

PARLIAMENT

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw debates Union Auditor-General report, national tax revenue

PAGE-2

NATIONAL

New pre-primary school building opened in Amyotha Hluttaw housing compound

PAGE-2

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President U Win Myint attends Bogyoke Aung San Statue unveiling ceremony



President U Win Myint addresses the unveiling ceremony of Bogyoke Aung San Statue in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

PRESIDENT U Win Myint attended and spoke on the occasion to unveil the Bogyoke Aung San Statue at the Thabyaygon Roundabout in Nay Pyi Taw at 8 am yesterday.

The ceremony was attended by President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho, Vice President U Myint Swe and wife Daw Khin Thet Htay, Vice President U Henry Van Thio and wife Dr Shwe Hluan, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat and wife Daw Yin May, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than and wife Nant Kyin Kyi, Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo, State Constitutional Tribunal Chairman U Myo

Nyunt, Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung, the Union Ministers, the Union Attorney-General, the Union Auditor-General, the Union Civil Service Board Chairman, the Peace Commission Chairman, the Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, the Central Bank of Myanmar Governor, the Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Chairman, the Hluttaw Affairs Committee Chairpersons, the Nay Pyi Taw Command Commander, the Deputy Ministers and their wives, the Hluttaw representatives,

SEE PAGE-3

State Counsellor meets with Shan State officials, celebrates birthday of Bogyoke Aung San with children



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi presents gift to a child at the ceremony to mark 105th birthday of Bogyoke Aung San in Taunggyi, Shan State. PHOTO: MNA

THE 105th birthday of Bogyoke Aung San was celebrated with a breakfast feast for the children at the city hall of Taunggyi in southern Shan State, yesterday.

At 8:30 am, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in her capacity as the Chairperson of the Central Committee for Development of Border Areas and National Races, held a meeting with cabinet members of Shan State government at Taunggyi Hotel.

The meeting was also attended by Union Ministers U Min Thu, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Dr Aung Thu, U Ohn Win, Dr Myint Htwe, Dr Win Myat Aye, Shan State

Chief Minister Dr Lin Htut, Deputy Ministers Major General Aung Thu and U Hla Maw Oo, local government ministers, chairmen and representatives from leading bodies of Wa Self-Administered Division, PaO Self-Administered Zone and Palaung Self-Administered Zone, Shan State Advocate-General and officials.

At the city hall of Taunggyi, the State Counsellor attended the ceremony to mark her father Bogyoke Aung San's 105th birthday with a breakfast feast for children.

SEE PAGE-4

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL

ID cards for matriculation exam to be issued as of 20 Feb

PAGE-6

NATIONAL

MoHS holds its daily meeting for preventing COVID-19

PAGE-6



NATIONAL

MoI prepares for 8th Myanmar Media Development Conference

PAGE-12

NATIONAL

Workshop on prosecutions in human trafficking cases held in Nay Pyi Taw

PAGE-12

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw debates Union Auditor-General report, national tax revenue

DURING the eighth-day meeting of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's 15th regular session yesterday, MPs debated a second report (1/2020) from the Joint Public Accounts Committee on the 6-month report from the Union Auditor-General (UAG) Office for April to September 2018.

Firstly, U Han Win Thein of Taninthayi Region constituency 4 said page 19 of the Union Auditor-General's report says a lack of coordination between ministries and weak adherence to existing laws is causing loss in the national budget. The report also suggests departments and officials should exercise proper administration to ensure all national revenue is earned and terms of contracts are followed.

He said this is caused by department mechanisms unable to process the shift from a centralized planned economy to a free market economy. He said the people currently given the authority to carry out reforms for a democratic society and market economy often overstep their boundaries, fail to perform their duties or procrastinate. He suggested implementing a law on management and a suitable court to remedy this issue.

Next, U Sai Tun Aye of Mong-shu constituency suggested that Myanmar's national resources should be considered as investments from the beginning of projects to increase the national electricity supply through the use of foreign loans. He said developing the electricity sector is important and the Ministry of Electricity and Energy must take care not

to waste national budget.

Next, U Kyaw Gyi (a) U Ohn Khin of Minhla constituency said that a close inspection of the ministries mentioned in the UAG's report show that they do not properly adhere to existing policies, directives, laws and by-laws. He suggested that ministry officials should be more honest and hardworking than before, especially now, as the nation is endeavouring for national and social development.

The Joint Public Accounts Committee's report was further debated by U Myo Zaw Aung of Kawlin constituency, U Myo Win of Mon State constituency 8, U Maung Myint of Mingin constituency, U Kyaw Naing of Yangon Region constituency 12, U Tin Ko Ko Oo of Bilin constituency, U Khin Cho of Hlaingbwe constituency, U Aung Thaik of Seikpyu constituency, U Sai Okkar of Laikha constituency, Dr Than Aung Soe of Minhla constituency, Daw Mi Kun Chan of Paung constituency, U Zaw Hein of Taninthayi Region constituency 7, Dr Kyaw Ngwe of Magway Region constituency 10, U Tun Myint of Bahan constituency, Dr San Maung Maung of Bago Region constituency 1, Daw Cho Cho of Ottwin constituency, U Khin Myo Win of Taninthayi Region constituency 12, Daw Aye Mya Mya Myo of Kyauktan constituency, U Kyaw Tote of Mandalay Region constituency 7, and Dr Kun Win Thauang of Kachin State constituency 11.

Lt-Gen Soe Htut also took the oath of office as Union Minister for Home Affairs in the presence of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw



Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's 15th regular session is being convened in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: SOE WIN TUN

Speaker U T Khun Myat.

Next, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee member U Nay Myo Tun submitted the committee's findings and suggestions concerning the Myanmar Geoscience Council Bill, disputed between the two Hluttaws. The Speaker called for MPs interested in submitting amendments directly related to the disputed facts to enroll their name.

Following this, Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry Dr Min Ye Paing Hein submitted the tax revenue records of Union-level Ministries and institutions for the second 6-month period of 2018-2019 financial year sent by the Union Government.

He explained that the estimate for the second 6-month tax revenue was K3,912.267 billion while the actual tax collected amounted to K4,317.552 billion, making the implementation rate

111.36 per cent.

He said of the 22 categories for tax collection, 13 categories exceeded estimates, 8 categories did not meet estimates, and 1 category had no estimate and no tax collection recorded.

The Deputy Minister said the 22 tax categories were levied by 9 Union Ministries and Nay Pyi Taw Council, and the 6 tax categories levied by MoPFI exceeded their estimate of K3,300.478 billion and collected K3,751.959 billion, marking an 113.68 per cent implementation rate.

He said the other 8 Union Ministries and Nay Pyi Taw Council levied the remaining 16 tax categories and collected K565.593 billion, which is 92.45 per cent of the estimated revenue of K611.789 billion.

The Deputy Minister said the tax revenue and GDP ratio of Myanmar is barely over 7 per cent, and comprehensive tax collection

is greatly needed.

Next, Joint Public Accounts Committee Vice Chairman U Saw Than Htut submitted the committee's report (2/2020) on the tax revenue. He mentioned that as Myanmar has signed the Common Effective Preferential Tariff (CEPT) with China, Japan, Thailand, India, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand, the amount of tariffs reduced for 2018-2019 financial year was K401.193 billion.

He said Myanmar needs to expand its export categories and quantity to ensure fair trade. The Speaker then called for MPs interested in discussing the report to enroll their names.

The ninth-day meeting of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's 15th regular session will convene on 17 February.—Aung Ye Thwin, Aye Aye Thant

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)



Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than and Deputy Hluttaw Speakers cut ribbon to open the new building of Pre-Primary School in Amyotha Hluttaw Housing compound in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

New pre-primary school building opened in Amyotha Hluttaw Housing compound

THE Department of Social Welfare under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement opened a new building for the pre-primary school in the Amyotha Hluttaw housing complex in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the ceremony, Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw U T Khun Myat, Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw Mahn Win Khaing Than, Deputy Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw U Tun Tun Hein, Deputy Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw U Aye Tha Aung opened the new school building by cutting the cer-

emonial ribbon. Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than sprinkled scented water on inscription of the new building.

