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Wednesday, 22 April 2020

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi calls on each citizen to be dutiful

“I wish every individual citizen performs his/her duty responsibly” wrote State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on her Facebook page yesterday. The following is what she wrote:

The biggest positive outcome that came out of the video conferencing done with many regions of Myanmar is the fact that I came to know the most important things needed by those trying to overcome the challenges of COVID-19. As soon as the video conferencing was over, the Ministry of Health and Sports and other relevant departments made immediate assessments of what needed to be done in what places and took immediate action.

To give an example, as soon as the video conferencing was over with Ayeyawady Region, we made arrangements after assessing how many masks, thermometers, PPE's and gloves were needed and how fast we could send them.

There is one thing that I still remember from my discussions with the young nurse. Some people do not thank the health workers. They are working because they get salaries. Why should we thank them? This is not at all surprising in an age where people talk about their rights above everything else. However, it is a really sad situation when people do not value duty and the “mangala” (auspiciousness) of gratitude.

On one occasion on New Year day, someone asked me what would you



Aung San Suu Kyi

State Counsellor

Message



like to wish for Myanmar. I answered truthfully, the way I felt, “I wish each individual citizen performs his/her duty responsibly.”

Office of the State Counsellor releases statement expressing sadness over civilian casualties in Rakhine, Chin States

THE Office of the State Counsellor has released a statement dated 21st April. Following is the full-text of the statement.

We greet with satisfaction and joy the news that on 19 April 2020, rice supplies have been delivered to the people of Paletwa Township who have been suffering severely from food shortages.

The Government will be implementing programmes for the relief and long-term development of Paletwa Township,

Chin State, in step with improvements in the peace and security situation.

We pay tribute to the members of the Tatmadaw who have discharged their duties with courage and dedication, and sacrificed their lives to defend the lives and property of our people from the ULA/AA terrorist group, who have been engaged in destructive activities at this time when the Government, the people and well-wishers are all engaged

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We pay tribute to the members of the Tatmadaw who have discharged their duties with courage and dedication, and sacrificed their lives to defend the lives and property of our people from the ULA/AA terrorist group, who have been engaged in destructive activities at this time when the Government, the people and well-wishers are all engaged in endeavours for the prevention, containment and cure of COVID-19.

Myanmar participates in inaugural WEF COVID-19 Action Platform for Asia Pacific

U THAUNG TUN, Union Minister of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, yesterday participated via videoconference in the inaugural COVID-19 Action Platform for the Asia Pacific organized by the World Economic Forum (WEF), acting as a partner to the World Health Organization (WHO).

The WEF Action Platform provides a virtual senior leaders' community spanning government, business and academia who will meet regularly to address critical issues arising from the COVID-19 crisis.

The videoconference provided participants with an opportunity to exchange perspectives and share insights designed to strengthen regional resilience, develop coordinated responses, and enhance public-private cooperation in



Union Minister U Thaung Tun participates via videoconference in the inaugural COVID-19 Action Platform for the Asia Pacific organised by the World Economic Forum (WEF). **PHOTO: MNA**

the fight against COVID-19.

Participants noted the unprecedented human tragedy COVID-19 has left in its wake, threatening both life and livelihood, and that the pandemic is likely to have dire conse-

quences for global growth and prosperity.

As COVID-19 knows no borders, the need for bold actions at the country-level complemented by greater regional and multilateral cooperation

was also stressed. Myanmar remains committed to working both with both our ASEAN and WEF partners, as well as with all other bilateral and multilateral partners, to ensure supply chain connectivity, to ensure

markets remain open, and to ensure vital emergency, humanitarian and longer-term development assistance is allocated to where it may have the greatest impact in the fight against COVID-19.—MNA

Total number of COVID-19 cases reaches 121 on Tuesday

Update of COVID-19 cases in Myanmar till 8:00 pm on 21 April

1. The National Health Laboratory (Yangon) tested the specimens of 185 persons in the first group for COVID-19 up to 6:00 pm on 21 April 2020. Two persons were tested positive, while the remaining 183 persons negative.
2. These two patients will be transferred to the respective hospitals for medical treatments.
3. There are now a total of 121 confirmed cases in Myanmar up to 8 pm on 21 April.
4. A total of 9 persons have recovered and five persons died.
5. New 123 persons are now under investigation from 12 noon on 20 April to 12 noon on 21 April.

Laboratory results on COVID-19 Positive cases in the laboratory tests (first group) on 21 April Up to 8:00 pm

Case No.	Aged	Gender	Address	Close Contact with COVID-19 positive patients	Travel history to foreign country	Hospital for medical treatment	Laboratory Result	Remark
120	21	Female	Dagon Myo-thit (East)	No	No	Yangon General Hospital	Positive	Patients under investigation
121	21	Female	Taunggyi, Shan State (south)	No	Yes	Sao San Htun General Hospital	Positive	Under quarantine

* The remaining 183 persons are tested negative of COVID-19

Ministry of Health and Sports
(Translated by Aung Khin)

MoFA releases statement expressing condolences to UN, WHO, family of Rakhine attack victim

Following is the full-text of the statement released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday.

It has been learnt with profound sadness that U Pyae Sone Win Maung, a local staff member of the World Health Organization (WHO) passed away early Tuesday due to injuries suffered when the motor vehicle he was driving came under attack near Yar Maung bridge in Minbya Township, Rakhine State on 20 April 2020. It is all the more perturbing to learn that the attack was launched on a vehicle which clearly bore the WHO emblem and was transporting swab samples from COVID-19 suspects to the National Health Laboratory in Yangon.

The Government of Myanmar expresses its deepest condolences and sympathy to the United Nations, the WHO and the bereaved family of the victim. The Government deeply regrets that such a reprehensible act was perpetrated on a WHO vehicle deployed on a humanitarian mission in support of the unyielding efforts of the Government of Myanmar to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Government of Myanmar will continue to work closely with the United Nations and the WHO to overcome the global pandemic notwithstanding the challenge posed by armed groups. The Government is fully committed to investigate the incident and to prevent recurrence of such abhorrent acts.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Nay Pyi Taw
Dated. 21 April 2020

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COVID-19 Call Centre opens daily

THE Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Containment and Emergency Response Committee has opened the COVID-19 Call Centre in Yangon. It will be opened daily.

In efforts to speed up the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 disease, the

call centre is established by the four communications operators and the Blue Ocean Company with the coordination of the Medical Research Department of the Health and Sports Ministry and Post and Telecommunications Department from 8 am to 8 pm daily at the Medical Research

Department in Yangon.

Over 43 staff from the Medical Research Department and 17 volunteers from the Myanmar Medical Association totally 60 workers has been working at the centre since 8th April.—MNA

“People are the key”

Office of the State Counsellor releases statement expressing sadness over civilian casualties in Rakhine, Chin States

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in endeavours for the prevention, containment and cure of COVID-19.
We are deeply saddened to learn of civilian casualties in Rakhine and Chin States. The Union Government will provide all necessary help and support

We are deeply saddened to learn of civilian casualties in Rakhine and Chin States. The Union Government will provide all necessary help and support for casualties and their families.

for casualties and their families.
The Union Government is resolved to continue with efforts to take the Peace Process, which aims at putting an end to the sufferings imposed by conflict on our people, to a successful conclusion.—MNA

Construction Ministry holds discussions on completion of projects amidst COVID-19



Union Minister U Han Zaw attends the meeting on video conferencing between its headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw and the directors of projects in Regions/States yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

THE Ministry of Construction held a meeting on video conferencing between its headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw and the directors of projects in Regions/States yesterday.
Union Minister for Construction U Han Zaw presided over the meeting, which was also attended by Deputy Minister Dr Kyaw Lin, the Permanent Secretary and the departmental heads, and they discussed timely completion of ongoing project, while caring about health of workers amid the Coronavirus Disease and safeguarding machinery in coordination with the respective local governments in the project areas.

