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Message of Greetings sent by President U Win Myint on occasion of 73rd Anniversary of Shan State Day celebrations

(7 February 2020)

Dear esteemed ethnic brothers and sisters living in the Shan State,

On the occasion of the 73rd Anniversary of Shan State Day which falls on 7th February, I am very happy and deem it a great honour to have the opportunity to send this message of greetings.

Myanmar, where all ethnic national races have been living in close friendship since time immemorial, lost her

sovereignty and independence in 1885 and came under the rule of British colonialists. Myanmar national races who did not wish to become slaves opposed the British in many ways and the British created disunity among the ethnic national races and governed the central plains and the hilly regions separately by causing disunity.

After the Second World War, all the people worked hard to gain independence in unity under the leader-

ship of national leader General Aung San. In granting independence, the British left behind the hilly regions. Therefore, General Aung San and Shan leaders, including leaders from other hilly regions met and discussed in Panglong, Shan State and had to try and reach agreement for the central plains and the hilly regions to get independence together.

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President meets locals, inspects hydropower project in Heho, Taunggyi



President U Win Myint greets locals in Shan State (South). **PHOTO: MNA**

PRESIDENT U WIN MYINT left Nay Pyi Taw by a special military flight and arrived in Heho, Shan State (South), yesterday morning. He was accompanied by Union Ministers Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Dr Aung Thu, U Ohn Win, U Win Khaing, U Ohn Maung, Chief of Myanmar Police Force Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo and officials.

The President and his entourage were welcomed at Heho airport by Shan State Chief Minister Dr Lin Htut, State Hluttaw Speaker U Sai Lone Sai, State Chief Justice U Kywel Kywel, state ministers, Hluttaw representatives, and departmental officials; a Shan traditional dance performance 'Keinari-Keinara' presented by local ethnic races. **SEE PAGE-3**

State Counsellor receives Ambassador, Special Rep of Foreign Ministry of Sweden



State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs Daw Aung San Suu Kyi greets Ambassador Mr Kent Härstedt of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. **PHOTO: MNA**

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received Ambassador Mr Kent Härstedt, Special Representative of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, at 10 am on 6 February 2020 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they exchanged

views on matters related to promoting bilateral relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Sweden, democratization, development, peace and national reconciliation processes as well as possible areas of support by Sweden in Myanmar's future endeavours in overcoming the challenges facing the country including the issue of Rakhine State.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw to discuss confirmation on Home Affairs Minister nominee



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw being convened in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: SOE WIN TUN

PYIDAUNGSU Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat asked the MPs for their consent or objection to appoint Lt-Gen Soe Htut, nominated by the President, for the Union Minister for Home Affairs. On the 6th day of 15th regu-

lar session, the Speaker said the Hluttaw is scheduled to discuss the nomination on 10 February, and he also invited the names of MPs who want to object the topic. During discussions about a work report of the National Ed-

ucation Policy Commission for the six-month period (from 10 April to 9 October 2019), MP U Win Win from Minbu constituency expressed his support on the plan to reopen agriculture high schools as it would be helpful for

agricultural sector.

MP Daw Htu May from Rakhine State constituency 11 pointed out the lack of connection between the requirements of states in developing human resources and economic objectives and priorities of the country is one of the underlying reasons for less development of these states.

She also advised the commission to set development goals for specific state in implementing higher education programmes with systematic research.

MP U Khin Maung Thi from Loilen constituency suggested the delegation members to foreign trips should make conclusion on appropriate ways for education reforms of the country from their oversea experiences, rather than highlighting on their visited places and sharing knowledge.

The report of NEPC was also discussed by the other 9 Hluttaw

representatives.

During discussions on the Financial Policy Implementation Report and the Financial Stability Report for the period from April to September 2018, Dr Thet Thet Khaing from Dagon constituency said reforms in banking sector should be adjusted with appropriate rules, and the terms for loans and interests should be decided by the banks and their customers.

MP Daw Cho Cho Win from Mawlaik constituency remarked the Central Bank of Myanmar needs to scrutinize and prevent waste of budgets of relevant departments, while the ministries require reviewing the use of their budgets.

The report was also discussed by the other 7 Hluttaw representatives. The 7th day meeting of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw will be held on 10 February.—Aung Ye Thwin and Aye Aye Thant (Translated by Aung Khin)



UEC Chairman leaves for Republic of India

THE delegation of the Union Election Commission led by its Chairman U Hla Thein left for the Republic of India

yesterday as study tour till 12 February on observing Delhi Legislative Assembly elections to be held on 8 February.

The UEC delegation was seen off at Yangon International Airport by officials from Indian Embassy in Yangon, UEC Office and Yangon Region Sub-Election Commission. UEC Chairman is accompanied by officials from the commission. —MNA

(Translated by TTN)

Union Election Commission Chairman U Hla Thein and delegation pose for a documentary photo at the Yangon International Airport yesterday before departing for India. PHOTO: MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee holds meeting

THE Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee held a meeting over a bill, namely Myanmar Geoscience Council Bill that was controversial between the two Hluttaws, at the meeting hall of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Building D in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. The meeting was attended by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker and Joint Bill Committee Chairman U Tun Aung (a) U Tun Tun Hein, the Joint Bill

Committee's Vice Chairmen, secretary, joint secretary and members, Pyithu Hluttaw Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Committee's chairman, secretary and members, and officials from Ministry of Education, Union Attorney-General Office, Myanmar Engineering Council, Myanmar Geosciences Society and Pyidaungsu Hluttaw office.—MNA (Translated by TTN)



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein attends the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee meeting over a bill namely Myanmar Geoscience Council. PHOTO: MNA



President U Win Myint delivers the speech at the meeting with local people in Taunggyi, Shan State, on 6 February 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

President meets locals, inspects hydropower project in Heho, Taunggyi

FROM PAGE-1

The President and party then proceeded by a motorcade to Taunggyi.

Next, the President met with Shan State cabinet members, Hluttaw representatives, departmental officials of state, districts and townships, and town elders at the Shan State government office.

At the meeting, the President said: “I have much pleasure to address you while I came here to attend the Shan State Day ceremony. February 7 was designated as Shan State Day in accordance with the constitution after the country had regained its independence on 4 January 1948. Moreover, the first President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar was Shan Sawbwa Sao Shwe Thike.

The Government is, in firm determination, building a Federal Union. All stake-holders should be well aware of it with profound significance. Democratic principles are embodied in the Panlong Agreement regardless of highlands or planes as the Government laid down policies to build a democratic nation.

Enjoying democracy throughout the country, all ethnic nationals within the Union attain equal rights; it can foster fairness and justice in politics, economic, social and religious sectors; it enables them to have equal rights and rule of law.

Those who perform the duties of the administrative pillar, the legislative pillar, and the judicial pillar should administer and manage their responsibilities without discrimination and prejudice upon ethnic nationals. That is the fundamental principle of democracy. When democracy

flourishes, all ethnic nationals can enjoy human rights and rule of law. Lack of democracy may lead to human rights violations without rule of law. Democracy, human rights and rule of law are three basic principles and they are inter-related with each other. Officials and organizations concerned must pay a good attention in this regard. During the course of their responsibilities, they should perform the State’s policies accurately and precisely. They should assist in solving the difficulties of ethnic nationals.

Differences and mistrusts will be mitigated through the attainment of democracy among all national races. Thus, we will achieve what we desire – internal peace.

Our nation is composed of

various national races. Bearing in mind that their languages, literacies, cultures and customs are our Union’s gifted beauties, we can develop our Union with the collaborative strength of their diverse concepts and ideas. The Government is supporting to preserve, promote and sustain the languages, literacies, cultures and customs of the ethnic people.

Three pillars of administration, legislation and judiciary are the Government’s policies and they need to be synchronized to build a Federal Democratic Union. Those who are taking responsibilities of three pillars are not rivals but they should be partners or co-partners.

Any ideas and concepts which are appropriate and beneficial to any states/regions should

be accepted and collaborated to develop the states and regions.

The government’s policy is to implement the development of all states and regions concurrently. All-round development can enhance stability and peace in the whole country.

In legislation, it is necessary that the existing laws and acts should be suitable for the states and regions without any contradiction to the Constitution. It is also necessary legislators should raise questions and tabling motions in line with Hluttaw laws, by-laws, rules and regulations.