Also present at the opening ceremony were Deputy Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung, Amyotha Hluttaw representatives, heads of Hluttaw Office and departmental officials.

The Department of Social Welfare spent K119 million for the building from its 2018-2019 financial year budget. — MNA

(Translated by TTN)

President U Win Myint attends Bogoyoke Aung San Statue unveiling ceremony

FROM PAGE-1

departmental officials, ethnic national races, non-governmental organizations, civil societies, university student unions, students, donors and local residents.

President U Win Myint spoke on the occasion to unveil the Bogoyoke Aung San Statue.

(The speech of President U Win Myint is covered on page 5)

Next, the President, the Vice Presidents, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker, the Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker, the Union Chief Justice and the Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman cut the ceremonial ribbon and sprayed scented water over monumental bronze plaques.

Then, the President and First Lady, the Vice Presidents, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker, the Amyotha Hluttaw Chairman, the Union Chief Justice, the Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman, the State Constitutional



President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho, Vice Presidents U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio, Hluttaw Speakers U T Khun Myat and Mahn Win Khaing Than and their wives, and ethnic youths pose for a commemorative photo in front of Bogoyoke Aung San Statue in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. Photo: MNA

Tribunal Chairman, the Union-level Officials, the Nay Pyi Taw Command Commander and Members of the Leading Committee for Bogoyoke Statue posed for group photos with the ethnic national races.

The President and First Lady concluded the event by cheerfully greeting the invited guests and local people.—MNA

(Translated by Aungthu Ya)

President U Win Myint sprinkles scented water on the stone inscription of the Bogoyoke Statue at the unveiling ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA



State Counsellor meets with Shan State officials, celebrates 105th birthday of Bogyoke Aung San with children in Taunggyi

FROM PAGE-1

Union Ministers U Min Thu, Lt-Gen Ye Aung, Dr Aung Thu, U Ohn Win, Dr Myint Htwe, Dr Win Myat Aye, Shan State Chief Minister Dr Lin Htut, Deputy Ministers Major General Aung Thu and U Hla Maw Oo, local government ministers and officials joined the ceremony.

A band from Yangon Education Centre for the Blind (Khaweichan) performed with songs of ‘Tribute to Bogyoke Aung San’ and ‘Peace is a Must’.

In making a speech, the State Counsellor shared her experience of parentless child, comparing with the feeling of orphans.

She also expressed her appreciation of the songs of singers from the Khaweichan school as the performance has proved that everybody has specific capacities and has a chance for developing their capacities.



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with cabinet members of Shan State government in Taunggyi, Shan State yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

The State Counsellor advised to transform some weaknesses into certain strengths in life to lead a happy and friendly environment with others, and finally wished for the wellbeing of all.

The State Counsellor then

presented commemorative gifts to the children to mark the 105th birthday of Bogyoke Aung San, followed by poem ‘Aung San Hero’ reciting by the children.

She also had the breakfast together with the children, and had a documentary photo taken

with them.

The State Counsellor and party then observed the environment of Inle Lake and its conservation programmes by helicopter before they took special flight from Heho airport to Nay Pyi Taw in the afternoon.

National Leader Bogyoke Aung San was born to U Phar and Daw Suu at Natmawk Town in Magway District of central Myanmar on 1st Waxing of Tabaung month in ME 1276 (12 February 1915). —MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi seen with the child at the event to mark the 105th birthday of Bogyoke Aung San in Taunggyi. PHOTO: MNA



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi eating breakfast together with the children at the ceremony to mark the 105th birthday of Bogyoke Aung San in Taunggyi, yesterday. PHOTO: MNA



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi poses for a photo together with children at the event to mark the 105th birthday of Bogyoke Aung San in Taunggyi, Shan State, yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

We have determined to establish a Democratic Federal Union that can guarantee fundamental rights for citizens, and to prevent a political system that oppresses people through the dictatorship.

President U Win Myint

Following is the full-text of the speech delivered by President U Win Myint at the ceremony to unveil the Bogyoke Aung San Statue in Nay Pyi Taw.

Mingalabar!

I extend my best wishes for peace of mind and wellbeing to the Vice Presidents, Hluttaw Speakers, Union level officials, Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command, Hluttaw representatives, civil service personnel, ethnic nationals, civil society organizations, students, invited guests and citizens all across the country.

First of all I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the various committees which worked on and gave support to successfully create the Bogyoke Aung San statue, donors and all the supporters. I am delighted and deem it an honour to have this opportunity to deliver a speech at this unveiling ceremony.

This day is indeed an auspicious day. Why? It is because today is the birthday of our national leader and hero Bogyoke Aung San; furthermore we have been able to erect the statue of our Union benefactor with pomp and ceremony with great numbers in attendance in Nay Pyi Taw, the capital city of Myanmar as well as in the Union territory. This statue brings to completion the noble qualities of a capital city; it also brings forth the prestige of a Union territory. I understand that all ethnic nationals and citizens would be filled with joy and happiness.

I believe that the reason for erecting the Bogyoke Aung San statue has bona fide reasons. It is not for mere formality; it is being done with deep meaning in relation to the affairs of the nation. I believe there are many good aims and objectives: to impress upon the younger generation to emulate the honesty and integrity of Bogyoke Aung San; his pure cetana and metta for the nation; to be inspired by his noble programme and work for the betterment of the country; his physical qualities and strength of character; to instill nationalistic spirit by being inspired by his good conduct, clarity of mind and integrity and also his knowledge, ideas and ideologies; his willingness to strive without any self-interest and lack of interest for any position in the interest of the country and the people for independence by sacrificing his life; to kindle patriotic spirit; to look upon the deeds of Bogyoke Aung San which may be regarded as great and grand historic milestones.

Moreover, it is hoped that this statue would remind us to undertake the remaining tasks contained in the policy and programme formulated by Bogyoke Aung San.

Whenever we think of Bogyoke Aung San, it is to remind us that many of the tasks mentioned by him in his speeches, instructions and words of advice and guidance still remain to be implemented, lest we make errors of omission.

Whenever we think of Bogyoke Aung San, it is to remind us that many of the tasks mentioned by him in his speeches, instructions and words of advice and guidance still remain to be implemented, lest we make errors of omission.

There is much to learn and take to heart from the speeches of Bogyoke Aung San throughout his lifetime: as a student, as a member of the Dohbhama Asiayone, as a Thakin, as a soldier, and as a national leader. If we study his speeches thoroughly, we may be able to know by examining his speeches to the finest detail, what kind of person he is, his political view, his qualities and what kind of leader he is. Furthermore, in as much as we can read his speeches and follow his advice, it is certain that we can gain much benefit for ourselves as well as for the country and the people.

We may glean vividly and in clarity the avant garde thinking and intellectual brilliance of the young Bogyoke by examining some excerpts from his model speeches. As a mark of respect to the gratitude I owe to Bogyoke, I wish to take this opportunity to share with my fellow citizens, as an aid to memory, some of the guiding principles and programme laid down by him.

Bogyoke, the architect of independence, he who

With intention to national unity, he also said “The Tatmadaw was founded not for an individual, but for the whole nation. Not for a political party or group, but for the entire national people.” This remark reflected his intention as to the nature of the Tatmadaw.

did not give a moment of thought, not even a speck of dust nor a grain of sand for his life, family or wealth, worked continuously and gave his life for the country to gain total independence and national sovereignty. He laid down in advance the following policy: when the Union of Burma gained independence, it should be a democracy; only then will the citizens enjoy democracy and human rights; only then will the country develop and prosper; only then will they enjoy Peace.

Bogyoke Aung San said clearly and boldly, “We have to promote democracy and make it popular. Only democracy is suitable for an independent country. Only this ideology encourages peace. That is why we should aim for democracy,” during the fourth meeting of national leaders in August 1945.

Bogyoke Aung San also reminded all the citizens to be vigilant about democracy so that they would not be caught unawares and in order to make sure that they do not fail to see the important aspects. At the preliminary conference for preparing the Anti-Fascist People’s Freedom League on 19 May 1947, he said, “Some countries which call themselves democratic have not yet enjoyed complete and genuine democracy. They enjoy only a small percentage of democracy.”