At the meeting, the Union Minister discussed completion of projects in time, raising health awareness on COVID-19 for the staff and labour at the project in accordance with the guidelines of Ministry of Health and Sports.
Deputy Minister Dr Kyaw Lin advised on following the directives and orders of Region/State governments and providing assistance to common people in the project areas.
The Permanent Secretary, the directors-general and the deputy directors-general discussed the progress of respective works and preventive measures against COVID-19.—MNA
(Translated by Aung Khin)

COVID-19 meeting discusses speeding up news releases to reduce rumours

THE work committee on finance, information and awareness related to control and response of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) held a meeting at the Nay Pyi Taw Council in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.
At the meeting, the committee’s chairman and Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Aung Myin Tun stressed the needs of accelerating public awareness activities on COVID-19 in the Nay Pyi

Taw Council Area in accordance with guidelines from the Ministry of Health and Sports.
He also said the attendees to cooperate with related departments in speeding up news releases to combat fake news and stop spreading rumours.
U Kyaw Kyaw Tun, Director of the Disaster Management Department, explained the current conditions of public awareness activities.



Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Aung Myin Tun chairs the work committee on finance, information and awareness related to control and response of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). PHOTO: MNA

Members of the committee reported on the matters related to news releases and awareness activities.
The committee’s chairman coordinated over the matters to be implemented in future. — Zaw Min Lwin (District IPRD)
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

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Office of the President
Press Release 15/2020
13th Waning of Tagu, 1382 ME
(20 April 2020)

Additional statistical bulletin on drug seizures, acting on information

1. In order to prevent and eradicate the dangers of narcotic drugs and psychotropic drugs, the Office of the President has formed the **Drug Activity Special Complaint Department** on 26 June 2018 to systematically accept and respond to reports on drug abuses and other related cases from the general public.
2. With orders from the Office of the President, the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department relayed information on reports on drug-related offenses up to 18 April 2020 to the Ministry of Home Affairs to take action, as displayed below:

Sr	Nature of report	Details on seizure and legal action taken
1	Information received of Phoe Lone who lives in Kayarsu Village, Phaungpyin Township, Sagaing Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.	On 5 April 2020, police searched the house of Phoe Lone (a) San Htwe, 37, son of U San Hla, who lives in Kayarsu Village, Phaungpyin Township, and arrested him together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Phaungpyin)MaYa(pa)68/2020 under Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
2	Information received of some people using, distributing and selling illegal drugs in Kyattagaung Village, Htigyaing Township, Sagaing Region.	On 5 April 2020, police searched the house of Daw Khin Mar San, 56, daughter of U Aung Khin, who lives in Kyattagaung Village, Htigyaing Township, and arrested her together with heroin. A case has been opened against her with MaMaSa (Htigyaing)MaYa(pa)39/2020 under Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
3	Information received of Myint Zaw who lives in Laemhee Village, Htigyaing Township, Sagaing Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.	On 17 April 2020, police arrested Myint Zaw, 44, son of U Toke Gyi, who lives in Laemhee Village, together with heroin on the Kwanbaung Village road, Htigyaing Township. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Htigyaing)MaYa(pa)42/2020 under Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
4	Information received of Min Tun who lives in Ngarpyaeinn Village, Indaw Township, Sagaing Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.	On 5 April 2020, police arrested Min Tun, 33, son of U Tun Shane, who lives in Ngarpyaeinn Village, together with ‘88/1’ stimulant tablets and heroin near the forest of the same village, Indaw Township. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Indaw)MaYa(pa)49/2020 under Section 19(a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
5	Information received of Kyi Thaung who lives in Hsattaw Village, Indaw Township, Sagaing Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.	On 13 April 2020, police searched the house of Kyaw Min Tun, 30, son of U Kyaw Aye, who lives in Oakshitkone Village, Indaw Township, and arrested him and two another – Aung Tin, 50, son of U Maung Oo, who lives in the same village and Kyi Thaung, 35, son of U Phoe Hmane, who lives in Settaw Village. Police seized heroin from them. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Indaw)MaYa(pa)58/2020 under Section 19(a), 20(a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
6	Information received of Maung Oo who lives in Paypin Village, Bamauk Township, Sagaing Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.	On 7 April 2020, police searched the house of Maung Oo, 42, son of U Aung Sein, who lives in Paypin Village, Bamauk Township, and arrested him together with opium. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Mansigy)MaYa(pa)25/2020 under Section 19(a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
7	Information received of some people distributing and selling illegal drugs in Aungthukha Ward, Kawthoung Tsp, Taninthayi Region.	Police have opened seven cases and arrested seven men together with stimulant tablets and speciosa powder in the previous weeks. Acting on a tip-off, police searched the house of Ma San San Win, 29, daughter of U Win Tun, who lives in Aungthukha Ward, Kawthoung Township on 7 April 2020, and arrested her together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against her with MaMaSa (Kawthoung)MaYa(pa)59/2020 under Section 19(a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Similarly, police arrested Aung Ko Oo (a) Watoke, 19, son of U Thein Win, who lives in Padauk Shwewar Ward, together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets near Tun Thirigone on 15 April 2020. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Kawthoung)MaYa(pa)64/2020 under Section 19(a) and 20(a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
8	Information received of some people distributing and selling illegal drugs in Innet Village, Thabeikkyin Tsp, Mandalay Region.	Police have opened four cases and arrested five men and two women together with stimulant tablets in the previous weeks. Acting on a tip-off, police searched the house of Thein Zaw (a) Sanshae, 30, son of U Chit Hla, who lives in Innet Village, Thabeikkyin Township on 8 April 2020, and arrested him together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Dagaung)MaYa(pa)8/2020 under Section 19(a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Similarly, police searched the house of Ma Mya Mya Hmway, 25, daughter of U Naing Win, who lives in Aungthayakyun, Innet Village-tract, Thabeikkyin Township, and arrested her together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against her with NaMaSa (Dagaung)MaYa(pa)9/2020 under Section 19(a) and 20(a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
9	Information received of some people distributing and selling illegal drugs in Abit-Khalaetine Village, Mudon Tsp, Mon State.	On 5 April 2020, police searched a motorcycle driven by Aung San Oo, 32, son of U Win Aung, who lives in Myoma 4 Ward, Mudon Township on the road of Abit-Khalaetine Village in the same township and arrested him together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Kamawet)MaYa(pa)12/2020 under Section 19(a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Similarly, police searched a motorcycle and Aung Thura Hein (a) Aung, 17, son of U Win Naing, who lives in Hnaingpyaing Village and Phyo Shine Kyaw, 17, son of U Zaw Moe, who lives in the same village on the road of Abit-Khalaetine Village in the same township and arrested them together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Kamawet)MaYa(pa)13/2020 under Section 16(c) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
10	Information received of Daw Aye Aye Naing who lives in No 64 Ward, Dagon Myothit (south) Township, Yangon Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.	On 14 April 2020, police searched a guesthouse in No 26 Ward, Dagon Myothit (south) Township, and arrested Daw Aye Aye Naing (a) Ma Naing, 45, daughter of U Hla Tun, who lives in No 64 Ward, the same township, Maung Maung Hla, 48, son of U Hla Myint, who lives in No 4 Ward, Kyauktada Township, Ouk Soe Ya, 29, son of U Thet Lwin Oo, who lives in No 7 Ward, Kyauktada Township and Ma Sandi Myint Maung, 29, daughter of U Ye Aung, who lives in No 93 Ward, Dagon Myothit Township (Seikkan) together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Dagon South)MaYa(pa)39/2020 under Section 16(c) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
11	Information received of Naing Lin Oo who lives in Phayagone Village, Thanlyin Township, Yangon Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.	On 14 April 2020, police arrested Naing Lin Oo (a) Thein Sein, 19, son of U Khin Oo, who lives in Phayagone Village, Thanlyin Township, together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets on the Maggin road of Phayagone Village in the same township. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Thanlyin)MaYa(pa)26/2020 under Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Additional statistical bulletin on drug seizures, acting on information