In the judicial pillar, judges can exercise fair and independent justice system. It is necessary that the administrative and legislative pillars should not get involved themselves. The practice

of checks and balances should be exercised only.

In our major aim of building a Federal Democratic Union, departmental personnel need to review their work and make changes in accord with the transitional process. It is also necessary that all departmental personnel and staff should perform their respective duties in a manner of justice. Democracy can sustain in the society where justice prevails. When democracy sustains we can build a Federal Union and then attain peace within the Union like “No democracy, no Federal Union”, “No Federal Union, no peace”, “No peace, no modernization”. Therefore, all should work together to build a Federal Democratic Union in harmony and in unity,” he urged in conclusion.

Afterwards, the President cordially cheered the attendees.

Also present on the occasion were Union Ministers, Shan State Chief Minister, State Hluttaw Speaker, State Chief Justice, State Hluttaw Deputy Speaker, State Advocate-General, State Justices, State Auditor-General, Hluttaw representatives, members of the legal aid, leading members of “Wa” Self-Administered Division, “Pa-O” Self-Administered Zone, and “Danu” Self-Administered Zone, state, district, and township departmental personnel, leaders of the ethnic literature and culture associations and town elders.

In the afternoon, the President and party arrived at the upper Keng Taung Hydropower Project site and Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy briefed the project implementation work with a project miniature.



President U Win Myint inspects the Keng Taung hydropower project at the Department of Hydropower Implementation yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

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We need to work together to get the benefits we want

If we want the whole country to develop and prosper, we need to strive with determination and energy with collective strength by putting in human resources, money and materials. Only then can we get the benefits. We will not get the benefits if the Bamars, Kayins, Shans, Kachins and Chins do their own thing each in the own way. We can get results only if we work together. We can know that we will get the results only if we try.

[Extract from the speech given by General Aung San at the dinner given by the Sawbwas at Panglong on the night of 11 February 1947]



Message of Greetings sent by President U Win Myint on occasion of 73rd Anniversary of Shan State Day celebrations

FROM PAGE-1

Shan, Kachin, and Chin ethnic leaders reached an agreement on 7th February 1947 to get independence together with the central plains without delay. Thus 7th February, the date on which it was decided to gain independence without separating the hilly regions from the central plains was designated as Shan State Day to honour this day. We have been celebrating Shan State Day every year and this year marks the 73rd anniversary.

It is a cause for regret that although we have gained independence for over 70 years, mistrust and disunity among ethnic brothers led to armed conflicts and therefore in some areas the sound of guns have not ceased; we are still far away from peace. To materialize the hopes and dreams of the ethnic national leaders who are born of the union and who worked together to establish this union, we have been striving hard for equality among nationals, national unity and for the emergence of a constitution that can guarantee in full measure democracy and fundamental human rights without losing sight of

these objectives.

With the aim of creating the Democratic Federal Union which has been the aspiration of our ethnic national leaders who are our forefathers, who worked together for the establishment of the Union, at this time we have been convening the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong meetings and have already successfully convened the third session. We have also reached agreement on many fundamental principles relating to democracy and federalism. We all need to work together in unity for harmonious development without any discrimination between the central plains and hilly regions in accordance with the saying “No stability, no peace; no stability, no development; no development; no modernization”.

I firmly believe that we can regain the same type of unity, trust and understanding that we have achieved at Panglong in 1947. Just as we achieved independence for the whole country by showing the unity of ethnic national races in the small town of Panglong 73 years ago, we will achieve durable peace at this time with the united strength of all the ethnic national races. Together, our ethnic national leaders

laid the foundation for our Union with Union spirit or Panglong spirit, and gained independence for us. For the perpetuation of independence, in our age and time also, we need to strive to build our Union, which has been the aspiration of our ethnic national leaders with union spirit.

Based on mutual understanding, mutual respect and mutual trust among our ethnic national brothers and sisters, we need to establish union spirit by laying aside our suspicions. The unity of all our ethnic nationals is the main driving force for peace, prosperity and development of our union.

As I send this message of greetings, I strongly urge all the ethnic national brethren to work together in unity towards the goal of establishing the Democratic Federal Union imbued with the essence of justice, freedom,, equality and right of self-determination, successfully without fail.

Signed/-
Win Myint
President

VP U Henry Van Thio meets with ROK Prime Minister, visits War Memorial of Korea

VICE President U Henry Van Thio visited the War Memorial of Korea in Seoul yesterday during his official tour in the Republic of Korea.

The Vice President, accompanied by Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko, was welcomed by the officials of the memorial.

After signing the visitors’ book, they exchanged commemorative gifts and looked around the memorial.

At 5 pm local time, the Vice President visited the office of Prime Minister Mr Chung Sye-kyun. During the meeting, they discussed promotion of bilateral relations between the two

countries, economic and cultural exchange programmes, employments for Myanmar migrant workers in South Korea and more investments of Korean investors in Myanmar.

The meeting was also attended by Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, Myanmar Ambassador to ROK U Thant Sin and Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs U Soe Han.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio enjoyed the dinner at the residence of Myanmar Ambassador.—MNA (Translated by Aung Khin)



Vice President U Henry Van Thio meets with Prime Minister Mr Chung Sye-kyun in the Seoul, the Republic of Korea yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

President meets locals, inspects hydropower project in Heho, Taunggyi

FROM PAGE-3

Next, the President inspected around the project site. Then, Deputy Minister U Khin Maung Win explained the major points of the Keng Taung Hydropower Project, the yearly

expectation of electricity production and actual production, the cost per unit of the electricity generated by the Keng Taung Hydropower Plant, distribution of electricity to nearby towns and villages, the project objectives and its feasibility survey,

capital investment in the project, procurement and use of funds, major work programme to be carried out and the measures undertaken already. The President instructed the electricity distribution should be prioritized to local areas and

regions; the project should be completed in time; and finance should be handled in order. The President then made an inspection tour around the upper Keng Taung Hydropower Project site, posed for a documentary photo with the staff, and

gave them a fruits basket. In the evening, the President went to the Sulamunilawkachangtha Pagoda and gave a donation of 5 lakhs to Pagoda's Trustees.—MNA
(Translated by Aungthu Ya)

State Counsellor receives Kazakhstan Ambassador

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received Ms Raushan Yesbulatova, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Bangkok at 11am on 6 February 2020 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw. At the meeting, they cordially exchanged views on matters pertaining

to promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation including culture and tourism sectors between Myanmar and Kazakhstan.—MNA

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi shakes hands with Ms Raushan Yesbulatova, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Union Minister U Kyaw Tin meets with Mr Kent Härstedt, Sweden Ambassador and Special Representative of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister U Kyaw Tin receives Sweden Ambassador

U KYAW TIN, Union Minister for International Cooperation of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, received Ambassador Mr Kent Härstedt, Special Representative of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, at 9 am on 6 February 2020 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw. During the meeting, they exchanged views on matters related to promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation between Myanmar and Sweden, the Swedish Government's continued constructive support towards Myanmar Government's efforts for peace, national reconciliation and democratization processes

as well as provision of development assistance to Myanmar by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) under the Sweden's strategy for development cooperation in Myanmar (2018-2022). They also discussed on possible areas of support by Sweden to Myanmar's endeavours in overcoming the challenges facing the country during its transition. Also in attendance with Union Minister were Director-General, International Organizations and Economic Department and Director-General, Political Department and officials from Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—MNA

Contracts signed for construction of Gyaing (Zathabyin), Gyaing (Ahtayan) bridges

CONTRACTS were signed with a private firm to construct the bridges of Gyaing (Zathabyin) and Gyaing (Ahtayan) which are included in the package-2 under the project to upgrade three bridges on East-West Economic Corridor implemented by the Bridge Department under the Ministry of Construction with

the ODA loan of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The signing ceremony held at the Ministry of Construction yesterday afternoon was attended by Deputy Minister for Construction Dr Kyaw Lin, directors-general, deputy directors-general, directors, de-

partmental officials, Chief Representative of JICA Myanmar Office Mr Masayuki Karasawa and officials from IHI Infrastructure System Co.Ltd. After delivering speeches by the Deputy Minister and the JICA Chief Representative, the contracts were signed by Director-General of Bridge Depart-

ment U Shwe Lay and President of IHI Infrastructure System Co.Ltd signed the contracts which will be implemented with a total of 33,869 million yen of JICA ODA loan. The loan agreement was signed on 16 October 2015, and the consultant contract with JV of Central Consultant Inc was inked on 6 March 2017.