He said: “Just because it is called a democracy does not mean it is a democracy. There are so many people who are using this word, just by hearing about it, without understanding its meaning.” – to make sure that citizens do not lose their democratic rights.

In relation to the administrative sector, in the prelude of the 1947 State Constitution in which he took

the leading role in the drafting process, Bogyoke Aung San instructed that the following principles should be firmly enshrined: justice in social relations, justice in economic relations, justice in politics, equality, equal opportunities and justice in legal affairs.

For establishing an administrative mechanism that can protect freedom and security of the people and support rule of law, Bogyoke Aung San said “The rule of autocrats who are opposed to the wishes of the public will lead to a system that is similar to fascism, instead of a people-centered democratic system.”

Bogyoke Aung San, who is also the founder of Tatmadaw, also said, “The Burma independence army will not involve itself either in administrative or political affairs. Our soldiers must not be involved with nor interfere with party politics and administrative sectors.” It was mentioned in his book titled ‘Political Classic Book’.

With intention to national unity, he also said “The Tatmadaw was founded not for an individual, but for the whole nation. Not for a political party or group, but for the entire national people.” This remark reflected his intention as to the nature of the Tatmadaw.

Regarding ethnic affairs, Bogyoke Aung San supported the paragraph 5 of Panglong Agreement, which includes ‘Full autonomy in internal administration for the Frontier Areas is accepted in principle.’

In also paragraph 7, the Agreement said “Citizens of the Frontier Areas shall enjoy rights and privileges which are regarded as fundamental in democratic countries.”

At the preliminary conference of the Anti-Fascist People’s Freedom League (AFPFL) held on 19 May 1947, Bogyoke Aung San said, “In my opinion, it is not appropriate to establish a unitary state in which most or all of the governing power resides in a centralized government. It is better to form a Union government.”

Bogyoke Aung San had a wide range of capacity in politics, organizing power, founding the Tatmadaw and respect by the ethnic people. He is a unique leader of the country. He is also a leader of public, politics and military. Although he has drawn up guidelines as a leader of vision on politics, economics, social affairs and unity, the successive governments could not implement the plans.

Therefore, our government is implementing the expectations of our national leaders as much as we can. We have determined to establish a Democratic Federal Union that can guarantee fundamental rights for citizens, and to prevent a political system that oppresses people through dictatorship.

The coordination of public, including ethnic people, is also required to implement these tasks with the feeling of very deep gratitude towards Bogyoke Aung San.

We could not forget our great benefactor Bogyoke Aung San. It is also believed that his philosophies and sacrifices will last eternally. Let’s show our tribute to him by implementing his policies and expectations Let’s protect national unity and union spirit with the collaborative efforts of national people, and let’s march to the destination of a Democratic Federal Union expected by Bogyoke Aung San.

Thank you all.

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Competitions commemorate Myanmar Children’s Day (Bogyoke’s Birthday)



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint delivers the speech at the commemorative ceremony to mark the 105th birthday of Bogyoke Aung San in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

A COMMEMORATIVE ceremony to unveil the Bogyoke Statue, to hold the essays writing, drawings, poems, songs, impromptu talks and Bogyoke’s Speeches contests, and to give prizes was convened on Myanmar Chil-

dren’s Day (Bogyoke’s Birthday) yesterday at the Myanmar International Convention Centre II in Nay Pyi Taw. Present on the occasion were Union Ministers U Kyaw Tin, Dr Pe Myint, Thura U Aung

Ko, U Thant Sin Maung, U Thein Swe and Nai Thet Lwin, Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr Myo Aung, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Chairman U Hla Myint

and their wives, Deputy Ministers U Khin Maung Tin, U Aung Hla Tun, U Kyi Min and U Aung Htoo, Deputy Attorney-General U Win Myint, Union Supreme Court Judges, Union Constitutional Tribunal Members, Union Election Commission Members, Chairpersons of Hluttaw Affairs Committee, Nay Pyi Taw Council Members, Anti-Corruption Commission Members, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Members, Leading Committee Members for Nay Pyi Taw Bogyoke Statue, Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee Members, teachers, students, donors, invited guests and officials. Union Minister Dr Pe Myint of the Ministry of Information delivered a speech at the ceremony. Next, Deputy Mayor U Ye Min Oo of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee explained the unveiling ceremony of Nay Pyi Taw Bogyoke Aung San Statute. The Bogyoke’s Speeches

contest was then followed. Union Minister Dr Pe Myint gave the first, second and third prizes to the winners in the Bogyoke’s Speeches contest. Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture and Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung of the Ministry of Transport and Communications awarded the special prizes to outstanding winners. Afterwards, Union Ministers, Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Chairman, Deputy Ministers and Chairpersons of the Hluttaw Affairs Committee had a documentary photo taken with the attendees. In the afternoon, the poems reciting, essays writing and impromptu talks competitions were held in commemoration of the Myanmar Children’s Day (Bogyoke’s Birthday). The event concluded with prize-giving ceremony. —MNA (Translated by Aungthu Ya)

ID cards for matriculation exam to be issued as of 20 Feb

THE Department of Myanmar Examinations will release ID cards for the matriculation exam as of 20 February before it organizes the examinations from 11 to 20 March.

Students who will sit the exam at the respective exam centers of Regions/ States are to draw their ID cards with their photo and roll number as of 20 February (Thursday).

Those from Basic Education High Schools, sub-schools, affiliated schools and private schools can get their ID cards from the heads of respective schools, while the external students may acquire the cards from respective supervisors of exam centres.

The students who face difficulties in taking out the ID cards may directly enquire township education officers and Department of Myanmar Examinations.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

MoHS holds its daily meeting for preventing COVID-19

PERMANENT Secretary Dr Thet Khaing Win of the Ministry of Health and Sports stressed the need for public cooperation in the ‘Isolation’ and ‘Quarantine’ process under way in Myanmar to prevent the spread of respiratory coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) at the daily meeting held at the ministry yesterday morning.

He also pointed out the need to enforce the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law and ratify the relevant by-laws. The existing in-patients under suspicion and patients under surveillance are required to have the stipulated health advice when they are discharged. It is necessary to continue the surveillance measures upon them after discharge.

He added: “Health awareness campaign should be carried out jointly with the Myanmar Red Cross Society in crowded places in order to reach the public and all walks of life. UNICEF will help in publishing the health information leaflets in Kachin, Shan, Wa and Kokang languages. We need to implement this immediately. We also need to properly learn the analyses on communicable diseases done by China and worldwide through the epidemiology perspective.

We should hold a round of awareness discussions on the detection procedures to be used in all state/region hospitals. Those who are quarantined should be allowed the necessary provisions like employment leave. We should continue the 24/7 hotline service of the Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) and inform the states/regions to coordinate with the EOC in the preventive measures being undertaken.

Health officials should present a daily report on the status of distribution of medicines, medical supply and personal protective equipment, on the remaining storage and resource mapping, and on the collaboration work with international development partners. UNICEF and MRCS should be more involved in the health information dissemination to remote villages where the Internet is not accessible,” he added.

The meeting discussed the matters pertaining to the update information on COVID-19, the epidemiology perspective analyses, the progress in health condition of the in-patients under surveillance at the states/regions hospitals and 59 students who were brought back from Wuhan (China), the control and prevention measures at 3 international airports and 27 entry points (both legal and illegal) in 20 townships of 8 states/regions, and the medical examination measure upon people on board the Chinese research vessel Xiang Yang Hong 06 that berthed at Thilawa Jetty on 12 February.

The daily meeting was attended by the Director-General (Public Health & Medical Services Department) of the Ministry of Health and Sports, the Deputy Director-General (Medical Services), the Deputy Director-General (Disease Control), the Deputy Director-General (Planning & Finance), the Director (Communicable Diseases Control – Central), the hospital heads, the CDC professors, the medicinal professors, and health officers among others.—MNA

(Translated by Aungthu Ya)

A daily meeting on prevention, control measures for the COVID-19 held on 13 February 2020. PHOTO: MNA



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Self-confidence key to building a federal democratic Union

WE, as a people, have committed to building a federal democratic Union inspired by Bogoyoke Aung San and other ethnic leaders.

