best choice to disguise his anger or dissatisfaction with the other as the other side cannot obviously notice his anger immediately. In this case, a poker face can cease the eminent conflict.

So, I must say it, someone may intentionally mask poker face occasionally or someone wears poker face as they are sad in the inner mind. Don’t assess that all poker face wearers are bad people as in the other way round, perhaps, they are showing sign they need comfort or they are saving themselves from getting into unwanted social confusions. However, wearing a poker face all the time will surely make you look aging. Just wear sometimes.





The greatest wealth : wellness and wisdom

By Mg Sila

After I had my breakfast, I read the latest news on my mobile phone. The death toll from China's coronavirus outbreak keeps rising and has even surpassed 250.

So I searched the latest news about the vaccine for the novel virus. The news story dated 30 January says scientists are racing to develop a vaccine. Currently, there is no cure and no vaccine for the deadly virus. Thousands of people were already infected.

As the outbreak of the new coronavirus continues to spread outside China, the World Health Organization (WHO) also declared a global emergency on 31 January.

When I was a kid, the disaster we worried about most was a nuclear war. That's why we had thought about the place where we must be hidden if nuclear attacks came, and how to survive in the places we hid. When I entered adulthood, I personally wanted to be rich and famous.

According to a recent study, like me, young people want to be rich and successful. We think that being rich and being famous could help us to be happy by making the things we want with the help of money and fame. It is somewhat true but not always.

So far nuclear weapons are the most dangerous weapons in the world, and people are cornering about the nuclear war which can kill many people.

Until the outbreak of Wuhan coronavirus, I thought that nuclear attacks will be the world's most dangerous catastrophe. Now I come to know that the greatest risk of global catastrophe doesn't look like this.

Nuclear war can be stooped by the people who create the war, while the catastrophes of an epidemic and natural disasters are difficult to stop. No one purposely created but we have to stop them.

A scientist says that if anything kills over 10 million people in the next few decades, it's most likely to be a highly infectious virus rather than a war. Not missiles, but microbes.

As an ordinary one, I can't say that his prediction will be surely true. But I'm concerned about the people on the planet I live in and love.

In the afternoon, I had a chat with my younger brother who was playing a mobile game. In his game, he has to kill his enemies by using various and complex weapons. If he can kill, he wins the game.

I asked him if he uses any nuclear weapons to kill his enemies. He said he has to use it in his game.

In the games, we have to kill the people by using various deadly weapons. Those who are skillful at war can win the war game.

Now, all people have to fight against is not like the war between two groups. In the war games, one group can win and survive. In the game of epidemic and natural disasters, we need to win all the games against them in order to survive.

In history, we won all the games against any kind of catastrophes including an epidemic and natural disasters. We have to try to win the present and future games of epidemic and natural disaster that no one purposely created. I believe that the best way to beat the catastrophes is by using collective wisdom (knowledge) of the people.

All of us want to be wealthy. The first step to be wealthy is to be healthy. To be healthy, we have to fight against the enemies of health, diseases. Most of the diseases can be beaten by the medical knowledge of our past generation. But, current and coming new diseases have to be defeated by our generation's own wisdom (knowledge).

I believe that we can beat new diseases with the help of our collective strength and wisdom.



May we see the portraits of our esteemed ones on the banknotes



By **S. Shwe Lin Yaung**
B.Sc, Pathein University

An auspicious Happy New Year's news was heard. The 1,000 kyat note will recount the portrait of independence leader Aung San. It will be released on Independence Day, 2020 to the public. It's fun and I'm amusingly happy. The only thing that can be said is that Independence Day is the public holiday and how will it be distributed? So far, this banknote has not been in Ko Myint Zan's hand. Nevertheless, Bogyoke's photo is visible and it is quite satisfactory indeed.

In fact, the pictures of the lion and the elephant on the banknote have been used for ages. In spite of assuming the unknown, people have not been satisfied with using such notes. They wanted to use just like paper money with the portraits of esteemed leaders. Now, as a first step in the country, we have to use real money and Ko Myint Zan almost jumped up with joy. He did not know the era of five pyas or ten pyas but knew well and remembered the pocket money for their fourth-grade students was two kyats a

day.