The period of construction projects is estimated at 45 months. The contract agreement for construction of Gyaing (Kawka-reik) bridge under the package 1 was signed with Hazama Ando and PS Mitsubishi Construction Co.,Ltd on 12 March 2019.—MNA
(Translated by Aung Khin)

Closing ceremony of Ethnic Culture Festival 2020 held

THE closing ceremony of Ethnic Culture Festival 2020 was held at the Kyauksan Ground in Yangon yesterday evening.

Theme song “Land of National People” was presented with a background video.

The ceremony was attended by Vice President U Henry Van Thio’s wife Dr Shwe Hlwan, Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Nai Thet Lwin and wife, Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint and wife, Union Ministers’ wives, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker, regional ministers, Region / State ethnic affairs ministers, chairmen and members of self-administered regions and zones, Hluttaw representatives, chairpersons and members of Region/State ethnic entrepreneurs associations, delegations of ethnic literature and culture associations, ethnic people associations, representatives, donors and the invited guests.

At the closing ceremony, Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin said the festival was successfully held with the displays of ethnic



Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Nai Thet Lwin addresses the closing ceremony of Ethnic Culture Festival 2020 in Yangon. PHOTO: MNA



Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein.



Kayah State Hluttaw Speaker U Hla Htwe.



Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association Chairman U Yaw Set.

cultures and traditional items. The event could generate high expectations for tourism industry

which can support socioeconomic developments in ethnic areas, could foster friendly relations

among ethnic people and also satisfy the leaders of the country.

He also called for ending the 70-year armed conflicts of the country. Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein made a congratulatory remark, followed by Kayah State Hluttaw Speaker U Hla Htwe, Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association Chairman U Yaw Set and Kayah State Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association Chairman U Tun Kyaw giving thanks to those who helped the ceremony.

Chairman U Tun Kyaw donated K5 million to the Institute of Sports and Physical Education, and honorary documents and commemorative gifts were given to the supporting companies organizations.

Vice President U Henry Van Thio’s wife Dr Shwe Hlwan, Union Ministers and wives, spouses of Chairman of Peace Commission and Union Attorney-General, Yangon Region Chief Minister

and the government ministers, Yangon Region Hluttaw Speaker and Chief Justice, Kayah State Hluttaw Speaker, Deputy Ministers’ wives, Chairman of Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association and wife, Vice Chairman and wife, Kayah State Entrepreneurs Association Chairman and its members, representatives from sponsor firms and Yangon Region Hluttaw MPs had the documentary photo taken.

The closing ceremony was concluded with entertainment programmes, and cash awards were presented to the contestants in Miss Ethnic Myanmar 2020. The festival was held from 1 to 7 February with intentions to promote friendly ties between ethnic people, to support peace-making efforts in the country, to foster unity of national people and to share traditions, food and cultures of ethnic nationals.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



People with their traditional costume pose for a documentary photo at the Ethnic Culture Festival 2020. PHOTO: MNA



Kayin traditional cultural booths attract visitors at Ethnic Culture Festival 2020 yesterday. PHOTO: MNA



Yangon Region Minister for Rakhine Ethnic Affairs U Zaw Aye Maung presents certificate of honour to an official. PHOTO: MNA

Vice Senior General Soe Win attends 11th DefExpo in India

DEPUTY Commander in Chief of Defence Services Vice Senior General Soe Win visited the 11th edition of DefExpo in India on 5 February.

The Vice Senior General and party looked around military equipment displayed at the India Pavilion & Up Pavilion before they held discussions with Air Chief Marshal of India Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria at the Air Force parlour of expo about fostering existing bilateral relation between the two countries, implementations of bilateral

agreements made in the meetings of air forces and experience sharing programme of air force experts.

Vice Senior General Soe Win also held a meeting with India Army General Manoj Mukund Naravane at the Army parlour of the same venue.

The meeting focused on promotion of bilateral relations, cooperation in security affairs, peace, development and security affairs at the border areas.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Vice Senior General Soe Win presents a gift to India Army General Manoj Mukund Naravane at the meeting in India. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF**

Central Committee on 2019 Novel Coronavirus convenes daily coordination meeting

THE Central Committee on Monitoring and Prevention of 2019 Novel Coronavirus held their daily coordination meeting (10/2020) at the Ministry of Health and Sports yesterday.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe first addressed the meeting with a message to the public that the speed at which the virus is spreading in China is rising with each passing day, and has jumped from a rate of 2,000 new cases per day on 31 January 2020 to 4,000 per day as of 5 February 2020.

The Union Minister said that the World Health Organization report on 6 February noted that 99 per cent of confirmed cases are occurring in China, with the virus spreading to 24 other countries as well. He said there are currently 28,276 confirmed cases globally, with 28,060 of the cases confirmed in China alone.

He said the mortality rate of lab-tested patients is at 2 per cent, with 565 deaths confirmed so far in China. Other confirmed

cases outside of China include 33 in Japan, 25 in Thailand, 24 in Singapore, and 10 in Viet Nam, said the Union Minister.

He said that from both pathological and public health perspectives, it is likely the virus will spread further. He said WHO is continuously monitoring the virus and updating news concerning it on its website in real time, and the MoHS will disseminate this information to the public in the same manner.

The Union Minister said that the reproduction rate of the 2019-nCoV virus is higher than other communicable diseases, according to computer simulation tests. He said assessing the current situation shows the virus is contagious from person to person, and that authorities are unfaltering in prevention and containment of the virus.

The Union Minister said they are tirelessly monitoring for early symptoms and suspected cases of the virus, quarantining suspected persons and

patients being monitored from the general public and administering treatment, and monitoring persons who have been in close contact with suspected persons or patients for symptoms as well.

He added that the incubation period of the virus can vary from 2 to 10 days, and as such, persons entering the country are arriving during the incubation period and those not showing symptoms yet can be in our surroundings right now. He called on the public to contact their nearest health department if people arriving from countries with the virus show suspected symptoms.

The Union Minister said hotel and guesthouse staff should similarly report signs of suspected symptoms to the nearest health department immediately. He said this will reduce the spread of the virus. He said health departments have been instructed to respond swiftly to reports of suspected cases.

He said they are sharing

medical information on the virus to crowded markets, bus stops and terminals, buses, hotels and guesthouses, tourist attraction sites, restaurants, schools, and offices. He encouraged the public to carefully read and follow the facts outlined in these posters and share it with family and friends as well.

The Union Minister said they are working closely with the Ministry of Information to disseminate information concerning the virus through television and radio broadcasts, with special emphasis on radio stations in ethnic languages. He said they will increase the efforts of their ministry and other relevant ministries and organizations to ensure the public receives genuine and comprehensive information in real time.

The Union Minister urged the public to cross-check rumours or fake news with authentic news sources, and requested citizens to refrain from sharing fake news on social media. He said festivals and commemorations should be reduced to only the most essential events during this period, so as to prevent mass public gatherings and encourage spread of the virus. He told the public to avoid crowded places as much as possible.

The Union Minister said the Health Education Division has disseminated information on the systematic use of face masks, proper hand washing, and guidelines to follow when sneezing or coughing, among other facts, and the nation will be able to effectively control the spread of the virus if the entire

public closely follows these facts. He said further information will be compiled and shared with the public.

The Union Minister said the 59 students flown back to Mandalay by special flight from Wuhan, Hubei Province, have shown positive signs as of their medical inspection yesterday morning. He said the status of persons being monitored and patients in hospitals are likewise showing positive signs. He said samples of 10 patients have been sent to designated laboratories and the results of 5 persons have returned, all showing negative, while the remaining five lab test results have yet to arrive.

The Union Minister said WHO declared the outbreak of the 2019-nCoV constitutes a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) and issued recommendations on 5 January to all countries regarding the situation. He said MoHS has been performing the tasks in these recommendations prior to WHO's announcements.

He said they include increasing active surveillance of the virus, early detection, isolation and case management, contact tracing, prevention of onward spread of the virus, exchanging information with WHO.