We strongly believe that only a genuine federal democratic system can guarantee equal opportunities and basic human rights to all the people, regardless of their ethnicity and majority or minority status.

As we march towards our goal, we should be on the alert to prevent the re-emergence of a political system under which people were ruled with an iron-fist.

To achieve our goal, we need to build unity, for therein lies our strength.

The people of the country have undertaken the historic task of building a federal democratic Union. If we can strengthen our union in the present time, generations to come will be able to enjoy the fruitful results of our efforts.

With self-confidence, they can move on to goals they seek, and win people's support with their powers and astuteness.

The people of the country have undertaken the historic task of building a federal democratic Union. If we can strengthen our union in the present time, generations to come will be able to enjoy the fruitful results of our efforts.

No one can escape history. Successive generations will judge our actions till the end of time. Therefore, we must think about how we'll face the tribunals formed by future generations. Our actions should enable us to defend ourselves with our heads held high.

The people need to nurture the spirit of the Union which accepts that we all are ethnic brethren of the Union.

As part of building a genuine democratic system, MPs are trying to amend the 2018 constitution. It was right of the ruling party to lay down a policy to achieve the goal of setting up a genuine democracy within the framework of peace and rule of law with the belief that such a step would not hurt the country.

Our leaders collaborated and exercised farsightedness, wisdom, magnanimity, and a risk-taking spirit.

They did what they believed and that reflects their self-confidence and trust in each other.

Today, if all stakeholders for the nationwide ceasefire have self-confidence, the peace process will be all-inclusive and the gun fires that we have heard for over 70 years will be silenced.

We would like to request ethnic armed groups who have not signed the ceasefire agreement until now to have confidence in their own capacity.

Global forum on COVID-19 pins down research priorities: WHO

The 2-day forum was held at the World Health Organization's Geneva headquarters. Over 300 scientists and researchers with many different backgrounds of study, helped address the current level and knowledge of the COVID-19 Disease (coronavirus). This includes, ways to collaborate and fund priority research to help stop this outbreak and prepare for the future.

A TWO-DAY forum on COVID-19 coordinated by the World Health Organization (WHO) concluded in Geneva on Wednesday, setting research priorities for scientists worldwide to better understand and fight the disease.

The forum, attended by about 350 experts and representatives from 68 institutions, aimed to mobilize international action in response to COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, by identifying key knowledge gaps and research priorities.

According to Soumya Swaminathan, WHO chief scientist, it was very fortunate to have doctors from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention at the forum online to present the data of research already initiated in China.

Meanwhile, development of vaccines and therapeutics is among other medium-term priorities, Swaminathan said.

In addition, scientists agreed that there must be a master clinical trial protocol to set out the options for different drugs that could be tested, either individually or in combination, she said.

Leading health experts from around the world have identified gaps and work together to accelerate and fund priority research needed to help stop this outbreak and prepare for any future outbreaks.

The forum was convened in line with the WHO R&D Blueprint – a strategy for developing drugs and vaccines before epidemics, and accelerating R and D while they are occurring.



Checkpoints have been set up around Son Loi farming region near Hanoi after six cases of the deadly new coronavirus were found there / © AFP

"This outbreak is a test of solidarity – political, financial and scientific. We need to come together to fight a common enemy that does not respect borders, ensure that we have the resources necessary to bring this outbreak to an end and bring our best science to the forefront to find shared answers to shared problems. Research is an integral part of the outbreak response," said WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. "I appreciate the positive response of the research community to join us at short notice and come up with concrete plans and commitment to work together."

The meeting, hosted in collaboration with GloPID-R (the Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness) brought together major research funders and over 300 scientists and researchers from a large variety of disciplines. They discussed all aspects of the outbreak and ways to control it including:

- the natural history of the virus, its transmission and diagnosis;
- animal and environmental research on the origin of the virus, including management measures at the human-animal interface;
- epidemiological studies;
- clinical characterization and management of disease caused by the virus;
- infection prevention and control, including best ways to protect health care workers;



Medical team members board the flight to Hubei Province at Changshui International Airport in Kunming, capital of southwest China's Yunnan Province, Feb. 12, 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA

- research and development for candidate therapeutics and vaccines;
- ethical considerations for research;
- and integration of social sciences into the outbreak response.

"This meeting allowed us to identify the urgent priorities for research. As a group of funders we will continue to mobilize, coordinate and align our funding to enable the research needed to tackle this crisis and stop the outbreak, in partnership with WHO," said Professor Yazdan Yazdanpanah, chair of GloPID-R. "Equitable access – making sure we share data and reach those most in need, in particular those in lower and middle-income countries, is fundamental to this work which must be guided by ethical considerations at all times."

During the meeting, the more than 300 scientists and researchers participating both in person and virtually agreed on a set of global research priorities. They also outlined mechanisms for continuing scientific interactions and collaborations beyond the meeting which will be coordinated and facilitated by WHO. They worked with research funders to determine how neces-

sary resources can be mobilized so that critical research can start immediately.

Foreign firms lend helping hand

Foreign firms across diverse industries have lent their support to China's fight against the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak through donations and fee reductions.

Global mining giants BHP and Rio Tinto donated 10 million yuan (about 1.4 million U.S. dollars) and 1 million dollars, respectively, to the Chinese Red Cross Foundation to aid medical workers and purchase supplies, according to the companies' websites.

Japan woman with coronavirus dies

Japan on Thursday reported the first death of a person infected with novel coronavirus, as the number of cases on a quarantined cruise ship offshore soared over 200.

The woman in her 80s was tested for the virus after being hospitalised, and was confirmed positive after her death, Health Minister Katsunobu Kato told a news briefing.

US cruise ship docks in Cambodia

A US cruise ship blocked from several Asian ports over concerns that a passenger could have been infected with the new coronavirus docked at a Cambodian pier Thursday, as frustrated holidaymakers expressed hope their ordeal may soon be over.

The Westerdam was supposed to be taking its 1,455 passengers on a dream 14-day cruise around east Asia, beginning in Hong Kong on February 1 and disembarking on Saturday in Yokohama, Japan.

But the ship was turned away from Japan, Guam, the Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand over fears of the novel coronavirus epidemic that has killed more than 1,300 people in China.

Cruise operator Holland America has insisted there are no cases of the SARS-like virus on board and Cambodia announced Wednesday that the boat would be able to dock in Sihanoukville, on its southern coast.

Vietnam quarantines area with 10,000 residents

More than 10,000 people in villages near Vietnam's capital were placed under quarantine Thursday after six cases of the

deadly new coronavirus were discovered there, authorities said.

In the first mass quarantine outside of China since the virus emerged there in late December, the Son Loi farming region about 40 kilometres (25 miles) from Hanoi will be locked down for 20 days, the health ministry said.

Checkpoints have been set up around the six villages that make up Son Loi, said an AFP team on the outskirts of the area in Binh Xuyen district.

Australia extends ban

Australia on Thursday announced a ban on travellers from China would extend for at least a week beyond Saturday's planned deadline, as the death toll from the coronavirus soared.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the government would maintain "entry restriction on foreign nationals who have recently been in mainland China" for further week "to protect Australians from the risk of coronavirus".

A decision to extend the ban further will be taken week-to-week, he said.