He remembered that he could have had my stomach full at the school cafeteria for two kyats. Also, he remembered that when he was given four coins of 50 pyas, that is worth two kyats and so for the coin, his grandma made a small cotton strap that was tied around his neck. When the bag was filled in, it is the sound of the bells ringing. He would also like to mention that money with respectable personalities had made their children interesting. When they were interested in the owners of the paper they were handling, they asked the adults. Adults also mentioned it. This was General Aung San who was the national leader who led the country's independence. The man who had the chains on the 45 kyat note was called the Thakhin Phoe Hla Gyi who was the leader of the 1300s oil strike (1300 Revolution). In addition that was 90 kyats and the person above was named Sayar San. He created the image of the farmers' historical account of the campaign. He mobilized grass-root farmers to be against the powerful British colonists.

When Ko Myint Zan heard it in his childhood days, he had ever had his eyes wide open and been startled. At the same time, the desire to respectfully deal with the notes in his hearts was

growing. However, it didn't take long. People-faced banknotes disappeared one by one. By the time he became aware of them, in his hands, there were banknotes with pictures of lions and elephants. What about his wallets like small zoos? After he lost his precious faces on the banknotes, there came across a picture of a lion that had come to our door. The people did not seem to have a lot of value and value on paper money. They including Ko Myint Zan did not know why they did not value them.

What was more, the value of the banknotes has fallen. Money was inflating. In spite of getting two kyats for pocket money when they were a fourth-grade student, that of a fourth-grade student today would at least be 1000 kyats. So, one kyat, five kyat, and ten kyat notes might have gone to the museum. Their real-life has changed into the antique that had to be collected. Is money something we value? So, if the product is worth making, then the user may want to set a price.

Today, the banknotes using in our country are very old and dirty. Some of them are torn. People have to hold them and use them for daily living. They do not also pay respect to them, it is just Ko Myint Zan's individual opinion.

In Thailand, our neighbor, they have pictures of their kings in their banknotes. It is also Gandhi in India

Build a federal Union with strength from diversity

Ethnic Cultural Festival-2020 kicked off yesterday at the Kyaikasan Grounds in Yangon, displaying the cultural and natural environments of diverse ethnic people residing nationwide.

This year's festival focuses on the culture of the Kayah ethnic people, following the 2019 festival, which highlighted the Kachin ethnic people.

Myanmar has over 100 ethnic tribes, who have been living through thick and thin for centuries. All the ethnic people of the Union, while taking pride in this kind of unity, are responsible to work together to build a federal democratic union.

The Myanmar Ethnic Culture Festival will continue through 7th February.

The festival is held to assist in the national peace process, as well as to showcase ethnic solidarity and culture to the citizens of Myanmar and foreign visitors, boost tourism, expand the sale of regional products and ethnic textiles to international markets, and create employment opportunities for ethnic youths.

This festival can be likened to a union festival where interaction with ethnic nationals and their cultures are available and seeks to boost travel and all-round development for their regions.

Myanmar is gifted with beautiful natural scenery and has the potential to expand nature-based tourism and support the development of ethnic regions.—GNLM