The Union Minister said they have instructed the states and regions to prepare 25 new patient wards to accommodate the patients under surveillance. He said they have given clear directives to the public health and treatment department heads of the states and regions to follow.

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Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe attends the coordination meeting of Central Committee on Monitoring and Prevention of 2019 Novel Coronavirus at the Ministry of Health and Sports yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Need realistic disaster risk financing facility for farmers

MYANMAR is bearing the brunt of climate change-induced disasters every year. The after-effects of such disasters are there for all to see. For instance, Cyclone Nargis, which struck Myanmar on 2 and 3 May, 2008, led to a huge loss of lives and property. The repercussions of the cyclone are being felt to date.

Natural disasters brought on by climate change are hard to predict. And their frequency and severity has been on the increase. In addition, natural disasters are borderless: a natural disaster in one country becomes a challenge to its neighboring country.

With disasters getting stronger and causing more devastation year by year, disaster management has become crucial for the Union Government, especially in the agricultural sector.

The need of the hour is an insurance system which can help rehabilitate farmers in disaster-hit areas within a short period of time.

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The agriculture sector has time and weather constraints. Any system aiming at rehabilitation and recovery within a short timeframe should be systematic and must be able to tackle hindrances to the socio-economic development of farmers. To quickly respond to disasters and bring about quick recovery of disaster-hit people, the Emergency Management Centre has adopted some Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

These issues are being handled by Myanmar in cooperation with ASEAN nations. The Southeast Asia Disaster Risk Insurance Facility (SEADRIF), which will be implemented in Myanmar at a cost of US\$116 million, is one of the five projects related to disaster risk management in Southeast Asia.

Myanmar signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the establishment of the region's first disaster risk financing facility with Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, and Singapore at the ASEAN+3 Finance and Central Bank Deputies Meeting in December, 2018 in the Republic of Korea.

The SEADRIF will act as a regional platform to provide ASEAN countries with insurance and re-insurance solutions and technical advice to increase their financial resilience to climate and disaster risks.

By supporting pre-disaster planning and post-disaster relief and reconstruction funding, the facility aims to protect people and their livelihoods while contributing to ongoing economic development and poverty reduction.

To ensure the insurance system meets with success and is sustainable, suggestions and advice on policy and procedures should be pragmatic and realistic on the ground level.

Meanwhile, cooperation from the private sector, in line with the law and rules, is sine qua non for implementing the system, which guarantees rights and benefits to farmers.

■ ■ ■

World leaders, experts warn against discrimination caused by coronavirus epidemic

Misunderstandings and fake news about the novel coronavirus are the major reasons that have led to the possible discrimination and violence

WORLD leaders and experts have called on the international community to discard discrimination against certain groups of people due to misinformation about the novel coronavirus epidemic.

Ever since the outbreak of the novel coronavirus that started first in China's central city of Wuhan, there have been unpleasant cases of discrimination and violence against the Chinese people being reported. Some biased media outlets even tagged the novel coronavirus as "China virus."

Having noticed the situation, United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said: "It's easy to move into ... perspectives in which there tends to be discrimination; there tends to be violation of human rights; there tends to be stigma on innocent people just because of their ethnicity."

The chief of the world's largest international organization also appealed for "a strong feeling of international solidarity, a strong feeling of support to China in these difficult circumstances but also to other countries that might be impacted," and "a strong concern to avoid the stigmatization of people that are innocent and that might be victims of that situation."

GLOBAL APPEAL FOR NON-DISCRIMINATION

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro

Sanchez has met leaders of the Chinese community in Spain to offer them support in the ongoing coronavirus crisis.

Sanchez said he lamented that fears of the virus have led to some Chinese people being victims of xenophobic incidents and caused difficulties to the Chinese community.

He made a call for understanding and made a positive valuation of the efforts that China is making to control the spread of the virus.

STEMMING MISINFORMATION

Misunderstandings and fake news about the novel coronavirus are the major reasons that have led to the possible discrimination and violence.

"Let us all be very careful, because there are some signs of discrimination that could turn into episodes of violence," Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said in a video clip posted on Twitter.

Educating the public globally is key, including the sharing of practical, preventive measures through schools, teachers, children and parents, said Yasmine Sherif, director of Education Cannot Wait, a global fund hosted by the UN Children's Fund.

Here are some questions and answers that you have easy access to learn about confusing facts about coronavirus. WHO experts

have explained in the purpose of informing the public.

Is it safe to receive a letter or a package from China?

Yes, it is safe. People receiving packages from China are not at risk of contracting the new coronavirus. From previous analysis, we know coronaviruses do not survive long on objects, such as letters or packages.

Can pets at home spread the new coronavirus (2019-nCoV)?

At present, there is no evidence that companion animals/pets such as dogs or cats can be infected with the new coronavirus. However, it is always a good idea to wash your hands with soap and water after contact with pets. This protects you against various common bacteria such as E.coli and Salmonella that can pass between pets and humans.

Do vaccines against pneumonia protect you against the new coronavirus?

No. Vaccines against pneumonia, such as pneumococcal vaccine and Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib) vaccine, do not provide protection against the new coronavirus.

The virus is so new and different that it needs its own vaccine. Researchers are trying to develop a vaccine against 2019-nCoV, and WHO is supporting their efforts.

Although these vaccines are



Technicians test the hematology analyzer at the Leishenshan (Thunder God Mountain) Hospital in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province, Feb. 5, 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA

not effective against 2019-nCoV, vaccination against respiratory illnesses is highly recommended to protect your health.

Can regularly rinsing your nose with saline help prevent infection with the new coronavirus?

No. There is no evidence that regularly rinsing the nose with saline has protected people from infection with the new coronavirus.

There is some limited evidence that regularly rinsing nose with saline can help people recover more quickly from the common cold. However, regularly rinsing the nose has not been shown to prevent respiratory infections.

Can gargling mouthwash protect you from infection with the new coronavirus?

No. There is no evidence that using mouthwash will protect you from infection with the new coronavirus.

Some brands or mouthwash can eliminate certain microbes for a few minutes in the saliva in your mouth. However, this does not mean they protect you from 2019-nCoV infection.

Can eating garlic help prevent infection with the new coronavirus?

Garlic is a healthy food that

may have some antimicrobial properties. However, there is no evidence from the current outbreak that eating garlic has protected people from the new coronavirus. **Does putting on sesame oil block the new coronavirus from entering the body?**

No. Sesame oil does not kill the new coronavirus. There are some chemical disinfectants that can kill the 2019-nCoV on surfaces. These include bleach/chlorine-based disinfectants, either solvents, 75% ethanol, peracetic acid and chloroform.

However, they have little or no impact on the virus if you put them on the skin or under your nose. It can even be dangerous to put these chemicals on your skin.

Does the new coronavirus affect older people, or are younger people also susceptible?

People of all ages can be infected by the new coronavirus (2019-nCoV). Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease) appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus.

WHO advises people of all ages to take steps to protect themselves from the virus, for example by following good hand hygiene

and good respiratory hygiene.

Are antibiotics effective in preventing and treating the new coronavirus?

No, antibiotics do not work against viruses, only bacteria.

The new coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a virus and, therefore, antibiotics should not be used as a means of prevention or treatment.

However, if you are hospitalized for the 2019-nCoV, you may receive antibiotics because bacterial co-infection is possible.

Are there any specific medicines to prevent or treat the new coronavirus?

To date, there is no specific medicine recommended to prevent or treat the new coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

However, those infected with the virus should receive appropriate care to relieve and treat symptoms, and those with severe illness should receive optimized supportive care. Some specific treatments are under investigation, and will be tested through clinical trials. WHO is helping to accelerate research and development efforts with a range of partners.

REFERENCES:

Xinhua News Updates; WHO Health Topics

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.

- * Maintain unity of all ethnic brothers Remember Union Day!
- * Living on the same land and drinking the same water, We are all Union nationals of the same blood.
- * A hundred fruits from the same stem, Our Union built in brotherhood.
- * Unity is power, Cohesion is strength, This is the heart of our Union.
- * Equal share for equal rights, Peace and stability in our Union, Responsibility in equal share, security and stability in our Union.