REFERENCES
WHO; AFP; Xinhua News Updates



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Thursday 13th February, 2020)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 14th February, 2020: Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions and Kachin State 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 (4-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated light rain in Kachin State.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14th February, 2020: Fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14th February, 2020: Fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14th February, 2020: Fair weather.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their work to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, in person, or by email to ce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Own name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.). – Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar

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

Myanmar needs to develop traditional sculpture business: veteran sculptor

TO produce high-quality sculptures, Myanmar needs to boost traditional sculpture businesses, produce skilled sculptors, and make it easier to apply for a business license and buy better raw materials, such as hardwood, said a veteran sculptor.
“We cannot set a time-limit for making a sculpture. When we are making a sculpture, we need to focus on doing our job to our best to be able to manufacture beautiful and good quality products. In doing so, we need to be artistic as well as creative and use innovative ideas. Additionally, we need to select designs based on the size of the hardwood. The price of sculptures can vary, depending on their size, design, and quality of hardwood. But, each handicraft is needed to fetch us an attractive price. The best hardwood varieties to make sculptures are: tawgyi padauk, tamaland, teak, and padauk. We have difficulty obtaining a license and raw teak is hard to find. But, the government has allowed us to sell finished



Sculptors carving wooden figures in Darbein. PHOTO: KHON (WIN PA)

sculptures in the market freely. Now, our team has arrived in this town to manufacture sculptures. The labour charges will depend on the quality. I started to make sculptures at the age of 14, and have been a sculptor for more than 20 years,” said U Ye Naing from Darpein town in Hlegu Township.
“I have been making ar-

rangements to open a sculpture shop for more than one year. Now, I have collected many sculptures. I offer appropriate fees to sculptors after observing the design of their handicrafts. Now, we can buy raw wood in town to manufacture sculptures. I am not really sure if the sculpture market will be good. We are also selling sculptures at affordable prices. We have a furni-

ture license,” said U Kyaw Wei of the Ah Kaung Kyaik family from Thuwannawady town.
The government is encouraging the development of sculpture. A wooden sculpture competition is currently on now. But, only a few professional youth sculptors can be found in Myanmar.—Khon (Win Pa)
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Elephant Museum to open at Wingabaw camp in March

A MUSEUM dedicated to pachyderms will open in March at the Wingabaw Elephant Conservation Camp in Bago Township. Officials expect more tourists to visit the camp this year once the museum is inaugurated.

The Wingabaw Elephant Conservation Camp opened on 3 November, 2016. It is located on the Phayagyi-Bawnet road in Bago Township, 3 miles and 7 furlongs from milepost 39. In the beginning, the Wingabaw

Elephant Camp recorded few visitors. Later, the number of visitors increased to around 50-100 per day. Now, the camp sees around 200-400 visitors on the weekends.
In the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the Wingabaw Elephant Camp earned K80.6 million from visitors, making it the highest earning camp in Myanmar. In the last 10 months, an elephant museum has been constructed at the camp. The building for the museum was completed in January and the museum is set to open in March.
Initially, the elephant camp was aimed solely at conserving elephants. Now, the camp also provides elephant-related activities where visitors can feed baby and adult elephants, give them a bathe, and take a ride. There is also a playground for children. In

addition, visitors can plant trees at the camp under a special programme.
“This year, the number of tourists visiting the Wingabaw elephant camp has increased. Earlier, there were only 20 tourists visiting the camp in a month. Now, there are around 70-100 tourists visiting the camp. The elephant museum will be opened in March and the infrastructure for the museum is complete. They only need to install the skeleton of an elephant. We will also decorate the museum with ivory hangings. But, we need more assistance and advice from experts,” said an official from the Elephant Camp. Currently, there are 18 elephants at the Wingabaw Elephant Conservation Camp.—Aye Maung
(Translated by Hay Mar)



Mahouts seen cleaning elephants at the Wingabaw Elephant Camp near Yangon-Mandalay Highway. PHOTO: THWE THWE TUN

Five-year-old girl dies in Mandalay fire outbreak

A FIVE-YEAR-OLD girl died yesterday after her house was engulfed in flames during a fire outbreak at a municipal employee housing quarter on Kanna Road, Sein Pan Ward,

Mahaaungmye Township, Mandalay District.
According to witnesses, a 9-year-old was using firewood to cook food on a kitchen stove at home, when some sparks set

a nearby wall on fire. The fire quickly spiraled out of control and spread to 10 other houses in the municipal employee housing quarter, killing a five-year-old inhabitant.

The fire started to break out at 7:22 am and was brought under control at 7:35 am. Firefighters put out the fire with the help of 30 vehicles.—Tin Zar Hlaing
(Translated by Hay Mar)

12 new investment projects to create over 6,600 jobs

THE Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) approved 12 new projects yesterday in the manufacturing, other services, and hotels sectors with investments of US\$501.913 million and K73.435 billion.

The investments include expansion of capital by 19 existing projects.

The projects will create more than 6,600 jobs for Myanmar citizens.

The MIC granted its approval at a meeting held in Yangon.

The meeting was attended by MIC vice chairman Dr. ThanMyint and 10 commission members.

At the end of December, 2019, the countries with the largest investments in Myanmar were Singapore, the People's Republic of China, and Thailand. The top sector was oil and gas sector, which accounted for 27 per cent of the total permitted foreign investment, followed by the power sector (26.15 per cent), and the manufacturing sector (14.07 per cent). —MNA



Union Minister Dr Than Myint attends the (3/2020) meeting of Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

China border trade suspension hurts over 50,000 marine workers; losses pegged at \$50 mln



Seafood exports cause a lot of losses due to China's border trade suspension. **PHOTO: SALAI VAN RO THANG (IPRD)**

THE suspension of border trade with China in wake of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak has rendered more than 50,000 marine workers jobless, according to Hein Nadi Aung Company Limited, which is exporting marine products from Muse town. The losses in fishery exports have been estimated at more than US\$50 million, it stated.

China has halted imports of Myanmar's marine products such as crabs, eels, frozen fish, dried fish and prawns, shrimps, and other products since 27 January.

"Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, 15 trucks of marine products, with estimated weight of 30 tons, were exported to China per day. The trade was forced to a stop after the COVID-19 epidemic. As a result, more than 50,000 marine workers across the country have become unemployed. Moreover, all stakeholders in the supply chain, including truck drivers and staff

of export companies, are facing financial constraints," said U Thein Win, manager of the Hein Nadi Aung Company.

According to market rumors, trade is expected to resume from 23 February. However, there has been no official statement from China yet.

"Marine products are perishable and decay more easily than fruits. It will take some time to reopen border trade as China has not issued any statement yet," he added.

The fees charged by the Muse fruit exchange has been exempted until 23 February. But, marine products have not been exempted of commodity exchange charges.

"At present, the entry of marine products to the Muse market remains suspended. The fishery industry is endeavoring to penetrate other potential markets," U Thein Win added.

—Salai Van Ro Thang (IPRD)

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Myanmar watermelon, muskmelon fair to be held at Myaypadaytha Kyun

By Nyein Nyein

A FIVE-DAY Myanmar Watermelon and Muskmelon Fair will take place between 27 February and 2 March at the Myaypadaytha Kyun in Yangon, according to the Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers and Exporters Association (MFVP).

At the fair, various kinds of watermelons and muskmelons will be displayed and sold on special offers. In addition, a delivery service will be offered to big buyers.

The fair is being organized with the support of the Yangon Region government, the Yangon City Development Committee, and the Ministry of Commerce.

Besides watermelons and muskmelons, other fruits will be displayed in about 30 stalls at the fair.

Currently, watermelon and muskmelon exports are facing difficulties due to COVID-19 (novel coronavirus).

The fair aims to support farmers and traders, said U Soe Than Min Din, Chairman of the MFVP.

"The coronavirus outbreak has led to the suspension of border trade between China and Myanmar. Therefore, traders have turned to the domestic market and the concerned officials have arranged the fair," he said.

"The fair will serve as a great opportunity to consumers to observe different kinds of watermelons and

muskmelons and the producing areas. It might help sellers link with foreign buyers," he added.

"Even after the fair, growers and traders will be allowed to continue selling fruits at the site by the Yangon Region government," said U Naing Win, chair of the Myanmar Watermelon and Muskmelon Producers and Exporters Association (Central).

"The authorities have temporarily designated four warehouses of the Ministry of Commerce in Satsan, Yangon and 1.5 acres of land near the Tamway chicken and duck market as points of sale for watermelons and muskmelons. Additionally, the government is also planning to create more points of sale in Danyingon and other local markets for the fruits," he said.

"Only a small volume of melons is being traded currently owing to the coronavirus outbreak, causing the price to plunge by half. More losses are expected in the coming weeks as long as border trade with China remains suspended," said U Naing Win.

"Losses are mounting. Normally, 600-700 trucks of melons were being exported to China per day. Now, only 30-50 trucks of melons are being sent to China," he said.

Watermelons and muskmelons will be harvested across the country, except Kayah and Chin states, until May.