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12	Information received of some people distributing and selling illegal drugs in wards of Taunggyi Tsp, southern Shan State.	Police have opened 20 cases and arrested 36 men and three women together with heroin, stimulant tablets and opium block in the previous weeks. Acting on a tip-off, police searched a motorcycle driven by Yay Chan, 19, son of U Sein Kalar, who lives in Shwe Taung Ward, Taunggyi Township on the Kyaukyayohe Road, the same ward and arrested him together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets on 5 April. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Taunggyi) MaYa(pa) 15/2020 under Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Similarly, police arrested Thein Zaw, 23, son of U Soe Thein; Kyaw Min Lay, 19, son of U Talo; Sai Htoo Htoo (a) Phoe Htoo, 25, son of U Aung Than and Wai Linn, 22, son of U Soe Naing, who live in Nyaungphyu Sakhan Ward, Taunggyi Township, together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets on the Hlaykhartathaung road of the same ward. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Taunggyi) MaYa(pa) 22/2020 under Section 19(a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
13	Information received of some people distributing and selling illegal drugs in Panhike No 8 Ward, Namtu Tsp, Shan State.	Police have opened 11 cases and arrested 11 men and two women together with heroin and stimulant tablets in the previous weeks. Acting on a tip-off, police arrested Eai Kon, 50, son of U Eai Ku, who lives in Panhike No 8 Ward, Namtu Township, together with heroin in the cemetery of Panhike No 8 Ward. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Namtu) MaYa(pa) 4/2020 under Section 19(a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Similarly, police arrested Soe Aung, 27, son of U Lun Pae, who lives in Panhike No 8 Ward, together with 88/1 stimulant tablets on a road near Sipinyaygate of the same ward. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Namtu) MaYa(pa) 5/2020 under Section 19(a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Similarly, police arrested Daw Bwayni, 48, daughter of U Thoo Lar, who lives in Saikhaung Village, together with heroin on a road near Sipinyaygate of the same ward. A case has been opened against her with MaMaSa (Namtu) MaYa(pa) 6/2020 under Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

3. Out of the information sent to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department, so far a total of 1,070 cases have been opened files as of 18 April 2020. A total of 1,646 people, including 1,376 men and 270 women had been arrested with 8,934.5014 g of heroin, 1,347.42 g of ICE, 41,544.33886 g of opium, 665.27 g of low-quality opium, 53,252.76 g of speciosa powder, 12,097.32 g of speciosa, 2.5 litres of liquid speciosa, 532,121 stimulant tablets, 10,311.67 g of marijuana, 0.1 litres of opium tincture, 596.28 g of opium blocks, 60 g of poppy seeds, 55.45 g of crushed stimulant tablet powder, 0.001 g of crushed ecstasy powder, 25 firearms, different kinds of 609 cartridges and one grenade. Efforts for fighting the drug trafficking has been stepped up and the department will report on further exposed cases.
4. To seize further drugs and to arrest drugs dealers, people are urged to inform the Ministry of Home Affairs, region and state governments and to inform huge cases of drug trafficking and other suspicious cases directly to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department of the Office of the President via following contact numbers:

Contacts	
Landline No.	— 067-590200
Fax Phone No.	— 067-590233
Email Address	— antinarcotics@presidentoffice.gov.mm

Announcement for 21 days facility quarantine and 7 days home quarantine

1. The Ministry of Health and Sports had earlier announced the 14-day facility quarantine, followed by another 14-day home quarantine, for prevention of COVID-19 infection from the foreign visitors and the positive patients.
2. However, the World Health Organization (WHO) has announced that the transmission of disease is possible before two days and until 28 days of symptoms, and that the infection of disease is possible during these periods. A research conducted in China has shown that strict and systematic quarantine for 21 days could contain the outbreak of disease up to 98.7%. Moreover, some regional countries are practicing a total of 28 days for both hospital/facility quarantine and home quarantine. Especially, the 28-day quarantine period is found in the countries with only limited laboratory tests.
3. Out of 28 positive cases for COVID-19 in Myanmar, some positive patients are the imported cases and the close persons with them. Moreover, the lab tests of National Health Laboratory and the contact tracings at Regions/States have showed that some confirmed patients and some quarantined persons for more than 14 days were still tested positive.
4. Therefore, the Ministry of Health and Sports has extended the 14-day facility quarantine to the 21-day community based facility quarantine/hotel quarantine and 7-day home quarantine, totalling 28-day quarantine.

The Ministry of Health and Sports
(Translated by Aung Khin)

Japan provides test kits, medical gas to support fighting against COVID-19

THE Government of Japan will provide additional 10,000 test kits to the National Health Laboratory-NHL today, according to the Japanese International Cooperation Agency-JICA.

The donation came after the JICA's assistance of 1,000 tests kits to the NHL on 25 February and 10,000 test kits on 9th April.

Besides, the JICA provided technical cooperation to guide testing method by dispatching Japanese experts.

By these assistance, definitive diagnosis, which had previously been conducted in Thailand, became available in Myanmar.

Based on the proposal of the Ministry of Health and Sports and Yangon Region Government, a Japanese Company, Kitajima Sanso Co. Ltd., has provided medical gas to Phaunggyi COVID-19 Specialist Hospital on 21 April.

Central Institute of Civil Services (Phaunggyi) has been renovated as Phaunggyi COVID-19 Specialist Hospital to provide medical services to the people with COVID-19 infections, which is rapidly increasing in Yangon Region, and Kitajima Sanso provided medical gas to give those patients necessary treatment.

Regarding these assistance, Japanese Ambassador Mr. Maruyama Ichiro said, “Japan would be together with all people of Myanmar to fight against COVID-19 while the infected cases of COVID-19 has been increasing and Myanmar has been in the difficult situation.

On April 14, 2020, in order to conduct the test appropriately and safely, JICA produced video materials to guide widely on how to collect and transport samples properly.

Moreover, in order to prevent the infections of COVID-19 to healthcare workers, the video materials presenting how to wear and remove Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) properly was also produced.—GNLM

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All shops to close but food, drugstores allowed to open: Ayeyawady region govt

AYEYAWADY Regional Government has announced that all shops must be closed in Ayeyawady region until 30 April except the food shops and drug stores to protect from further spreading of Covid-19.
Among the shops being opened in the municipal markets, only the basic food shops and the drug stores are allowed to remain open in the market. All other shops inclusive of the cosmetics and beauty salons must be closed till 30 April. Moreover, the operation of the passenger buses will be suspended until the end of April.