U Aung Myo Myint appointed as Permanent Representative of Myanmar to Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Jakarta

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Aung Myo Myint, Director-General of Strategic Studies and Training Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Jakarta.—MNA

U Myint Lwin presents Credentials to President of the Republic of Turkey

U MYINT LWIN, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Turkey, presented his Credentials to Mr Recep Tayyip Erdogan, President of the Republic of Turkey on 4 February 2020 in Ankara.—MNA



The Chinese consulate in Bali said at least 5,000 holidaymakers were on the island, the centrepiece of Indonesia's tourism industry. PHOTO: AFP

Union Minister U Thein Swe receives French ambassador, IDEMIA Vice President

UNION Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe received French Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Christian Lechervy and Vice President of the France-based IDEMIA company Mrs Sabine Dominget at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the meeting, they discussed the implementation of Myanmar's e-Government system, along with e-ID, biographic and biometric for unique ID for each citizen.

IDEMIA is a major technological player in the fields of identity management and authentication, and it has developed cutting-edge technologies and services leveraging artificial intelligence, biometrics and cryptography. Discussions with IDEMIA also focused on its assistance for Myanmar's e-Government through French Embassy in Myanmar, training programmes and future cooperation in technologies.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Union Minister U Thein Swe holds talks with French Ambassador Mr Christian Lechervy and Vice President of the France-based IDEMIA company Mrs Sabine Dominget in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister for Commerce attends Illicit Trade Forum in Geneva

UNION Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint attended the Illicit Trade Forum jointly organized by the United Nations

Conference on Trade and Development-UNCTAD and the Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade-TRACIT on 3

and 4 February in Geneva, Switzerland.

High ranking officials from the governments of 50 countries

and experts gathered at the forum which was held with the aim of addressing the problem of smuggling, counterfeiting, trafficking of human and wildlife and other forms of illicit trade that hold back progress on the global development agenda.

On 4 February, Union Minister Dr Than Myint, accompanied by Permanent Representative and Ambassador U Kyaw Moe Tun, met with Ms Dorothy Ng'ambi Tembo, Executive Director ad interim of the International Trade Centre-ITC and discussed cooperation between Myanmar and the International Trade Centre and trade development in Myanmar.

In the afternoon, the My-

anmar delegation met with Deputy Executive Director Ms Ssemuwemba and Mr Simon Hess of the Enhanced Integrated Framework-EIF of the World Trade Organization at the office of the Myanmar Representative in Geneva. At the meeting, the two sides discussed the progress of the Myanmar Services Trade Enhancement Project (M-STEP) and further cooperation.

Afterwards, the Myanmar delegation held a meeting with a delegation from Trade Policy Review Division of the World Trade Organization and discussed plans for holding the Myanmar's second Trade Policy Review which is slated to be held in October.—MNA



Union Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint attends the Illicit Trade Forum in Geneva, Switzerland. **PHOTO: MNA**

Central Committee on 2019 Novel Coronavirus convenes daily coordination meeting

FROM PAGE-7

He said they have suspended visa on arrivals for travelers from China and since then, travelers flying in from China have gone down from 2,300 on average per day since 31 January to 323 travelers in both Yangon and Mandalay international airports combined. He said the hotels and guesthouses where the 323 landed travelers will be staying have been notified as well.

The Union Minister said as China and Myanmar share an expansive border measuring 1,300 miles long, proper inspection at legal entry gates and possible illegal points of entry are important. He said MoHS officials are collaborating with relevant ministries in surveillance of the virus according to rules and regulations at the bor-

der entry points.

He said entry from these locations is several times higher than from flights to Myanmar; thus, they have instructed MoHS officials to work closely with relevant ministries and local organizations regarding the matter. The ministry has notified WHO of this important fact in calculating the range of the virus' spread and possibly consider Myanmar a prioritized country for medical and lab supplies.

The Union Minister said his ministry's officials will consider recommendations from any and all organizations by gauging it with the current situation of Myanmar before making decisions. He said they must consider all perspectives and take into consideration geography, regional rate of transmission, social, economic and trade aspects, and

travel status in order to make informed and effective responses to the changing situation. He said they must also be mindful of avoiding negative impacts on trade and the economy.

The Union Minister said he has instructed the state/regional public health and medical services departments to exchange all information on containment and prevention of the virus with each other and to adopt appropriate models from other states/regions if it is deemed appropriate. He said the state/regional governments have formed containment units with relevant government departments to handle the situation.

The Union Minister said all virus containment and prevention processes are archived so that they may help as a point of reference in the future and

as teaching materials in public health courses. He said ministry officials with relatively high experience will guide the next generation of professionals and teachers from public health and basic health universities to acquire practical experience by having them involved in these containment processes.

The Union Minister said the ministry regularly updates news and information on the situation on their website (www.mohs.gov.mm) and their social media pages for public viewing. He concluded his speech by expressing his gratitude to all persons and entities involved in responding to the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Present at the meeting were the Deputy Minister and Permanent Secretary of MoHS, the Director-General of the

Union Minister's Office, the Director-General of the Public Health and Medical Services Department, the Deputy Director-General of Treatment and the Deputy Director-General of Disease Eradication, Deputy Director-General of Public Health, Deputy Director-General of Administration and Finance, Deputy Director-General of Procurement and Logistics, Director of Central Communicable Disease Eradication, Director of Treatment, the Medical Superintendent of Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital, professors of communicable disease treatment and medicine, and officials from domestic and foreign communications and information, public health, treatment, laboratory, and eHealth sectors.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Corporate governance regulations to be instituted in April: Ministry

By Nyein Nyein

THE Myanmar government will publish a corporate governance regulations for listed enterprises in April, said U Aung Naing Oo, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations.

The Advisory Committee for Corporate Governance Reform in Myanmar endorsed the draft notification for corporate governance on 5 February at the Pan Pacific Hotel.

“We will refer two laws — the Securities Exchange Law 2013 and the Myanmar Companies Law 2017 — after the draft is finalized and legalized. We intend to publish the corporate governance notification in April, 2020,” said U Aung Naing Oo.

The draft corporate governance regulations will cover four key areas — internal control system, audit committee, independent directors, and disclosure, he said.

The Directorate of Investment and Company Administration will monitor the internal control system of listed companies. To oversee the effectiveness of the internal control system and ensure it functions



Permanent Secretary U Aung Naing Oo delivers the speech at the meeting of Advisory Committee for Corporate Governance Reform at the Pan Pacific Hotel in Yangon. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

properly, listed companies will be required to set up an audit committee. Furthermore, all listed companies would need to have at least one independent director.

“The audit committee will have to be chaired by an independent director. Investors will need to know how the corpo-

rate governance is structured and how the company manages conflict of interest. Transparency is central to shareholders’ ability to exercise their rights. The independent director would have to disclose important information to investors. Those items will be embodied in the corporate governance noti-

fication,” said U Aung Naing Oo.

“The corporate governance system will help listed companies and public companies to regulate their management to ensure compliance with the best governance practices and to have transparency and responsibility. Once the regulation

is instituted, all companies will have to comply with it,” according to the Advisory Committee on Corporate Governance Reform.

The corporate governance regulations has been drafted based on the Securities Exchange Law and Myanmar Companies Law.

“Some items will be effective from October, 2020. Some items will be reported to the DICA and will come into effect in October, 2021,” said U Aung Naing Oo.

“With this notification, Myanmar’s capital markets will boost investor confidence and increase economic efficiencies. We will continue to strive to improve corporate governance and contribute to the further development of capital markets in the country,” he said.

Myanmar drafted the corporate governance regulations in cooperation with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2013. The Advisory Committee for Corporate Governance Reform was formed in 2018 and started working from January, 2019.

(Translated by EMM)

Authorities raising awareness on CNG safety after 3 tank explosions in 16 years

By Nyein Nyein

THREE CNG tank explosions in the past 16 years, which claimed the lives of several people, have prompted the authorities to raise awareness on CNG safe practices, said U Hla Win Htay, General Manager of the Natural Gas Vehicle Department (CNG) under Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE).

“To ensure the safety of passengers and drivers, CNG tanks on buses are being inspected once a year. Once the gas tanks expire, they are no longer available for use,” he said.

“Since 2004, CNG cylinders installed on buses have been re-tested at the department once a year. Only two weeks are allowed for extending the due date mentioned on both the first and last pages of the CNG record book. CNG cylinders contain the date of manufacture and expiry. We do not allow using CNG cylinders past

their expiration date as that can threaten lives,” said U Hla Win Htay.