Myanmar exports more than 800,000 tons of watermelons and 150,000 tons of muskmelons every year.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



A farmer watering plants in a watermelon farm in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: GNLM**



Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint attends the meeting to organize the 8th Myanmar Media Development Conference in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

MoI prepares for 8th Myanmar Media Development Conference

THE Ministry of Information hosted a preparatory meeting to organize the 8th Myanmar Media Development Conference at its headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

The meeting discussed major topics, subjects and schedule for the conference.

Those present at the meeting were Union Minister Dr Pe Myint, Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun, Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung, the Directors-General, officers, representatives from Myanmar Press Council, UNESCO, IMF/Fojo, DW Akademie, BBC Media Action, Internews, JICA and MYPOL.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Notice For Changing of Tender Closing Date for Ambulance

Ministry of Health and Sports, Department of Medical Services has already invited open tender for Ambulance in (2019-2020) Budget year. Now the tender closing date is changed to (11-3-2020) 12:00 noon instead of (26-2-2020) 12:00 noon. Tender Documents are available during office hours at the Procurement and Supply Division, Department of Medical Services, Office No (4), Ministry of Health and Sports.

For detail information, please contact the phone No. 067-3411510, 067-411634, Procurement and Supply Division Office, Department of Medical Services, Ministry of Health and Sports, Myanmar.

Procurement and Supply Division
Department of Medical Services
Ministry of Health and Sports, Myanmar

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V OCEAN PROBE VOY. NO. (034N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V OCEAN PROBE VOY. NO. (034N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 14-2-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of 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.

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Workshop on prosecutions in human trafficking cases held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE Myanmar Police Force and the Union Attorney-General Office jointly organized a workshop for officials who are implementing the guidelines for prosecutions in human trafficking cases. The workshop under the title of 'Reviewing the Challenges of Police-Prosecutors Guidelines in Trafficking in Persons Cases'

was held at Hilton Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. A total of 30 officers of the Myanmar Police Force and 25 legal officers from the UAGO shared experiences of difficulties and challenges in taking actions against trafficking cases.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Officials from the Myanmar Police Force and the Union Attorney-General Office attend the workshop for prosecutions in human trafficking cases in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Forest Department confiscates illegal woods

THE Forest Department has been collaborating with the general public and employing a community monitoring and report system to uncover illegal logging and smuggling of forest products.

From 7 to 10 February, officials confiscated 9.3460 tonnes of illegal teak from Hponetone forest reserve in Mawlaik Township, 52.8364 tonnes of illegal

teak, ironwood, shorea oblongifolia, arjuna, and shorea robusta from Pyuangtwe forest reserve plots no.92, 93 and 94 in Kyunhla Township, 4.9280 tonnes of illegal teak and other woods from one mile west of Koehtaungbo Village in Kantbalu Township, 7.4984 tonnes of illegal teak and ironwood from Yoma forest reserve in Yedeshe Township, 29.5608

tonnes of illegal wood from Yonepin forest reserve plot no.60 and 72 in Lewe Township, 2.0558 tonnes of illegal wood near Ohhteintaung Village in Singaing Township, 5.8954 tonnes of illegal wood from plot no.45 of Mahuyar forest reserve in Hlegu Township, 7.2780 tonnes of illegal wood in Mabein Township, and 7.3770 tonnes of illegal wood near milepost 12/2 on Gwa-Ngathaingchaung Highway.

The Forest Department has also apprehended 4 suspects and have filed cases at relevant police stations for the illegal activities.



Forest officials check illegally cut teak logs.

PHOTO: NYI NYI THAN (NAY PYI TAW)

More than 600 tonnes of illegal wood seized

The Forest Department is working closely with public participation and a community monitoring and report system to uncover illegal logging and forest products. According to reports sent by the forest department offices of Nay Pyi Taw Council and the states and regions, officials have confiscated 199.2178 tonnes of teak, 151.5200 tonnes of hardwood and 308.0766 tonnes of other wood (a total of 658.8144 tonnes), arrested 43 suspects and seized 39 vehicles between 3 to 9 February.—Nyi Nyi Than (Nay Pyi Taw)

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

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(EXPORT MARKETING & MILLING DEPARTMENT)
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France won't bar but may restrict Huawei in 5G network

PARIS — France on Thursday said it would not bow to American pressure to exclude Huawei from supplying equipment for its 5G networks, though the Chinese telecommunications firm could be subject to restrictions.

Taking a stance echoing those of Britain and the European Union, Economy and Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said Paris could prioritise European operators as it begins preparations to roll out the 5G network.

“There is no discrimination towards Huawei... No, Huawei will not be excluded from the 5G in



French Economy and Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire. PHOTO: AFP

France,” Le Maire told BFM TV.

But he added “the French state will take precautions to protect our sovereign interests”, especially near nuclear and military installations. Also, “it is understandable that we

could prioritise a European operator” such as Nokia or Ericsson, he added. 5G stands for fifth generation, the latest in cellular mobile communications offering vastly higher speeds which could unlock a variety of new applications.

‘Protect our sovereignty’

There has been intense debate in Europe about whether or not to exclude Huawei from supplying equipment for 5G mobile networks.

Critics, led by Washington, say Huawei is too close to Beijing and its equipment could be used as a tool for spying — a contention the company strongly rejects.

US President Donald Trump has already ordered American firms to cease doing business with Huawei, and has urged allies to follow suit.—AFP ■

British finance minister quits in reshuffle upset

LONDON — British Finance Minister Sajid Javid resigned on Thursday, in a shock move that deals a blow to Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s government just weeks after Brexit and a month before the annual budget.

The chancellor of the exchequer stood down after Johnson tried to use a reorganisation of his cabinet to get rid of some of Javid’s aides, a source close to the departing minister said.

He was immediately replaced by senior Treasury official Rishi Sunak.

Javid’s departure is a major upset at a turbulent time for Britain, just weeks after leaving the Europe-

an Union on 31 January, a process that has left the country with an uncertain future. Johnson was on Thursday carrying out a cabinet reshuffle, his first since winning a comfortable parliamentary majority in the December general election.

Javid, a former City of London banker born into a working class Muslim family, was considered safe in his job despite reports of tensions between him and Johnson’s senior aide, Dominic Cummings.

But rumours began to circulate after his meeting with the prime minister went on longer than expected. “He has turned down the job of chancellor of the



Sajid Javid has resigned as chancellor of the Exchequer for the UK. PHOTO: AFP

exchequer,” a source close to Javid said. “The prime minister said he had to fire all his special advisers and replace them with Number 10 special advisers. “The chancellor said no self-respecting minister would accept those terms.”

Belfast minister out

Earlier, Johnson sacked his Northern Ireland minister despite his role in restoring devolved government to Belfast after a three-year suspension last month.—AFP ■

COVID-19 causing first drop in oil use in decade: IEA

PARIS — Global oil demand will suffer its first quarterly drop in a decade as the COVID-19 virus lashes the economy in China and its impact ripples throughout the world, the IEA said Thursday.

“Global oil demand has been hit hard by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and the widespread shutdown of China’s economy,” the International

Energy Agency said in its latest monthly report.

“Demand is now expected to fall by 435,000 barrels year-on-year in the first quarter of 2020, the first quarterly contraction in more than 10 years” when it dropped during the global economic crisis, it added.

While the IEA still expects demand for oil to grow for this year as the

outbreak is contained, it slashed its forecast for the increase in global consumption by nearly a third to 825,000 barrels per day, the smallest increase since 2011. The outbreak of the new coronavirus spurred China to take drastic measures such as placing in quarantine over a dozen cities and extending the Lunar New Year holidays in order to try to

stem its spread, nearly shutting down key parts of its economy.

Although markets have rebounded in recent days as investors grew confident that China could quickly contain the virus and its economic impact would be short lived, the IEA warned against complacency by comparing today’s crisis to the 2003 SARS outbreak.—AFP ■

Invitation for Bids

Date:	17 th February 2020
Loan No. and Title:	Loan 3748-MYA: Power Network Development Project
Contract No. and Title:	Package No. (2) – 47(T) DPTSC(PTP)/ (2019-2020): Design, Supply, Installation and Commissioning of 230 kV Ye and Dawei Substations and Extension of 230 kV Mawlamyine Substation
Deadline for Submission of Bids	2 nd April 2020, 13:00 hours (local time)

1. The Republic of the Union Myanmar has received financing from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) toward the cost of the Power Network Development Project. Part of the financing will be used for payments under the contract named above. Bidding is open to Bidders from eligible source countries of ADB.