Only the private vehicles are allowed to run with only five persons on board including the driver, according to the announcement of the regional government released on 19 April.
“The authorities have instructed to close every shop in the municipal markets except those selling the food and medicines. The authorities will also take action against those who are not wearing the masks in the market. Previously, the regional government has announced that the private cars are allowed to run but there must be no more than seven

persons aboard. Now, they amended that only five persons must be on board on the private cars,” said U Kyaw Myint, Minister for Municipal in Ayeyawady region.
U Htay Lwin Thein, a member of the market committee of Hinthada Town market said, “We have some difficulties related to the announcement. We just received the order at 10:30 pm that all shops except those selling the food and medicines must close from 20 to 30 April. We should know the order one day ahead to be able to fully cooperate with the authorities.

We also understand the difficulties of the authorities. However, we need enough time to make preparation. So, we want to suggest to the authorities that they issue the order at least one day ahead. If they do so, we can cooperate more conveniently. This morning, some of the shop owners reached the market to open their shops because they did not know the announcement. Therefore, we want the authorities to announce at least one day ahead to make enough preparation”. —Htet Htet
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Collecting rentals of leased hotels deferred for six months

The Directorate of Hotels and Tourism under the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has announced that it will defer collecting of rents of the leased hotels and joint venture hotels for six months beginning from 1 April to 30 September.
The Directorate of Hotels and Tourism has state-owned hotels rented to private entrepreneurs. With the outbreak of the Covid-19 around the world, the tourism industry has stopped in Myanmar because the local and foreign visitors are not travelling and thus no

guests are staying at the hotels. So, the department deferred the rentals of the leased hotels and lands for six months for the entrepreneurs to be relieved of the adverse effects on the tourism industry.
The Yangon region Tourism Committee granted licences to eight hotels with 750 rooms, seven hotel construction permits, one guesthouse construction permit and 117 travel service licences (inbound and outbound) on 18 February 2020, thereby creating 801 jobs, according to the Regional Tourism Committee.

Last year, the committee issued 42 hotel licences and 14 guesthouse licences. Besides, the committee permitted the construction of 20 hotels and three guesthouses.
The committee has issued 356 inbound and outbound travel service licences, 121 outbound travel service licences and 218 tour guide licences. The businesses have investments of K152,030 million and US\$238.29 million so far and created 3,232 jobs, according to the committee.
Earlier, the hotels and tour-

ism sector was regulated by the Union Government. Under the Myanmar Tourism Law 2018, the sector has been decentralized and more power has been vested in the regional and state governments, said Naw Pan Thinzar Myo, the Minister for Kayin Ethnic Affairs as well as the vice-chairperson of the Regional Tourism Committee.
There are currently some 430 hotels and motels operating in Yangon region, according to the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. —Aye Maung
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Monywa sees 20 fire outbreaks in 4 townships in four months

OVER the first four months of 2020, 20 cases of fire outbreak have been reported so far in four townships of Monywa districts in Sagaing region.
Among the cases, there were 14 outbreaks in Monywa Township alone, it is learnt.
“Most of the outbreaks were started from the rubbish bin. The fire starting from the rubbish bin continued to other houses. People set fire to the garbage to dispose of. Then, they could not control the fire. The local people do not keep the fire control apparatuses in

their houses,” said U Nyi Nyi Zaw, the head of fire services department of Monywa District.
Most of the cases, 11 in total, happened in March, one of the hottest months in Monywa district with three each taking place in January, February and April.
“We want the local people to change the old electric wires. Now, the weather is too hot and people are using air cons and fans all the time and the old ones could not stand to overheat. Most cases of fire outbreak took place in the vil-



Fire gutted house in Monywa. **FILE PHOTO: MYO WIN TUN (MONYWA)**

lages. So, the fire engine could not reach the scene in time,” he added.
“Damage to property retards the development. Most

fire outbreaks are due to negligence,” he said. —Myo Win Tun (Monywa)
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Yangon Region government lifts daylight truck ban



A truck drives past a cargo container yard in Yangon. **FILE PHOTO**

By Nyein Nyein

YANGON Region government has now allowed the container trucks for daytime operation, according to the regional government.

Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA) requested the regional government to allow the trucks to run daytime operation because of the nighttime curfew amid Covid-19 crisis and the government lifted the daytime truck ban. To ease the traffic congestion and prevent traffic accidents, YRTA, Myanmar Container Trucks Associ-

ation, Myanmar Port Authority and traffic police will jointly work on this.

As a result of this, the trucks are temporarily allowed to run between 7 am and 8 pm. Truck drivers need to follow this time frame not to have any early or delayed events.

As there are industrial zones and big markets in Yangon city, the roads are seen busy with cargo trucks. Therefore, the heavy trucks were earlier allowed to run between 9 pm and 6 am. During the daytime, they were allowed to travel during the specified time. The

drivers faced with difficulties after announcing the night curfew amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, prompting the regional government to give green light to daytime operation.

Regarding the traffic law enforcement on container trucks, a team comprising YRTA members, traffic police, Yangon City Development Committee members, Myanmar Port Authority, Myanmar Container Trucks Association and Myanmar Highway Freight Transportation Services Association will conduct a surprise check. *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

Annual inflation rate rises to 9.2 per cent in February

THE annual rate of inflation in Myanmar, based on the Consumer Price Index, stood at 9.2 per cent in February 2020, according to a report released by the Central Statistical Organization under the Ministry of Planning and Finance.

The figure has remained above 8 per cent since June 2019. The inflation rate stood at 7.28 per cent in March 2019 and gradually inclined. It reached a peak of 8.61 per cent in September and dipped in November. It touched the highest level at 8.81 per cent in December 2019 because of the high season.

Afterwards, despite the drop in fuel oil price and gain in local currency, power tariff hike led to higher inflation rate up to 9.2 per cent in February 2020.

The inflation rate was registered at 9.06 per cent in January 2020, and so, the month February witnessed a small rise of 0.14 per cent against January's rate. The core inflation, which strips out volatile food and energy prices, was 11.15 per cent in February.

The Myanmar Kyat gained against the US dollar in February. The price of imported oil dropped, causing food price to slightly decrease.

Nevertheless, there was a

remarkable increase in CPI in the household goods and maintenance, transportation, other commodities, clothing, health, education services, recreation, culture, non-food and tobacco and beverages groups. The price of telecommunications stays flat.

In February, Ayeyawady Region recorded the highest inflation rate at 12.65 per cent, followed by Magway Region at 11.89 per cent, and Sagaing Region at 11.82 per cent. The rate fluctuated with a maximum rate of 14.19 per cent in Ayeyawady Region and a minimum rate of 4.46 per cent in Chin State.

Earlier, the inflation rate was calculated based on a 2006 survey. The base year was later changed to 2012. The Central Statistical Organization conducted a Household Income and Expenditure Survey in 82 townships in November 2012. To reduce the inflation rate, the concerned authorities have been making efforts based on policies on finance, currency, trade, and foreign currency control, in keeping with the second five-year National Development Plan (2016-2017FY-2020-2021FY). — Htet Myat *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

MoC issues over 67,000 COs through online platform so far

THE Ministry of Commerce (MoC) has issued over 67,000 preferential Certificates of Origin (COs) so far for exporters and importers in Myanmar through electronic means, the ministry stated.