There is one CNG cylinder testing workshop in Thakayta and two in Ywarma, Yangon Region. Since 2013, about 85,000 CNG tanks from Yangon, Mandalay, and Magway have been re-tested. More than 82,000 tanks passed the test, while more than 2,000 failed, as per data from the Natural Gas Vehicle Department (CNG) under the MOGE.

Of the three workshops, the one in Thakayta will be relocated to Mandalay in the current financial year. Some owners of CNG powered buses have sought an extension for replacing expired CNG cylinders due to the high cost of replacement, said U Hla Aung from the Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA).

“The life of a CNG cylinder has a limit. It is mandatory to replace a cylinder after expiry for the sake of people. It is also

to prevent possible accidents,” said U Hla Aung.

“Additionally, some passengers have poor knowledge of CNG buses. They do not get out of the car while refuelling,” he added.

The MOGE extended the exploration of CNG projects in 2014 to facilitate transportation in Yangon. There are 46 CNG stations across the country, with 41 located in Yangon, three in Magway, and one in Mandalay.

The daily consumption of CNG is estimated at over 24 million cubic feet in Myanmar. And, YBS buses, which provide transportation services to 1.8 million Yangon residents, account for more than 13 million cubic feet of the total consumption. Taxis use about 8 million cubic feet, and other vehicles consume about 2 million cubic feet, according to the Natural Gas Vehicle Department (CNG) under the MOGE.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Manufacturing exports exceeds \$3 bln in Oct-Jan

EXPORTS of finished industrial goods touched a high of US\$3.138 billion between 1 October and 24 January in the 2019-2020 financial year, reflecting an increase of \$706.18 million compared with the corresponding period of the previous financial year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

As per figures provided by the ministry, the exports of finished industrial goods totaled \$2.43 billion during the same period in the 2018-2019 FY.

Myanmar’s manufacturing sector is largely concentrated in garment and textiles produced on the cutting, making, and packaging (CMP) basis, and it contributes to the country’s GDP to a certain extent.

The CMP industry has emerged as a very promising one in the export sector. The val-

ue of CMP exports was just \$850 million in the 2015-2016 FY, but it tripled within two years to reach \$2.5 billion in the 2017-2018 FY, as per figures provided during the Myanmar Global Investment Forum 2018, held on 12 September.

In the first month of the current financial year, exports of clothes produced under the CMP system topped \$320 million.

Japan is the largest market for Myanmar apparel, followed by the European Union.

The Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association has more than 500 members, and garment factories in Myanmar employ more than 500,000 workers. Investors prefer to invest in cheap-labor countries like Myanmar.—GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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Gulf of Mottama to get mangrove cover: U Phyo Min Thein

By Nyein Nyein

THE Yangon Region government is planning to plant mangroves along the Gulf of Mottama as part of efforts to combat climate change, said U Phyo Min Thein, Chief Minister of Yangon Region.

He made the remarks at the Sixth Green Economy Green Growth (GEGG) Forum held on 6 February at the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCD).

“We are making efforts to conserve mangroves in Yangon Region. More than 30,000 mangroves are being replanted in the region. We are also planning to cover the Gulf of Mottama with mangroves,” said U Phyo Min Thein.

“Moreover, we are preparing to invite businesses which are accountable and take the responsibility to not adversely affect the environment and urban development.



Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein and attendees pose for a group photo at the Sixth Green Economy Green Growth (GEGG) Forum in Yangon on 6 February. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

So, we can strike a proper balance between turning our attention to natural disasters, as well as climate change, as seen across the country,” he added.

In the production sector, efforts are being made to ensure smoke-free manufacturing or systematic management of smoke produced by factories, he added.

Myanmar is located on the Sagaing fault, and so, businessmen need to be assured that there is suitable infrastructure for investment in Myanmar and that their businesses are not vulnerable to natural disasters, the chief minister said.

The objectives of the GEGG forum include ensuring sustainable development of Myanmar,

lowering the environmental impact from enterprises, and promoting accountable and responsible investments and businesses.

“All stakeholders and participants should get actively involved in discussions for bringing about development,” said U Phyo Min Thein.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Boat laden with teak seized off Kawthoung

THE Myanmar Tatmadaw (Navy) on 3 February seized a boat carrying an illegal consignment of teak to Malaysia



Seven workers seen on board the seized boat carrying illegal teak. PHOTO: KYAW SOE (KAWTHOUNG)

in the Myanmar territorial sea off Kawthoung.

The boat was handed over to the authorities in Kawthoung District on 5 February.

According to the investigation, Tatmadaw vessels, led by Lieutenant Commander Lwin Ko Ko Maung, spotted the boat named Aung Nyein Chan Min at 5 pm on 3 February during a patrol. The boat was inside Myanmar’s territorial waters. When the Tatmadaw vessels summoned the boat, its operators tried to flee.

The Tatmadaw vessels caught up with the boat at nautical mile 69, southwest

of Roe bank, near the Myanmar-India maritime border. When officials searched the boat, they found 50 tons of Padauk teak lumber, two HINO EK 100 280 HP machines, and a boat frame measuring 72x10 feet. There were seven workers on board the boat bound for Malaysia.

Officials from the district Forest Department and related organizations will take legal action against the seven workers and conduct further investigations according to the law. —Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Seven killed, 14 hurt after vehicle plunges down hill in Pinlebu

SEVEN pilgrims returning from Zalone Mountain were killed and 14 others injured on 5 February after their vehicle plunged down a hill and overturned in Pinlebu Township, according to Pinlebu Myoma police station.

According to the investigation, a Mitsubishi vehicle carrying pilgrims from Mawhine Village in Pinlebu Township plunged downhill after the driver, Maung Htay, 32, lost control of the vehicle due to brake failure. The mishap occurred between Mai-

tontarlay and Maitontargyi villages in Pinlebu Township, Katha District, Sagaing Region. Seven passengers died on the spot, while 14 others were injured and rushed to the Pinlebu People’s Hospital. The police have filed a case of reckless driving against the driver under Sections 337, 338, and 304(A) of the Penal Code. —Chit San (KhinU)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Seven dead as a vehicle plunges down a hill in Pinlebu Township. PHOTO: CHIT SAN (KHIN U)



Brazil’s annual basic interest rate down to record low

RIO DE JANEIRO — Brazil’s Central Bank’s Monetary Policy Committee (Copom) on Wednesday lowered the country’s annual basic interest rate (Selic) by 25 basis points to 4.25 percent, the lowest since Brazil adopted an inflation-targeting framework in 1999.

“Given the lagged effects of the monetary easing cycle initiated in July 2019, the Committee considers (it) appropriate to interrupt the monetary easing cycle,” the Copom said in a statement. This is the fifth consecutive rate cut by the central bank, and the reduction was expected by the financial market. The Copom said the Selic rate will most likely not experience further cuts in the near future, and its next steps will depend on the evolution of the economic activity, the risk balance and the projections for the inflation rate.— Xinhua ■



This is the fifth consecutive rate cut by the central bank, and the reduction was expected by the financial market. PHOTO: AFP

Health talks conducted at Nay Pyi Taw 300-bed People’s Hospital to prevent infectious diseases



Health educative programme conducted at Nay Pyi Taw 300-bed People’s Hospital in Pubba Thiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

HEALTH service officers educated patients and their care assistants about transmissions of infectious diseases, including novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), at Nay Pyi Taw 300-bed People’s Hospital in Pubba Thiri Township yesterday morning.

Video clips for possible ways of infections, symptoms and systematic use of face masks and hand washing were shown.

Senior medical doctors also explained information and effective preventions of infectious diseases including novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) originated in Wuhan city of China. Health educative programmes are being conducted once a week at the

Nay Pyi Taw 300-bed People’s Hospital to follow recommendations for preventing infectious diseases. The hospital has also set up a fever corner for the patients with high body temperature, cough and sneeze, and the isolation ward for the suspected patients.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Norway’s Equinor sets green goals but activists unimpressed

OSLO — Norwegian oil giant Equinor unveiled Thursday objectives to reduce its climate impact but the plans disappointed environmental activists.

The state-controlled firm said it aims for overall carbon neutrality by 2030, reducing by half emissions that cause global warming by 2050, and a 10-fold increase in renewable energy capacity by 2026.