PHOTOS: MNA



SUNDAY COMICS

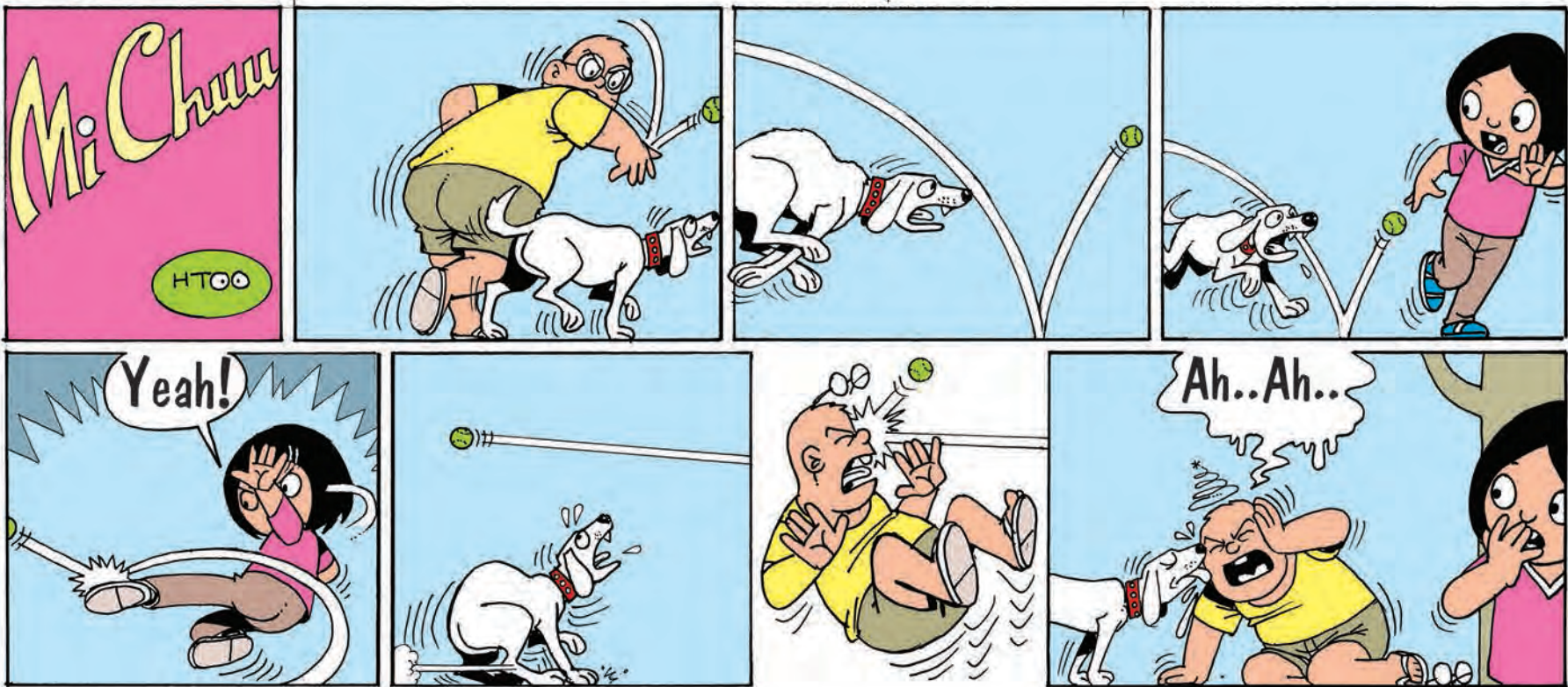
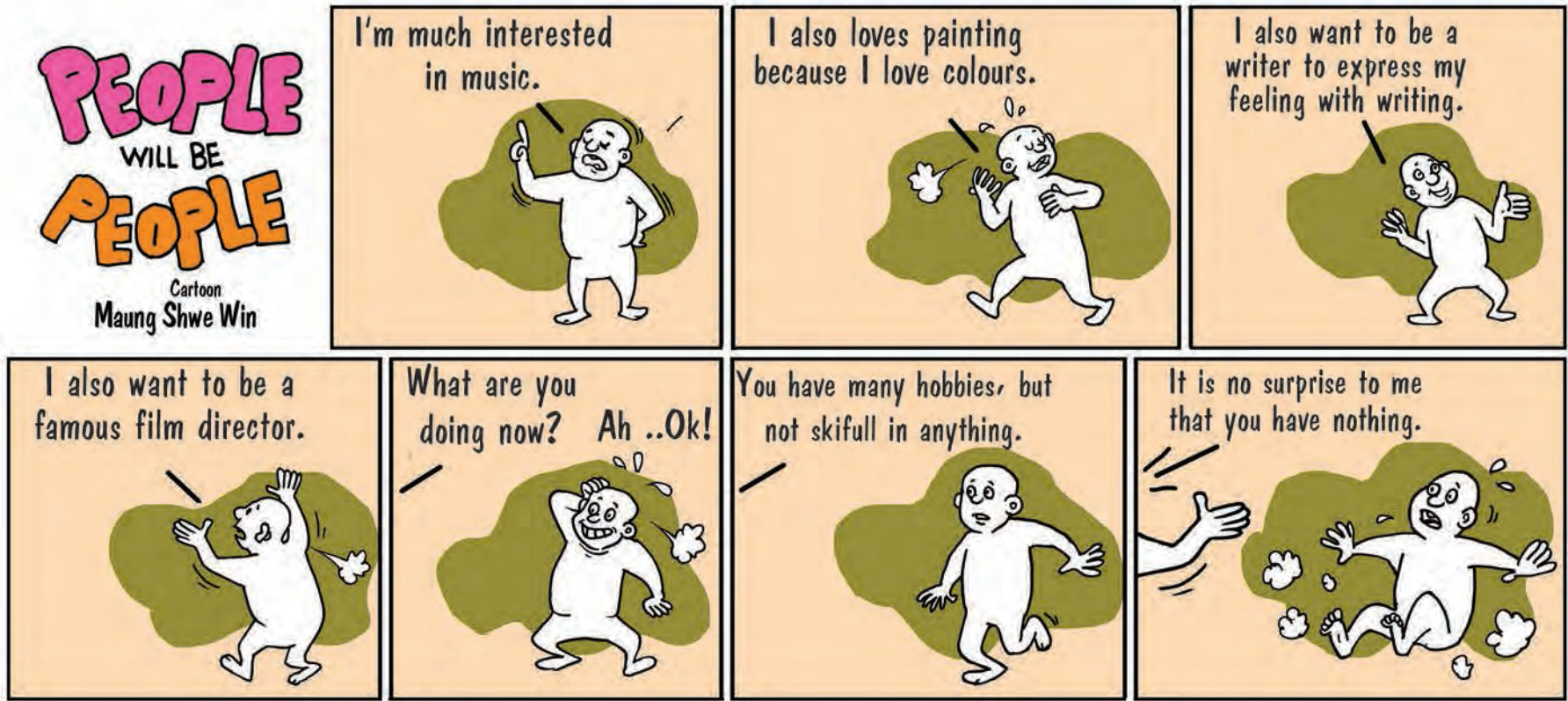




PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

The Shitthaung Temple

By Maung Maung Aye

The Shitthaung Temple is one of the most renowned temples in Mrauk U. It was established in 1535 by King Min Bar Gyi, the most powerful Rakhine king of Mrauk U Period. It is so named because it housed 8,4000 images of the Buddha to be enlightened



in the future. King Min Bar Gyi ascended the Mrauk U palace in 1532. Three years afterwards, the Portuguese soldiers who were based on Sundvipa island at the mouth of the Ganges river invaded Rakhine territory with a great navy. But the Rakhine army defeated them and drove them away out of their domain. In commemoration of that victory, King Min Bar Gyi built this temple. So it was also known

as 'Yan Aung Zeya Temple'. Having sought advice from Sayadaw Vens. Aggacideya and Aggamuni, Hermit U Mra Wah ,wise Minister Vimala and his son Maha Panna Kyaw, the king had the Phoe Khaung hill one kilometer north of the palace bulldozed and levelled and the temple built on that ground by 1,000 masons within one year.

The Shitthaung Temple is the archaeological treasure house which ranks top in Mrauk U. Its roof is surmounted with a large bell-shaped stupa surrounded by 26 satellite stupas. The outer wall is interspersed with twenty-eight niches in which are life-size images of the seated Buddha placed back to back. All life-size reliefs at this temple represent King Min Bar Gyi as the earthly counterpart of Sakka, King of gods who resides in Tavatimsa on the Summit of Mount Meru. The six tiers of bas-reliefs at this temple may correspond to the six planes of existence. The lowest level of the reliefs depicts animals of all kinds, humans, etc enjoying life in the world of desire. The central level depicts the former lives of the Gotama Buddha from the jataka tales that give the moral lessons to all visitors. The Lokapalas Devas are depicted at the fifth level. The uppermost level represents Brah-

mas or gods. At the four corners, the reliefs are interspersed by life-size statues which represent King Min Bar Gyi.

At intervals around the plinths are figures of the earth-goddess Vasundhare wringing her hair to bear witness to the Danaparami (Perfection of donation) fulfilled by the Budhisatta. Byala, a mythical creature, which is the national emblem of the Rakhine, is found inside of the Shit-thaung Temple. The Rakhines regard it as a symbol bringing good luck and auspiciousness to them.

The Shit-thaung temple festival is one of the most popular festivals in Rakhine. The festival usually falls on May 23 and lasts five days. Rakhine traditional long-boat races, Rakhine Kyin Pwes (the Rakhine traditional wrestling contests), Rakhine traditional dances and Buddha Pujaniya ceremony are held during the festival. During the festive days, the pilgrims from far and near flock to this festival. So the whole town is alive and agog with festive mood from the sun-rise to sun-set.

During the Buddhapujaniya ceremony, beautiful Rakhine damsels perform the Rakhine traditional dance in praise of the attributes of Triple Gem. These

dances show great devotion of the Rakhines to Buddhism from ancient times. In the long-boat race, 10 boats have to participate, each group comprising 15 strong, muscular long-boat rowers. Many spectators on both banks of the creek applaud the contesting rowers. This race shows the unity and outstanding rowing skill of the Rakhines. In Kyin pwes, the Kyin wrestlers who come from Taw-phyanhaung area in Ponnagyun Township and Yanbye Township are famous and mostly win many trophies. This race shows quickness, mindfulness, stamina and art of the wrestling. Rakhine nationals take much pride in this sport as a national identity and they desire to preserve Kyin wrestling as an ancient Rakhine sport.