The ministry helped traders save time and cost as it launched online service for the COs in May 2019. All the documents can be uploaded electronically and applicants can make an online payment. They can print out the certificate. The online applications can be submitted to the following MoC branches, MoC office on Strand Road and Yangon, Department of Trade in Yankin Township and Thilawa SEZ.

The MoC has also released Standard Operating Proce-

dures (SOPs) for private businesspersons seeking Certificate of Origin (CO), per the new trade environment in foreign countries.

According to a news release from the MoC, businesspersons can apply for COs at the export-import office in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw; the Thilawa Special Zone; and, at the 14 border trade checkpoints — Muse, Lweje, Chinshwehaw, Kampaiti, Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Tamu, Reed, Htikhee, Kengtung, Maese, and Mawtaung.

The MoC is issuing CO Form A so businesspersons can enjoy the benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences offered by 40 developed countries, including Australia,

Belarus, Canada, European Union countries, Iceland, Japan, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, and the US. Form Korea, Form DFTP with India, and Form China are also being issued to help businesspersons avail the duty-free tariff preference for Least Developed Countries.

Moreover, forms under the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (Form D), ASEAN-China Free Trade Area Preferential Tariff Certificate of Origin (Form E), and ASEAN-Korea Free Trade Agreement (Form AK), ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (Form AJ), ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (Form AANZ),

ASEAN-India Free Trade Agreement (Form AI), and ASEAN-Hong Kong CO (Form AHK) are also being issued.

Only registered importers and exporters can apply for COs. The applications can be filed online or manually at the border trade checkpoints and offices. The applicants must be trading net member.

At the time of application, certificates of product registration, export declaration, bill of landing, invoice, cost statement, HS-Code, and necessary documents for production will have to be submitted along with the CO Forms. Further details are available on www.commerce.gov.mm. —Ko Htet *(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

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Care for those who care for us

AMIDST the global fight against the COVID-19 disease, a WHO vehicle with the United Nations emblem was attacked by the ULA/AA terrorist group on 20 April, and a WHO local staff member was seriously wounded. He was driving this vehicle on his mission to transport swabs samples from COVID-19 suspects in townships in Rakhine State to the National Health Laboratory in Yangon. He died the next day.

The Union Government and the World Health Organization condemned the attack.

"This incident once again puts the spotlight on the extreme hardships being faced by our corona warriors – our doctors, nurses, other health workforce – especially while working in security compromised and hard-to-reach areas as they continue to contribute their best to save lives," said Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director for South-East Asia of the World Health Organization.

Unfortunately, we are also seeing cases of attacks on security personnel and local administrators who are assisting in prevention, tracing contacts and enforcing physical distancing measures including facility quarantine to stop COVID19.

We condemn all kinds of physical, verbal or psychological violence against frontline health care workers and volunteers who are risking their lives on the frontline in the face of the infectious disease to save others.

We would like to pay tribute to the health worker who sacrificed his life for fighting the global pandemic and we would like to express sadness over attacks on all front-line health workers, security personnel and volunteers.

Investigation must be carried out into the killing of the local WHO staff as the government is committed to addressing the concerns and fears of the frontline workers battling with the pandemic. Measures must be taken to prevent recurrence of such abhorrent acts.

A pandemic like disease does not distinguish between borders and people, and if the virus is not contained it will endanger all of us.

WHO's regional director appealed yesterday to all to facilitate the work of our health workforce who are putting their lives at risk to save other lives.

We must continue to do everything we can to protect and support the frontline health workers.

■ ■ ■

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Ministry of Ethnic Affairs' fourth-year performances

By Nanda Win, Photo: Taya

To bring the internal armed conflicts to an end and establish total peace throughout the country, cooperation between the government and the people in the development processes across the nation is sine qua non.

TO achieve unity among the ethnic national brethren, the government is fostering ethnic unity and Union spirit, adopting the idea "diversity is an opportunity for unity."

Throughout the history, the government has fulfilled the needs of ethnic people, and tried to provide the equal rights to all ethnic national races residing in the country.

In efforts to strengthen the unity of all ethnic people, the incumbent government formed the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs in March 2016 in accordance with the Ethnic Rights Protection Law that was enacted in 2015.

Region/state ethnic affairs ministers were appointed to undertake the affairs of their ethnic groups, assist development of the Union and establish peace. The ethnic affair ministers were nominated by their ethnic groups. There are a total of 29 state/region ethnic affairs ministers in the state/region cabinets.

"When peace prevails in the whole nation, all states and regions will be developed," said the President in his speech, urging ethnic affairs ministers to deliver the message to the national races.

"As our national leaders successfully worked it out with the exercise of farsightedness at the 20th century Panglong Conference, so we will unfailingly be able to successfully build the Democratic Federal Union if we, brothers and sisters of national races come together and work it out with farsightedness and unity," said State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on 73rd anniversary of the Union Day celebration in Panglong, Shan State.

According to the 2008 Constitution, "National Races" means the ethnic groups those who regard the Republic of the Union of Myanmar as their country of origin and live continuously in the country. But, those who are granted citizenship and guest citizens are not included.



Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin attends the opening of 2019 Mon Business Forum in Mawlamyine on 2 November 2019.

"Ethnic Affairs" include language, literature, fine art, culture, customs and religion, historical heritages, peace, ethnic rights included at the constitution, and socio-economic development.

Formulating the Ethnic Rights Protection Law, bylaw, and policies, Ministry of Ethnic Affairs has implemented the national races' affairs.

The Ethnic Rights Protection Law was enacted to provide the rights of the national races guaranteed by the constitution and equal citizen's rights to all ethnic groups, to enhance solidarity, mutual amity and respect and mutual assistance among ethnic groups and to live eternally together on the basic of genuine union spirit, to preserve and develop ethnic's historical heritage, national characters, customs, culture, fine art, literature and languages, and to promote socio-economic development.

To fulfill the purposes of the Ethnic Rights Protection Law, the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs laid down four policies as follow;

- To obtain the rights of the national races in the constitution and equal citizen's rights for all ethnic groups
- To enhance solidarity, mutual

amity and respect and mutual assistance among ethnic groups and to live eternally together on the basics of genuine union spirit

- To preserve and develop ethnic's historical heritage, national characters, customs, culture, fine art, literature and languages
- To promote socio-economic development including education, health, economy, transportation and communications, so forth, of less-developed ethnic groups.

With the Goal 3 of the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (2018-2030) that includes job creation and private sector-led growth, the ministry organized the Ethnic Sustainable Development Forum in 2018 to promote the ethnic people's socioeconomic development.

As a result of the ethnic development forum, the Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association (MEEA) was formed in March 2018 to assist the nation's economy and peace process.

Mon Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association organized Mon Business Forum in Mawlamyine on 2nd and 3rd November 2019, and Kachin Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association held Kachin Business Forum in My-



Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin poses for a group together with ethnic culture troupes.

itkyina on 14 and 15 November.

In accordance with the Ethnic Affairs Protection Law, the ministry allowed organizing the ethnic festivals. By the leaders of the State attending festivals, sending messages, the Union Ministers and related cabinet members attending the festivals, coordinating the organizing of festivals, and providing cash assistances, the government also encouraged the rights of the ethnic groups.