2. The **Department of Power Transmission and System Control** (“the Employer”) invites sealed bids from eligible Bidders for the **Design, Supply, Installation and Commissioning of 230 kV Ye and Dawei Substations and Extension of 230 kV Mawlamyine Substation** (the “Facilities”). The Facilities are located within Mon State and Tanintharyi region.

3. **International Competitive Bidding (ICB)** will be conducted in accordance with ADB’s **Single-Stage, One-Envelope** bidding procedure and is open to all Bidders from eligible countries as described in the Bidding Document.

4. Only eligible Bidders with the following key qualifications should participate in the bidding:

- Minimum average annual turnover of US\$22 million calculated as total certified payments received for contracts in progress or completed, within the last three (3) years;
- Participation in at least one (1) contract as main contractor that has been successfully completed within the last five (5) years and that is similar to the proposed contract, where the value of the Bidder’s participation exceeds US\$17.5 million.
- For the above or other contracts executed as main contractor, a minimum experience within the last ten (10) years in the following activities:
 - Two (2) projects on turnkey basis successfully in operation for three (3) years;
 - 220 kV or above AIS substation with the capacity of 100MVA or above;
 - Each project shall be Outside Bidder Country for International Bidder. For Myanmar bidders, both outside and within Myanmar are acceptable.

The qualification criteria are more completely described in the Bidding Document.

5. To obtain further information and inspect the Bidding Documents, Bidders should contact the following from 9:30-16:30 hours (local time) except Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

Department of Power Transmission and System Control (DPTSC)

Address: Material Planning Department (DPTSC), Building No. 27, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

Telephone: 95 67 8104286

Email: dg.dptsc@moe.gov.mm, sedesignnptp.mepe@gmail.com, dir1nptp.dptsc@moe.gov.mm, dd1nptp.dptsc@moe.gov.mm

Fax: 95 67 8104286

6. The Bidding Document, in the English language, may be purchased by interested Bidders on the submission of a written application to the address above requesting the Bidding Documents for the Facilities and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of purchase order (bank draft) in Myanmar Kyats equivalent to US\$100.

7. A Pre-bid meeting shall take place on **3rd March 2020 at 14:00 hours (local time) at Meeting Room No(2), Ministry of Electricity and Energy.**

8. Bids must be delivered to the address above on or before **13:00 hours (local time) on 2nd April 2020** together with a Bid Security as described in the Bidding Documents.

9. Electronic Submission is not allowed.

10. Bids will be opened immediately after the bid submission deadline in the presence of Bidder’s representatives who choose to attend.

11. Any request for extension of Bid submission deadline shall not be allowed.

Tender Committee

**Department of Power Transmission and System Control
Ministry of Electricity and Energy
Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
Telephone 067-3410282, 3410209**

Slovak minister tipped to be next UN envoy for Western Sahara

BRATISLAVA — Slovak Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajcak, who once served as the president of the UN General Assembly, is expected to be named the world body's new special envoy for disputed Western Sahara, diplomats said Wednesday.

The post has been vacant since May 2019, when former German president Horst Kohler stepped down for health reasons.

Unless one of the formal parties to the conflict objects, Lajcak's nomination should be confirmed in the coming weeks, the diplomats told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The vast desert territory

of Western Sahara lies north of Mauritania and is bordered to the west by around 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) of Atlantic coastline.

Morocco has controlled 80 percent of the territory since the 1970s and views it as an integral part of the kingdom. That is disputed by the Polisario Front, an Algerian-backed independence movement.

The Polisario fought a war for independence from 1975 to 1991 and wants a referendum in which the people of Western Sahara choose between independence and integration with Morocco.



Slovak Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajcak, seen here in Brussels in January 2020, could be the next UN envoy to Western Sahara. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Rabat has offered autonomy, but insists it will retain sovereignty.

Finding a successor to Kohler has been complicated for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. Several candidates refused to take up the post when asked, or were rejected by

one of the parties to the conflict, diplomats said.

Kohler had managed to bring Morocco, the Polisario, Algeria and Mauritania to the negotiating table in Switzerland in December 2018 and again in March 2019, but no significant progress was made.—AFP ■

US-Saudi partnership critical to confront Iran's destabilizing behaviour: Pompeo



US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo meets with his Saudi Arabian counterpart, Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan, at the State Department in Washington. **PHOTO: AFP**

WASHINGTON — US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Wednesday (local time) met his Saudi Arabian counterpart Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud here and discussed among other issues, "the continued need to counter the Iranian regime's destabilizing behaviour."

"US-Saudi partnership is critical as we confront Iran's destabilizing behavior. We also share an interest in de-escalation in Yemen. Glad to meet with Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud on these regional security issues," Pompeo tweeted after the meeting.

According to Al Arabiya, this was the second time in three months that Pompeo and the Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister have met.

A state department spokesperson in a statement said, "Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo met today with Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud in Washington, D.C. Secretary Pompeo and Foreign Minister Al Saud discussed bilateral and regional issues of mutual concern, including the continued need to counter the Iranian regime's destabilizing behaviour."—ANI ■

Growing bill to fix Britain's Big Ben

LONDON — The bill to repair London's iconic Big Ben clock tower has increased by millions of pounds after the discovery of World War II bomb damage, pollution and asbestos, Britain's parliament said Thursday.

The cost of renovating the Elizabeth Tower housing the famous clock, which began in 2017, is now set to rise to nearly £80 million (\$104 million, 95 million euros).

The extensive damage requiring an extra £18.8 million was only revealed once the project team was able to begin intrusive surveys for the first time ever on the 177-year-old structure.

However, the efforts to re-

store the tower "to its previous splendour" remain on track for completion in late 2021, according to officials.

A spokesperson for the House of Commons Commission, which is overseeing the project, called the spiralling costs "very frustrating".

Ian Ailles, director general of the House of Commons, said the task of restoring the Elizabeth Tower "had been more complex than we could have anticipated".

"With a 12m square (130 square feet) footprint and a prime location right in the middle of a busy working Parliament, understanding the full extent of the damage to the tower was impos-

sible until the scaffolding was up," he added. The work is to repair the clock faces and mechanism, cracks in the tower's masonry

and corrosion in the roof, as well as to restore the edging around the clock faces to its original 19th-century colour.—AFP ■



The renovations have meant Big Ben — whose chimes feature on British television and radio news bulletins — has been largely silent since 2017. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS In BRIEF

Facebook-owned WhatsApp crosses 2-billion global userbase threshold

SAN FRANCISCO — Facebook said Wednesday that its stand-alone messaging app WhatsApp has reached the milestone of 2 billion global users.

Facebook renewed its commitment to securing the instant messaging service with end-to-end encryption, to protect its users in their private online communication.

"Strong encryption acts like an unbreakable digital lock that keeps the information you send over WhatsApp secure, helping protect you from hackers and criminals," Facebook said.

WhatsApp is the second social media platform in the world to cross the 2-billion threshold, after its parent company Facebook, which had 2.5 billion active users every month by the end of 2019.—Xinhua ■

Libyan oil corporation welcomes UN Security Council's extension measures against illicit oil export

TRIPOLI — The state-owned National Oil Corporation (NOC) of Libya's UN-backed government on Thursday welcomed the resolution of the UN Security Council extending measures against illicit export of oil from Libya.

"NOC welcomes the adoption by the UN Security Council of Resolution 2509 authorizing measures against the illicit export of crude oil and other petroleum products from Libya, continuing to allow member states to inspect designated vessels on the high seas," the NOC said in a statement.

The corporation also condemned attempts by the eastern-based government to take control of the NOC's Inspection and Measurement Department.

The UN Security Council on Thursday adopted resolution 2509 that extends the authorization of measures against the illicit export of crude oil and other petroleum products from Libya until 30 April, 2021.

—Xinhua ■

Israel freezes ties with UN Rights Chief

TEL AVIV — Israeli Foreign Ministry on Wednesday (local time) announced that the country is freezing ties with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights after the OHCHR published a blacklist of companies cooperating with Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

The development

came hours after UN body published a list of 112 companies that do business in West Bank settlements, reported Times of Israel.