To conclude, the Shitthaung Temple is the show-case of Buddhist art and architecture. So it reflects the high architectural standard of ancient Rakhines and their profound devotion to Buddhism. Like this temple, other pagodas and temples in Mrauk U are embellished with excellent works of art and architecture. So it is thought by the writer that all the temples and pagodas in Mrauk U including the Shitthaung Temple should be kept in situ.



To my dear, dear friend

O my dear lovely friend
Your words in never end
And repeatedly you saying
“She’s my world and everything.”

Soulless shining in the sky
Sharing the light, world in blind
A soulless tree called Green Banyan
Brings its shade for everyone.

Soulless thing, a little cube
Lying on way through.
These three little soulless things
Giving welfare to beings.

O my dear, dear friend
“She’s my world” will never end
But you look those tiny things
They three are, at you, mocking.

Takkato Min Maw
Translated by
Nwe Phyo (Cherry Land)

FROM PAGE- S-3

banknotes. Ho Chi Minh's image on Vietnamese money The Chinese currency looks like a mega-monger. In the Japanese yen, a picture of Higuchi Li-chiyo, the first female writer of the Miji era, who may have been a contemporary of King Mindon. As well as non-political citizens, such as the portrait of medical scientist Noguchi Hideyo, are honored to be proud of their finances. So let us look at the popular US dollar. They also paid tribute to their country's leaders. George Washington, on a dollar note, Mark Jackson, on a two-dollar note, Abraham Lincoln in the 5 dollar note, picture of Alexander Hamilton on 10 dollar note. Andrew Jackson on a 20-dollar note. Benjamin Franklin's picture on 100 dollar note.

In other countries, the portraits of the people who are proudly respected by their nationals are printed on their currency. So, on our banknotes, the people who are respected by the people of the country should be mentioned. For example, former UN Secretary-General U Thant, Thakhin Ko Taw Hmine, the literati of independence, and so on. Now, the portrait of Bogyoke Aung San on 1000 Kyat banknotes has come back into the hands of Myanmar nationals. Ko Myint Zan silently wishes that more replacement in banknotes to the pictures of lions and elephants' places could have been seen and used as soon as possible.

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT SCHEDULE

YANGON TO BANGKOK				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
PG706	5:50	8:10	Daily	
8M335	7:30	9:15	Daily	
UB-019	7:25	9:20	Daily	
TG2304	9:35	11:30	Daily	
PG702	10:30	12:30	1,2,3,4,6,7	
TG2302	11:20	13:15	Daily	
PG708	15:35	17:35	Daily	
8M331	16:30	18:15	Daily	
UB-017	17:35	19:30	Daily	
PG704	18:35	20:35	Daily	
TG306	19:50	21:45	Daily	

YANGON TO DON MUEANG				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
DD4231	8:05	9:50	Daily	
FD252	8:45	10:30	Daily	
SL201	8:30	10:20	1,3,4,5,7	
FD254	17:40	19:25	Daily	
FD258	21:40	23:30	Daily	
SL207	19:35	21:25	1,2,4,6,7	
DD4239	21:00	22:45	Daily	

YANGON TO GUANGZHOU				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
8M711	8:40	13:15	2,4,5,7	
CZ3056	11:25	15:55	3,6	
CZ3056	17:30	22:00	1,5	

YANGON TO SINGAPORE				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
UB001	7:15	23:45	Daily	
8M231	8:20	12:40	Daily	
SQ997	10:25	15:10	Daily	
3K582	11:30	16:05	1,4,5,7	
UB003	16:00	20:30	Daily	
MI519	17:35	22:10	1,2,4,6,7	
MI521	18:30	22:55	3,4,5,6	
3K584	19:40	00:10	1,2,3,5,6,7	

YANGON TO SEOUL INCHEON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
KE472	23:30	7:25	Daily	

YANGON TO TAIPEI				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
CI7916	10:45	16:20	Daily	

BANGKOK TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
TG2303	7:50	8:45	Daily	
PG701	8:45	9:40	1,2,3,4,6,7	
TG2301	9:35	10:30	Daily	
8M336	10:40	11:25	Daily	
UB020	10:20	11:15	Daily	
PG707	13:45	14:40	Daily	
PG703	16:50	17:45	Daily	
TG305	18:05	18:50	Daily	
8M332	19:15	20:00	Daily	
PG705	20:30	21:55	Daily	
UB018	20:30	21:25	Daily	