Organized by Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association (MEEA), the first Myanmar Ethnic Culture Festival

was held in Yangon from 25 to 30 January 2019 to enhance the ethnic people's unity, display their cultures, and promote tourism sector.

A coordination meeting concerning the Myanmar Ethnic Culture Festival 2020 and the Ethnic Sustainable Development Forum was held on 23 January 2020, and attended by Vice President U Henry Van Thio, in his capacity as Chairman of the Ethnic Affairs, Public Affairs Management and Service Committee.

The Vice President said the meeting to organize the Myanmar Ethnic Culture Festival 2020 in accordance with the objectives of the festival -- to assist the national peace process, showcase ethnic solidarity and culture to Myanmar citizens and foreign visitors,



Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin

"When we talk about the same blood it's really not the vein in human's body. It means the blood flows in our minds. If our minds are same and alike, we can be the same blood," said State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi at the opening cere-

mony of the second Myanmar Ethnic Culture Festival 2020 on 1 February.

At the opening of the festival, Vice President U Henry Van Thio also said, "Ethnic nationals are varied and diverse in the country so there are different views between them. All should remove them and proceed with the same ideas and concepts. Therefore, all can collaborate and work together in the nation building though there are diversities."

SEE PAGE-10



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 20th April, 2020)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 21st April, 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State and isolated in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Bago and Taninthayi Regions, Shan and Chin States. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (3-6) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of rain or thundershowers in Sagaing Region, Kachin, Shan and Chin States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21st April, 2020: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21st April, 2020: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21st April, 2020: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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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Ministry of Ethnic Affairs' fourth-year performances

FROM PAGE-9

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

The government also formulated policies to develop small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and so that ethnic businesspersons could invest not only in local businesses but also in service industry.

As Myanmar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association established state/region branch offices, ethnic businesspersons got opportunities for exporting their regions' local products to the developed regions.

A total of 5,161 daily-wage monthly-paid teaching assistants in the 2018-2019 academic year, and 7,263 ethnic language teachers in the 2019-2020 academic year were also appointed at the basic education schools in order to create more job opportunities.

With the aim of handing over jewellery production techniques to next generation, Su Htoo Pan, an education charity foundation, established a vocational institute for manufacturing finished jewellery. Admission to the institute was chosen by the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs. Su Htoo Pan Foundation helps those who completed a course at the institute to get a job at the small and



Officials and attendees pose for a group at the Kachin State Business Forum in Myitkyina.

medium-sized enterprises.

The religions, customs and festivals of the ethnic people across the country are included in the list of intangible cultural heritage in order to preserve and develop language, literature, fine art, culture, customs, national characters, and historical heritages.

In cooperation with Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, the ministry conducted a capacity building training for preservation of intangible cultural heritage in 2019.

On 1 August 2019, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation handed over the Union National Races Village (Yangon) to the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs. The Union National Races Village was being upgraded to transform it into an Ethnic Communication Centre-ECC.

Teaching ethnic languages at basic education schools in summer, drawing up local curriculums, making efforts for teaching 64 ethnic languages, and publishing preschool and kindergarten students'

bilingual Ethnic Languages/ Myanmar picture books in 66 ethnic languages, the ethnic people's languages, literatures and cultures were preserved and developed.

Surveys on endangered ethnic languages, literatures, customs, culture and lifestyles, faiths and festivals, ethnic people's costumes, displays of utensils and musical instruments, official establishment of ethnic literature and culture organizations, health papers, posters and press releases issued by UNICEF were translated into ethnic languages.

A total of 374 healthy ethnic cuisines were collected to put them in the first version of Health Norm and Standards Book. Law and bylaws of Ethnic Rights Protection were translated into ethnic languages. The ministry was recording the changes of ethnic costumes through eras.

Implementing the policy of enhancing solidarity, mutual amity and respect and mutual assistance among ethnic groups and to live eternally together on

the basic of genuine union spirit, the ministry arranged first excursion to Nay Pyi Taw for 94 ethnic representatives from Kachin, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Rakhine, Shan, Taung, Lisu, Khami and Mro ethnic groups in northern Shan State and Rakhine State, the second trip for 90 ethnic representatives from the national races in Kachin State and Taninthayi Region, and the third excursion for 107 ethnic representatives from national races in Kayah and Chin States.

Similarly, the fourth excursion to Nay Pyi Taw for 101 ethnic representatives from Sagaing and Ayeyawady regions, and the fifth excursion to Yangon for 92 ethnic representatives from Magway and eastern Shan State were also organized.

With the aim of preservation and development of language, literature and culture, during the 2018-2019 financial year, the ministry provided more than K 20 million for eight literature and culture organizations in Nay Pyi Taw Coun.

cil Area, 12 organizations in Kachin State, 13 organizations in Kayah State, 13 organizations in Chin State, and four organizations in Sagaing Region.

With the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (2018-2030), the ministry has implemented the strategic plan for ethnic rights to ensure the rights of the national races guaranteed by the constitution and equal citizen's rights for all ethnic groups.

A coordination meeting to initiate drafting of a strategic plan for ethnic rights was held in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 September 2019.

The Ethnic Rights Protection Bylaw was enacted on 23 August 2019 to effectively solve conflicts.

The ministry's staff in states and regions conducted a total of 64 activities explaining the matters that are included at the Ethnic Protection Law to the ethnic people in 2018-2019.

After collecting the data on ethnic affairs, a strategic plan for ethnic rights (2019-2028) was drafted and being implemented.

A total of 14 offices in regions and states were opened since 2017. The offices will be used as Ethnic Communication Centre -ECC by hosting meetings, festivals and workshops. To effectively implement ethnic affairs, in-charges for the offices were appointed.

Ministry of Ethnic Affairs was striving to promote the socio-economic development of ethnic national brethren and assist building a genuine Federal Democratic Union. (Translated by Khin Wai Lwin)



Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin poses for a group photo together with ethnic literature and culture troupes from Kayah and Chin States.

Coronavirus: latest global developments

Here are the latest developments in the coronavirus crisis:

Trump eyes immigration ban

US President Donald Trump says he will temporarily ban immigration to the United States to combat the “invisible enemy” of coronavirus, a drastic new step in his anti-immigration crusade, but gives no further details.

“In light of the attack from the Invisible Enemy, as well as the need to protect the jobs of our GREAT American Citizens, I will be signing an Executive Order to temporarily suspend immigration into the United States!” he tweets late Monday.

Oil market turmoil

Oil-price turmoil grips traders once again, a day after US crude futures crashed below zero for the first time as a result

of shrinking demand and a vast supply glut.

China defends epidemic handling

Beijing hits back at mounting pressure over its management of the crisis. “Any question about China’s transparency in the prevention and control of epidemic situation is not in line with facts,” says foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang.

More than 170,000 dead

More than 2,483,846 infections have now been reported and at least 170,368 people have died, according to an AFP tally at 1100 GMT Tuesday based on official sources. The United States has the most deaths of any country with 42,364.

Italy is the second hardest-hit country, with 24,114 dead. Spain follows with 21,282, then France with 20,265 and Britain

with 16,509.

Italy to get exit plan details

Italy’s Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte promises to reveal by the weekend the steps he will take to loosen restrictions and reopen the economy.

“I would like to be able to say, let’s open everything. Right away,” Conte writes on Facebook. “But such a decision would be irresponsible.”

Virgin Australia collapses

Cash-strapped Virgin Australia goes into administration, making it the largest carrier to buckle under the strain of the pandemic.