“Foreign Minister Israel Katz ordered the Foreign Ministry to freeze contacts with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, which encourages the campaign to boycott Israel”, the Is-

raeli Foreign Ministry was quoted as saying in a statement by Sputnik. Earlier, in a statement, Katz had denounced the publication of the list of companies doing business in West Bank settlements, a move which Palestinians celebrated as “victory for international law”. “The UNHRC Commissioner’s announcement regarding the publication of

a ‘blacklist’ of companies represents the ultimate surrender to the pressure exerted by countries and organizations interested in harming Israel. This announcement was made despite knowing that the majority of countries around the world declined to join this political pressure campaign,” he said.

—ANI ■



United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet speaks in Geneva, 20 March, 2019. PHOTO: AFP



FILE PHOTO: A man registers his candidacy for Iran’s parliamentary election at the Interior Ministry in Tehran, Iran, on 2 December, 2019. PHOTO: AFP

Iran starts election campaign

TEHRAN — Iran’s parliamentary election campaign officially started across the country on Thursday.

According to Iran’s Guardians Council of Constitution, the main entity in charge of vetting candidates, more than seven thousand candidates have been approved to compete in the February election.

Iranian people will go to the ballot boxes on 21 February to elect the lawmakers for 290-seat par-

liament. Nearly 58 million Iranians are eligible to vote in the 11th round of parliamentary elections.

Out of eligible people to cast a ballot in the election, 50.13 per cent are men. The two main parliamentary camps, namely reformists and principalities, have issued the list of candidates they want to field.

Last week, Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei urged the Iranians to actively par-

ticipate in the upcoming elections.

Khamenei advised some Iranian media and officials to avoid “talking in a way to discourage people from attending the elections.”

He also said that the enemy “exaggerates” the disputes and uses them against Iran. The Iranian top leader called for big turnout in the election, saying that it will disappoint the enemy.

—Xinhua

Sudan signs deal with families of victims of USS Cole bombing: ministry

KHARTOUM — Sudan’s justice ministry said early Thursday it had signed a deal with the families of the American servicemen killed in the 2000 bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen.

The deal was signed on February 7 in Washington to fulfil a key condition for removing the northeast African country from the United States’ state sponsor of terrorism list, the ministry said in a statement without specifying the amount of compensation agreed.

“As part of the transi-

tional government’s effort to remove Sudan from the terrorism list, a deal has been signed on February 7 with the families of the victims of the USS Cole incident,” the ministry said.

“The deal clearly specifies that the government of Sudan was not responsible for the incident or any such terrorist incident and it is doing this deal only to... fulfil the condition put by the American administration to remove Sudan from its terrorism list.”

On 12 October, 2000, a rubber boat loaded with

explosives blew up as it rounded the bow of the guided-missile destroyer, which had just pulled into Aden, Yemen, for a refueling stop.

Seventeen American sailors were killed as well as the two perpetrators of the attack claimed by Al-Qaeda, in an early success for the terror group and its founder Osama bin Laden. A US court then ruled that Sudan, where the two bombers were trained, was responsible for the attack — a claim Khartoum always denied.— AFP ■



On 12 October, 2000, a rubber boat loaded with explosives blew up as it rounded the bow of the USS Cole in Aden, Yemen, killing 17 sailors. PHOTO: AFP

Venezuela’s Guaido defends sanctions against Maduro regime

CARACAS — Venezuela’s opposition leader Juan Guaido on Wednesday defended foreign sanctions against his country 24 hours after he was attacked at Caracas international airport by state airline employees shouting “fascist”.

Guaido returned on Tuesday from a three-week international tour that took

him to the US, Canada, Colombia and Europe. He was met by some angry Conviasa workers enraged that last Friday the US placed sanctions on the state airline company. The US action criminalizing trans-actions with the flag carrier is the latest of many sanctions by Washington aimed at toppling leftist President

Nicolas Maduro’s regime, particularly by cutting his government’s oil revenue.

One protester appeared to douse Guaido with a fizzy drink. But speaking to journalists after a legislative session held in a Caracas plaza, the National Assembly speaker defended the use of sanc-tions.— AFP ■

Condolence

Dr Maung Maung Lwin, Deputy Executive Director at the Myanmar Development Institute has today sadly passed away. Dr Maung Maung Lwin, who returned to Myanmar several years ago after years of exile, will be missed for his teaching, his insight and his passion for driving positive change in his country. He will be sorely missed by his friends and colleagues at both Myanmar Development Institute and Renaissance Institute.



ONE Championship two-division champion Aung La N Sang signs a contract on 12 February to defend his title. **PHOTO: AUNG LA N SANG'S FB**

Aung La N Sang signs contract to defend title

AUNG LA N SANG, the ONE Middleweight and Light Heavyweight World Champion, has signed a contract for defending his ONE Middleweight title in the near future, according to an statement released on his social media page.

De Ridder of Netherlands, who defeated Brazilian fighter Leandro Ataides in the ONE Championship event titled 'Warrior's Code', held on 7 February in Jakarta, Indonesia, was unofficially billed as his potential challenger. But, De Ridder was injured recently, and ONE Championship has not announced the name of the challenger yet.

Aung La's signing of the contract indicates that he is prepar-

ing to face any fighter.

"ONE Championship middleweight title bout signed. It will not be against the puzzle-piece Reinier de Ridder since he said he's injured. But, I promise it will be an amazing bout and my team at Sanford MMA and my trainers will get me ready," Aung La N Sang stated on his social media page.

After the name of the challenger is made official, the promised fight will be one of the biggest in ONE Championship in 2020.

The exact dates and venues will be released soon by ONE Championship after the middleweight challenger is confirmed by ONE Championship. —Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Myanmar Futsal League: MIU, VUC to fight for championship title

THE Myanmar Imperial University and Victoria University College futsal clubs will compete for the championship position in the final match of the 2020 edition of the Myanmar Futsal League, which will be held on 15 February at the Thuwunna Indoor Stadium in Yangon.

Both teams have set a no-loss record in the tourney, and their previous meeting had ended in a 2-2 draw.

In the upcoming final, both teams need a win for securing the championship title.

While VUC FC has scored 202 goals, MIU FC has scored 176 goals in the tourney.

MIU FC is the defending champion of the league, and it will be interesting to see whether the VUC team manages to deliver an upset and nab the championship trophy.

Speaking about the final,

head coach of the Myanmar national futsal team, U Htay Myint, said both teams comprise national-level futsal players and are mostly equal in footing, and the ability of foreign players in the teams will decide who wins the tourney.

Entry to the final match will be free, and the match will start at 7:30 am, according to the Myanmar Football Federation.

—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■



A VUC FC player (white) vies for the ball with an MIU FC player (yellow) during their previous meeting in the Myanmar National League 2019-2020. **PHOTO: MFF FUTSAL**

U-21 Myanmar National League: Yangon United beat Yaw Myay 6-0



Yangon United U-21 players celebrate their big win over Yaw Myay FC. **PHOTO: YUFC**

IN the U-21 Myanmar National League match held yesterday, Yangon United secured a huge 6-0 victory over Yaw Myay FC at the Sa Lin stadium in Yangon.

Aung Ko Oo made a hat-trick, while Min Hein Htet and Sai Sanda Aung each scored a goal for Yangon United.

Yangon United dominated over Yaw Myay throughout the match and created scoring opportunities frequently.

Yangon United netted the opening goal after the Yaw Myay defender deflected the ball into his own goal.

The first half ended with a score of 1-0 in favor of Yangon

United. In the second half, the Yangon United youth team used more attacking tactics.

Ye Thway and Min Hein Htet substituted for Ye Htay and Myat Min Khaing in the second half.

The second goal for Yangon United was scored by Aung Ko Oo off an assist from teammate Min Hein Htet.

The next two goals were scored by Min Hein Htet at 75 minutes and Sai Sanda Aung at 80 minutes.

Just before the match ended, Aung Ko Oo scored two more goals, helping his team secure a 6-0 win over Yaw Myay FC. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■