“Today we are setting new short-, mid- and long-term ambitions to reduce our own greenhouse gas emissions and to shape our portfolio in line with the Paris Agreement,” Equinor’s chief executive Eldar Saetre said in a statement.



Equinor just launched the Johan Sverdrup oil field in the North Sea, which has brought its production to record levels. PHOTO: AFP

efforts to limit the increase in global temperatures to under 2.0 degrees Celsius in an attempt to avoid severe consequences from global warming.

“It is a good business strategy to ensure competitiveness and drive change towards a low carbon future, based on a strong commitment to value creation for our shareholders,” Saetre added.

The targets go beyond ones the firm announced just one month ago which aimed to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from its onshore and offshore drilling facilities by 2050.

“As part of the energy industry, we must be part of the solution to combat climate change and address decarbonisation more broadly in line with changes in society,” said Saetre.

Not all the details are known, but Equinor would likely need to power its facilities from renewable electricity and turn to offsets to achieve overall carbon neutrality.

While Equinor is already involved in the massive Dogger Bank wind farm project off the coast of Britain, Thursday’s announcement indicates a shift to a greater role in renewable wind power in the future.—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V FILOTIMO VOY. NO. (005W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V FILOTIMO VOY. NO. (005W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7-2-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/MIP where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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

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

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AGENT FOR: M/S WILHELMSSEN SHIPS SERVICES PTE LTD.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S UNIVERSE LOGISTICS INTERNATIONAL CO LTD

Phone No: 2301928

Merkel calls shock far-right vote in Thuringia state ‘unforgivable’

PRETORIA — German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Thursday said it was “unforgivable” that a politician in Thuringia allowed himself to be elected state premier with help from MPs of the far-right AfD, calling for a fresh vote.

The surprise election of Thomas Kemmerich from the liberal Free Democrats (FDP) on Wednesday shattered a political taboo in Germany, where mainstream parties have vowed never to work with the anti-Islam, anti-immigrant AfD.

What happened in Thuringia “is unforgivable and that’s why the result must be reversed”, Merkel said at a press conference in South Africa, describing

Wednesday’s drama as “a bad day for democracy”.

The aftershocks are being felt in Berlin as well, since local MPs from Merkel’s own centre-right CDU party also backed Kemmerich in the third run-off vote for the premiership, putting them on the same side as the AfD.

Merkel’s centre-left Social Democratic coalition partners have reacted furiously to the debacle, calling for the CDU to clearly distance itself from the AfD if the national alliance is to survive.

Both parties are meeting for crisis talks in Berlin on Saturday.

Merkel made clear that local CDU lawmakers were not al-



Merkel’s centre-left Social Democratic coalition partners have reacted furiously to the debacle. PHOTO: AFP

lowed to help Kemmerich cobble together a minority government in the small state of Thuringia, eastern Germany.

“The CDU must not take part in a government led by this premier,” she told reporters. Merkel said the actions of her local allies in Thuringia “broke

with the values and convictions of the CDU”.

“We must now do everything we can to make clear that this can in no way be reconciled with what the CDU does and thinks, and that’s what we will work on in the coming days,” she added. —AFP ■

Israeli troops wounded in Jerusalem car-ramming

JERUSALEM — A car-ramming targeting Israeli troops in Jerusalem wounded 14 people early Thursday in an attack that Palestinian Islamist group Hamas hailed as a response to

Washington’s controversial Middle East peace plan.

A manhunt was underway for the driver who fled the scene outside a popular Jerusalem entertainment spot.

The attack occurred shortly before 2:00 am (2400 GMT) outside the First Station, an historic Ottoman-era railway terminus that has been turned into a cultural and entertainment centre

with bars and restaurants.

The attacker struck in the street outside where the soldiers had been marching, the army said.

One of then soldiers was “severely injured” and has been evacuated to hospital.

Public radio said they were new recruits on their way to an induction ceremony at Jerusalem’s Western Wall, the holiest site where Jews can pray.

“During the incident, a terrorist sped his car towards (Israeli) soldiers,” the army said.

Israeli troops “are currently pursuing the terrorist who escaped the scene.”

Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said “the incident is being investigated as a terror attack.”

There have been car-rammings targeting Israeli troops in the past, in the occupied West Bank as well as Jerusalem. —AFP ■



A man cleans the site of a Jerusalem car-ramming targeting Israeli troops that wounded 14 people, one of them critically outside a popular nightspot. PHOTO: AFP

Two dead and dozens injured as train derails near Milan

MILAN — Two people were killed and about 30 injured on Thursday when a high-speed train derailed near Milan in northern Italy, authorities said.

The accident occurred near the town of Lodi, about 50 kilometres (30 miles) south of Milan.

Lodi Prefect Marcello Car-

dona told reporters an investigation was underway into the accident that killed two railworkers.

“There shouldn’t be other deaths,” Cardona said, adding that injuries sustained were not life-threatening.

The interior minister has been informed and the prosecu-

tor was already at the scene of the accident, the cause of which was unknown, he said.

The Milan-Salerno train was en route to Bologna when it came off the tracks.

Video images showed one car flipped on its side that appeared to be still attached to

the other car.

According to initial findings reported by the media, the engine went off the rails and struck a freight wagon on a parallel track before hitting a railway building several dozen metres away. —AFP ■

NEWS In BRIEF

Suspected jihadists held in Maldives after foreigners stabbed

MALE — Maldives police arrested three suspected Islamic extremists Thursday over the stabbing of three foreigners in the upmarket tourist destination.

Two Chinese men and an Australian were in a stable condition after being stabbed Tuesday, just two months after security officials warned of the presence of violent radicals inspired by the Islamic State group. Authorities said were investigating a video released on social media claiming the attack had been carried out by a local group sympathetic to IS.

“The Maldives police service has arrested three suspects under a court warrant in relation to the stabbing of three foreign nationals,” police said in a statement. They were not identified. —AFP ■

African ministers kick off ordinary session in framework of 33rd AU summit

ADDIS ABABA — The 36th ordinary session of the African Union (AU) Executive Council, which comprises ministers of the 55-member pan-African bloc, opened on Thursday in the framework of the 33rd AU summit at the AU headquarters in Ethiopia’s capital Addis Ababa.

In the two-day session, the AU Executive Council is expected to consider the draft agenda and the draft decisions and declarations of the assembly with appropriate recommendations for consideration by the AU heads of states, whose session is scheduled to take place from 9 to 10 February.

The AU summit is held under the theme of the year 2020, “Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa’s Development.”

As a flagship project of Agenda 2063, a blueprint for prosperous and peaceful Africa by 2063, “Silencing the guns by 2020” was adopted by the AU heads of state during the 50th anniversary of the then Organization for African Union (OAU) now African Union (AU) in 2013. —Xinhua ■

In political triumph, Trump acquitted in impeachment trial

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump was acquitted by the US Senate on Wednesday following a historic impeachment trial that shone a harsh light on America's divisions, without ever shaking the loyalty of his voter base.

In a political triumph for the US leader, Trump drew on staunch Republican support to easily defeat a Democratic effort to expel him from office for pressuring Ukraine to help bolster his re-election effort.

The president immediately claimed "victory" while the White House declared it a full "exoneration" — and Democrats rejected the acquittal as the "valueless" outcome of an unfair trial.

But the vote in the Senate showed just how solid a grip the former real estate mogul holds over the Republican Party — an asset nine months before he



President Donald Trump immediately claimed "victory" after his acquittal in a historic impeachment, but Democrats said the outcome resulted from an unfair trial. **PHOTO: AFP**

seeks a second four-year-term.

Even though several conceded Trump's behavior was wrong, Republicans ultimately stayed loyal in voting to clear the president of charges of abuse of power, by 52 to 48, and of obstruction of

Congress, by 53 to 47 — far from the two-thirds supermajority required for conviction.

"Two thirds of the senators present not having found him guilty of the charges contained therein, it is therefore ordered

and adjudged that the said Donald John Trump be, and he is hereby, acquitted," said Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts, who presided over the trial.

One Republican, Senator Mitt Romney, a longtime Trump foe, risked White House wrath to vote alongside Democrats on the first count, saying Trump was "guilty of an appalling abuse of public trust." He voted not guilty on the second charge.