Munich beer festival runs dry

For the first time since World War II, German officials cancel Oktoberfest, a beloved beer-swilling festival in southern



Medical staff prepare nasal swabs for analysis in a high detection rate Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) machine to screen for COVID-19, on 21 April 2020, at the Croix-Rousse hospital in Lyon, central-eastern France, on the 35th day of a lockdown in France aimed at curbing the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, caused by the novel coronavirus. **PHOTO: AFP**

Bavaria scheduled for September 19 to October 4 and expecting to draw some six million visitors.

No bulls in Pamplona

Spain’s best-known bull-run-

ning festival in the northern city of Pamplona, held each year between 6 and 14 July and attracting hundreds of thousands of people, is cancelled. — AFP ■

Humans to blame for spread of coronavirus and other ‘zoonoses’

PARIS(France) — Whether it came from a bat or a pangolin is not certain, but one thing is: the coronavirus outbreak that has killed tens of thousands and turned the world upside down comes from the animal world.

It is human activity that enabled the virus to jump to people, and specialists are warning that if nothing changes many other pandemics of this nature will follow.

The name given to diseases transmitted from animals to humans is “zoonoses”, based on the Greek words for “animal” and “sickness”.

They are not new — tuberculosis, rabies, toxoplasmosis, malaria, to name just a few, are all zoonoses. According to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), 60 per cent of human infectious diseases originate from animals.

This figure climbs to 75 per cent for “emerging” diseases such as Ebola, HIV, avian flu, Zika, or SARS, another type of coronavirus. The list goes on.

“The emergence of zoonotic diseases is often associated with environmental changes or ecological disturbances, such as agricultural intensification

and human settlement, or encroachments into forests and other habitats,” said a 2016 UNEP report.

“Changes in the environment are usually the result of human activities, ranging from land use change to climate change.”

Gwenael Vourc’h of INRAE, a French public research institute, also blames human activity for the crossover between species. “Given the growth of the human population and its ever more intense use of planetary resources, the destruction of more and more ecosystems multiplies contacts,” she says.

A key area of concern is deforestation to make way for agriculture and intensive livestock farming.

Domesticated animals are often a “bridge” between pathogens from the wild and humans. The widespread use of antibiotics in the livestock industry has also led to bacterial pathogens building up immunity to front-line drugs.

Urbanisation and habitat fragmentation are also highly disruptive of the balance between species, while global warming can push disease-carrying animals into new territory. — AFP ■

COVID-19 food crisis “entirely avoidable”, but quick and strategic action needed

ROME — The COVID-19 pandemic is threatening food security where people depend on small-scale farming or fishing for their livelihoods, but a global food crisis is “entirely avoidable” if policy makers take timely action, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

“FAO is particularly concerned about the pandemic’s impacts on vulnerable communities already grappling with hunger or other crises ... as well as countries that rely heavily on food imports, such as Small Islands Developing States, and countries that depend on primary exports like oil,” FAO said in a statement earlier this month.

Vulnerable communities include small farmers, pastoralists, fishers, informal labourers, and the 10 million children in Latin America and the Caribbean who depend on school meals as a primary source of food, FAO pointed out.

“But there is no need for the world to panic. Globally, there is enough food for everyone. Policy makers around the world need to be careful not to ... turn this health crisis into an entirely avoidable food crisis,” FAO said.

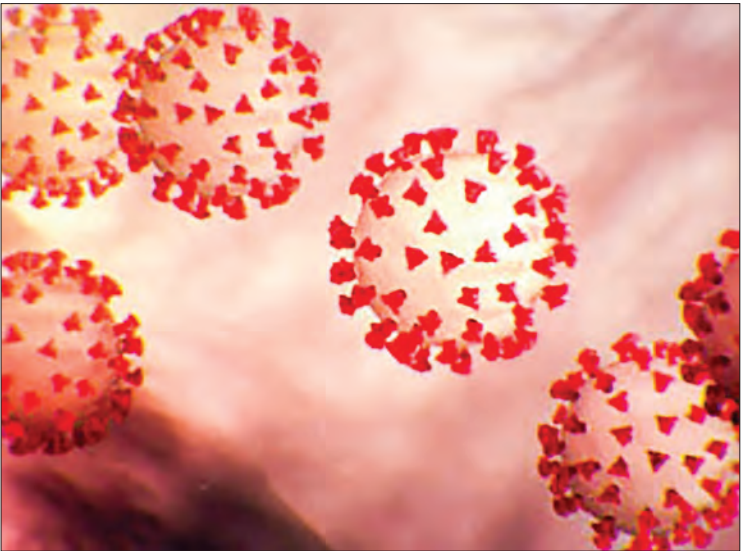
VULNERABLE COUNTRIES AT RISK

According to FAO senior economist Abdolreza Abbassian, the pandemic has not led to a global food crisis, but it has caused world trade to contract drastically and almost all currencies to depreciate against the US dollar.

This in turn spells trouble for the world’s most vulnerable countries, most of whom rely heavily on exports while also importing staple foods: there is less money coming in, and it takes more money to buy necessities.

“The longer the pandemic goes on, the more the danger that these countries will give up trying to control the virus because they simply don’t have the resources to do so, or they will try to impose lockdowns, which could mean disaster,” Abbassian told Xinhua.

“(These are countries where) if people don’t go to work, they won’t have money. It’s not like they have checks show up in their bank accounts: they literally won’t be able to feed their families, so they might have to sell their livelihoods — for example, their sheep — just to get money to buy food,” explained Abbassian.— Xinhua ■



The novel coronavirus originated in the animal kingdom and jumped to humans. **PHOTO: AFP**

Trump vows immigration ban as virus roils world economy

WASHINGTON (United States) — Donald Trump vowed to temporarily ban immigration to the United States to combat the “invisible enemy” of coronavirus, claiming it would save American jobs as the world economy plunges into meltdown.

The announcement, a drastic new step in the US President’s anti-immigration crusade, comes as the globe tries to chart its way out of an unprecedented health and economic crisis.

In just four months, the novel coronavirus has touched almost every nation on the planet, keeping billions of people at home and claiming more than 170,000 lives.

The US is the host of the world’s deadliest outbreak, with more than 42,000 deaths and 784,000 known infections nation-



President Donald Trump speaks during the daily briefing on the novel coronavirus. He suspends immigration insisting he is protecting American jobs but critics say he is appealing to his base in an election year. **PHOTO: AFP**

wide. At least 22 million American jobs have also been lost as lockdowns suffocate commerce

around the globe, resulting in the extraordinary spectacle of oil prices turning negative as de-

mand evaporates.

After lending support to a spate of anti-lockdown protests in

parts of the US, President Trump said late Monday he would halt immigration to the country — a move likely to please his right-wing base in an election year.

“In light of the attack from the Invisible Enemy, as well as the need to protect the jobs of our GREAT American Citizens, I will be signing an Executive Order to temporarily suspend immigration into the United States!” he tweeted.

There were no further details about the measure or how long it would last.

Rival Democrats accused the Republican president of politicising the health crisis to push his anti-immigrant agenda and deflect blame for initially downplaying the dangers of the virus.— AFP ■

Oil market in turmoil as equities slump

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Oil-price turmoil gripped traders once more Tuesday, a day after US crude futures crashed below zero for the first time, as the coronavirus crisis cripples global energy demand and worsens a vast supply glut.