DON MUEANG TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
DD4230	6:20	7:05	Daily	
FD251	7:30	8:15	Daily	
SL200	6:45	7:35	1,3,4,5,7	
FD253	16:25	17:05	Daily	
FD257	20:30	21:10	Daily	
SL206	18:55	19:45	1,2,4,6,7	
DD4238	19:30	20:15	Daily	

GUANGZHOU TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
CZ3055	8:30	10:20	3,6	
8M712	14:15	15:50	2,4,5,7	
CZ3055	14:40	16:30	1,5	

SINGAPORE TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
SQ998	7:55	09:20	Daily	
3K581	9:10	10:35	1,2,3,5,6,7	
UB002	13:00	14:30	Daily	
8M232	13:45	15:15	Daily	
MI518	15:15	16:40	1,2,4,6,7	
MI520	14:10	17:35	3,4,5,6	
3K583	17:30	18:45	1,4,5,7	
UB004	21:15	22:45	Daily	

SEOUL INCHEON TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
KE471	18:15	22:10	Daily	

TAIPEI TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
CI7915	7:00	9:50	Daily	

YANGON TO KUALA LUMPUR				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
AK505	8:25	12:40	Daily	
MH741	11:15	15:45	Daily	
OD551	12:25	16:45	1,4,7	
MH743	16:10	20:30	1,4,6,7	
AK503	19:10	23:30	Daily	
OD553	23:55	4:20+1	2,3,5,6	

YANGON TO HONG KONG				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
KA251	1:25	6:00	1,2,3,4,6,7	
UB8027	7:05	11:45	3,5,7	
KA275	17:05	21:50	1,3,5,7	

YANGON TO DHAKA				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
BG061	14:15	16:00	1,3,6	

YANGON TO DUBAI				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
EK389	2:00	5:45	1,2,4,6	

YANGON TO BEIJING				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
CA906	23:50	5:50+1	1,3,4,5,7	

YANGON TO HANIO				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
VN956	19:00	21:30	Daily	
VJ918	18:55	21:20	Daily	

YANGON TO HO CHI MINH				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
VN942	12:10	15:05	1,3,4,6,7	

YANGON TO TOKYO				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
NH814	22:10	6:45+1	Daily	

YANGON TO DOHA				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
QR919	1:05	4:55	1,3,4,6,7	

YANGON TO CHIANG MAI				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
PG724	13:40	15:30	1,3,4,7	

KUALA LUMPUR TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
AK504	6:45	7:55	Daily	
MH740	9:10	10:25	Daily	
OD550	10:15	11:30	1,4,7	
MH742	13:55	15:05	1,4,6,7	
AK502	17:20	18:30	Daily	
OD552	21:45	22:55	2,3,5,6	

HONG KONG TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
UB8028	12:45	14:30	3,5,7	
KA250	21:50	23:35	1,2,3,5,6,7	
KA254	14:20	16:10	1,3,5,7	

DHAKA TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
BG060	10:45	13:30	1,3,6	

DUBAI TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
EK388	10:30	16:15	1,3,5,7	

BEIJING TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
CA905	19:00	22:55	1,3,4,5,7	

HANOI TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
VN957	16:40	18:05	Daily	
VJ917	16:30	17:55	Daily	

HO CHI MINH TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
VN943	9:30	11:05	1,3,4,6,7	

TOKYO TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
NH813	11:00	16:25	Daily	

DOHA TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
QR918	8:25	17:50	2,3,5,6,7	

CHIANG MAI TO YANGON				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
PG723	12:05	12:55	1,3,5,7	

YANGON TO KUNMING				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
MU2580	10:55	14:35	2,4,6	
MU2012	13:40	20:50	3	
MU9750	15:55	19:35	2,4,6	
MU9758	15:55	19:35	1,3,5,7	

MANDALAY TO BANGKOK				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
PG710	14:30	16:55	Daily	
PG714	19:15	21:40	Daily	

MANDALAY TO DON MUEONG				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
FD245	12:55	15:20	Daily	

MANDALAY TO KUNMING				
FLIGHT	DEP	ARV	DATE	
MU2568	9:25	12:25	Daily	
MU2040	15:20	18:25	1,3,7	
MU9742	15:20	18:25	2,4,6	
MU9748	21:20	00:25	2,4	