Trump's impeachment and trial will leave a permanent stain on his record, as it did for the only two presidents to have encountered the same fate, Andrew Johnson in 1868 and Bill Clinton in 1998.

But the Senate verdict was never truly in question since the House of Representatives formally impeached Trump in December, and it has now cleared out a major hurdle for the president to

fully plunge into his campaign for re-election in November.

Trump to speak Thursday

Responding to the verdict, Trump announced he would deliver a formal statement Thursday from the White House "to discuss our Country's VICTORY on the Impeachment Hoax!"

The president had earlier tweeted a montage depicting a fake cover of Time magazine declaring him president for all eternity. Trump later tweeted a video attacking Romney, the first senator in US history to support convicting a president from his own party.

While the White House declared that Trump had obtained "full vindication and exoneration," Nancy Pelosi, the House Speaker, warned that by clearing Trump Republicans had "normalized lawlessness." — AFP ■

Russian FM begins Latin America tour with Fidel Castro tribute

MOSCOW — Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov was due to begin a tour of Latin America by visiting Fidel Castro's tomb in Cuba on Wednesday before meeting with his counterpart from the Caribbean island Bruno Rodriguez.

Lavrov will also visit other left-wing allies Mexico and Venezuela on his trip.

Before leaving for Cuba, Lavrov said he'd picked his itinerary to "pay tribute" to Castro.

"For me this is very significant, because for many generations of Russians, Fidel was an example of true dedication to the homeland and his people," Lavrov told Prensa Latina, Cuba's state news agency.

Castro died in November 2016, 10 years after stepping down as Cuba's leader following almost five decades in power. He led the 1959 communist revolution that ousted US-backed military dictator Fulgencio Batista.



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov is due to visit left-wing allies Cuba, Mexico and Venezuela on his Latin American tour. **PHOTO: AFP**

Lavrov's visit comes a day after US President Donald Trump vowed to support the democratic aspirations of Cubans, Venezuelans and Nicaraguans in his State of the Union speech.

"We see the United States' attempts to subordinate Latin America to its geopolitical interests are aimed at toppling 'inconvenient governments' in Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua," said Lavrov. — AFP ■

Palestinian President to address UNSC on US Mideast peace deal next week

RAMALLAH — Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is slated to address the UN Security Council (UNSC) next week over the US Middle East peace plan, better known as the 'Deal of the Century', a senior Palestinian official has said.

Riyad Mansour, the permanent representative of Palestine in the United Nations, told the official Voice of Palestine radio

on Wednesday that Abbas will arrive in New York on Monday and address the UNSC on Tuesday. Mansour revealed that Palestine will submit a draft resolution to the UNSC, Xinhua news agency reported.

Meanwhile, Saleh Ra'fat, a member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation Executive Committee, told reporters that the draft resolution includes the

rejection of the US peace plan.

"In case America vetoes the draft resolution in the Security Council, Palestine will go to the UN General Assembly," Ra'fat said.

He expected the resolution to gain overwhelming majority support of the UN General Assembly, as well as "large condemnation of all Israeli measures." — ANI ■



FILE PHOTO: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas speaking to Democratic members of Congress, 7 August, 2019. **PHOTO: AFP**

Kenya leader warns against US, China rivalry in Africa

NAIROBI — Kenya's president said Wednesday that African nations should be free to cooperate with both the United States and China, warning that foreign powers were exacerbating the

continent's divisions.

President Uhuru Kenyatta was speaking on a visit to Washington, where speculation has built that the United States will seek to negotiate a free-trade

agreement with Kenya, in what would be a first with an African nation. On the eve of his talks with President Donald Trump, Kenyatta said he was "very concerned" about a return to the Cold War

era when Africans had to choose between the United States and the Soviet Union. "Western countries, and their counterparts in Asia and the Middle East, are returned to competition over Africa, in some

cases weaponizing divisions, pursuing proxy actions and behaving like Africa is for the taking.

"Well, I want to tell you it is not," Kenyatta said at the Atlantic Council think tank. — AFP ■

Viet Nam enters the fourth and final round of the 2020 AFC Women's Olympic Qualifiers after defeating Myanmar 1-0

VIET Nam have entered the fourth and final round of the 2020 AFC Women's Olympic Qualifiers after defeating ASEAN neighbours Myanmar 1-0 on Thursday.

Myanmar women's team only satisfied with the third round competition after the Viet Nam team won the match with a 1-0 goal in the group stage of the 2020 AFC Women's Olympic Qualifiers.

In the third round Group-A match of the Olympic Qualifiers held yesterday evening at the Jeju World Cup Stadium in Seongwipo, the Republic of Korea, Vietnam won the match with a goal by Viet Nam striker Ngan Thi Van Su in the 62nd minute.

The two Southeast Asian nations were facing each other in Group A of the third round of the Olympic Qualifiers in

a match which was to decide who will join Korea Republic, the third team in the group, in the play-off stages of the qualification tournament.

Myanmar did well to deny AFF Women's Championship 2019 winners Viet Nam much chances in the first half and the score remained goalless as the two sides went into the half-time interval.

However, Ngan Thi Van Su got in front of his marker to plant a header into the goal in the 62nd minute to give Vietnam the win. The Golden Girls will now face Korea Republic in their final outing on February 9 that will decide who will win Group A.

Myanmar had lost 7-0 to hosts South Korea in their opening match on February 3 meaning that Vietnam could ensure progression with a win in their opening match of the



Myanmar did well to deny AFF Women's Championship 2019 winners Vietnam much chances in the first half and the score remained goalless as the two sides went into the half-time interval. **PHOTO: MFF**

third round.

Top two teams from Group A and B are to qualify for a two-legged play-off round from which the winners will join hosts Japan in the women's football

competition of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

While Group A winners face the runners-up from Group B, the winners of Group B will take on runners-up of Group A in the

play-offs to be held in March 2020.

Group B consists of ASEAN heavyweights Thailand, Chinese Taipei, China PR and hosts Australia.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Football: Son's late penalty sends Spurs into FA Cup fifth round



Tottenham Hotspur's South Korean striker Son Heung-Min (right) kicks a penalty and scores his team's third goal against Southampton during the English FA Cup fourth round replay football match. **(GLYN KIRK/AFP)**

LONDON — Son Heung-min capped a spirited Tottenham fightback as the South Korean's late penalty secured a dramatic 3-2 win against Southampton in Wednesday's (Feb 5) FA Cup fourth-round replay.

Jose Mourinho's side were 12 minutes away from being knocked out after squandering the first-half lead given to them by Jack Stephens' own goal.

Shane Long and Danny Ings scored as Southampton hit back to take the lead at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

But Lucas Moura equalised before Son won and converted the decisive penalty with just two minutes left.

Tottenham, who last won the FA Cup in 1991, will host struggling Norwich in the fifth round in the first week of March.

Aiming for the first trophy of his reign, Mourinho, who replaced Mauricio Pochettino earlier this season, will be relieved Tottenham avoided a surprise exit from a competition he has not won since 2007 with Chelsea.

Tottenham are without a

major trophy of any kind since the 2008 League Cup and Mourinho would dearly love to end that drought, but his team will have to improve significantly on this erratic display.

With Premier League teams enjoying a first winter break in the English top flight, this was a replay neither side wanted.

Every team should have 13 and 16 days between games, but Southampton's break has been cut from 14 days to 10, with Tottenham's cut to 11, as a result of the replay.—AFP

Premier League clubs vote for longer summer transfer window

LONDON — Premier League clubs voted on Thursday to move the closing date of the summer transfer window to bring it into line with the rest of Europe.

At Thursday's shareholders' meeting the clubs voted to revert to the traditional date at the end of August or early September after two seasons when the window closed on the eve of the campaign.

This year's summer window will close at 1600 GMT on Tuesday, September 1 as August 31 is a public holiday.

A Premier League statement read: "At a shareholders' meeting today, Premier League clubs voted to adopt a change to the summer transfer window closing date for season 2020/21.

"This will move the closing date back to the traditional point at the end of August/early September.

"The 2020 closing date will therefore be 17:00 BST (1600 GMT) on 1 September.

"Clubs agreed after discussing the topic at length at previous shareholders' meetings."—AFP



File photo of Manchester City with Premier League trophy. **(FILE)/AFP**