The commodity rout also sent world equity markets spiralling lower, as investors fretted that the news could compound a deep global economic downturn that has been widely forecast as a result of the deadly COVID-19 outbreak.

In Tuesday trading, New York’s light sweet crude West Texas Intermediate for May delivery clawed back to minus \$3.91 per barrel. WTI had Monday collapsed to an unprecedented intra-day low of minus \$40.32, with producers paying clients to take it off their hands.

This week’s massive sell-off came ahead of Tuesday’s expiry of the May contract. Most trading

has moved to the June contract, which was down about 20 per cent at \$16.33 per barrel.

“Ever thought that it could be imaginable to see the price of US oil valued at less than a pizza? Or even a slice of pizza? How about for it to actually cost to sell US crude?” said Jameel Ahmad, head of currency strategy and market research at FXTM.

“All of this was previously thought to be unthinkable -- but it became very real for traders as the price of US oil turned negative for the first time in history.”

Negative prices mean traders must pay to find buyers to take physical possession of the oil — a job made near-impossible with the world’s storage capacity at bursting point.

Elsewhere Tuesday, European benchmark Brent North Sea oil for June delivery tumbled to an 18-year low at \$18.10 per barrel, before shooting back up to \$21.08 in volatile deals.— AFP ■

Madagascar president launches coronavirus ‘remedy’

ANTANANARIVO (Madagascar) — The president of Madagascar Andry Rajoelina has officially launched a local herbal remedy claimed to prevent and cure the novel coronavirus.

“Tests have been carried out — two people have now been cured by this treatment,” Rajoelina told ministers, diplomats and journalists at the Malagasy Institute of Applied Research (IMRA), which developed the beverage.

“This herbal tea gives results in seven days,” he said.

Downing a dose, he said: “I will be the first to drink this today, in front of you, to show you that this product cures and does not kill.” The drink, which has been called Covid-Organics, is derived from artemisia — a plant with proven efficacy in malaria treatment — and other indigenous herbs, according to the IMRA.

But its safety and effectiveness have not been assessed internationally, nor has any data from trials been published in peer-reviewed studies. Mainstream scientists have warned of the potential risk from untested



Madagascan President Andry Rajoelina gave the official launch to a herbal tea claimed to prevent and cure coronavirus. **PHOTO: AFP**

herbal brews.

Rajoelina brushed aside any such reservations and said the concoction would be offered to schoolchildren, as it was his duty was to “protect the Malagasy people”.

“Covid-Organics will be used as prophylaxis, that is for prevention, but clinical observations have shown a trend towards its effectiveness in curative treatment,” said Dr. Charles Andrianjara, IMRA’s director general.

The large Indian Ocean island has so far detected 121 cases and no fatality.

The pandemic has triggered a rush for herbal formulas, lemons and ginger in the belief that they can protect against the virus.

The World Health Organization (WHO), which has people to be vigilant about claimed cures for COVID-19, did not attend the event. The US Centers for Disease Control (CDC), referring to claims for herbal or tea remedies, says: “There is no scientific evidence that any of these alternative remedies can prevent or cure the illness caused by COVID-19. In fact, some of them may not be safe to consume.” — AFP



Oil markets have been ravaged this year by a collapse in demand caused by the virus and the Saudi-Russian price war. **PHOTO: AFP**

Huawei’s revenue rises 1.4% on year in 1st quarter despite pandemic

BEIJING — Chinese telecom-equipment giant Huawei Technologies Co. said Tuesday that its revenue rose 1.4 per cent from a year earlier to 182.2 billion

yuan (\$25.76 billion) despite the outbreak of the pneumonia-causing coronavirus. But the pace of revenue growth was much slower than the 39 per cent expansion

posted in the first three months of 2019, as many analysts say the virus pandemic has significantly stifled private spending across the globe.— Kyodo News ■

Seoul plays down report on North Korean leader's health

SEOUL (South Korea) — South Korea played down a report Tuesday that the North's leader Kim Jong Un was being treated after surgery, as speculation mounted over his absence from a key anniversary.

Pyongyang marked the birthday of its late founder, Kim's grandfather Kim Il Sung, on 15 April — by far the most important date in its annual political calendar — but Kim was not seen in attendance.

Daily NK, an online media outlet run mostly by North Korean defectors, said Kim had undergone a cardiovascular procedure earlier this month and was recovering at a villa in North Phyongan province. "Excessive smoking, obesity, and fatigue were the direct causes of Kim's urgent cardiovascular treatment," it cited an unidentified source inside the country as saying.

No confirmation of the report was immediately available.

But it triggered widespread speculation, with CNN citing a US official saying that Washington was "monitoring intelligence" that Kim was in "grave danger" after undergoing surgery.

In a statement, a spokesman for the South's presidential Blue House said: "We have nothing to confirm and no special movement has been detected inside North Korea as of now."

The South's Yonhap news agency, meanwhile, cited an unnamed government official saying that reports Kim was seriously ill were "not true".

But there were no explicit denials that Kim, who is in his mid-30s, had had some kind of procedure. Previous absences



Kim Jong Un's health is frequently the subject of speculation, but little concrete is known about the secretive leader. **PHOTO: AFP**

from the public eye on Kim's part have prompted speculation about his health. In 2014 he dropped out of sight for nearly six weeks before reappearing with a cane. Days later, the South's spy agency said he had undergone surgery to remove a cyst from his ankle.

"No-one knows what's going on inside North Korea," said Martyn Williams, who is affiliated with the 38 North research website.

"Kim Jong Il had been dead several days before it was announced and it took everyone by surprise," he tweeted.

"Kim Jong Un has been 'missing' before, and has always reappeared. That said, his absence this week was more notable."

Closely guarded

The North Korean leader has not made a public appearance since presiding over a meeting of the Workers' Party politburo on 11 April.

His powerful sister Kim Yo Jong was named as an al-

ternate politburo member and the meeting called for stronger measures against the coronavirus pandemic. Pyongyang has closed its borders and imposed tight restrictions to protect itself from the virus that emerged in neighbouring China and has since swept the world, and insists it has had no cases.

On 12 April, the North's official news state media KCNA reported that Kim had inspected drills by fighter jets at an air defence unit.

There were no state media reports of any drills after the South said two days later that Pyongyang had launched a series of short-range cruise missiles.

But analysts have said his absence from the April 15 commemorations suggested he could be looking to emphasise his own authority over his family's legacy.

China is the North's key diplomatic backer and main provider of trade and aid, but Beijing declined to be drawn on Tuesday's developments. —AFP ■

Hong Kong to extend social distancing measures until 7 May

HONG KONG — Hong Kong will extend social distancing measures for two weeks until 7 May as it is not yet time to relax its fight against the coronavirus pandemic, leader Carrie Lam said Tuesday.

The measures in place include closure of entertainment venues, such as clubhouses, exercise gyms, mahjong parlors and bars, restrictions on table spacing in restaurants, and a four-person public gathering limit.

They were supposed to expire on Thursday, but Lam told reporters that for the time being, the better balance should be struck "to ensure all the successes that Hong Kong has achieved over the last three months will not be wasted."

Under stronger infection control measures that become effective Wednesday, all arrivals at Hong Kong's international airport will be tested for the new virus while waiting at designated sites for the results.

Those who have tested positive will be hospitalized and those who have tested negative will undergo a 14-day quarantine and be tested again before the end of the quarantine period. Hong Kong has reported fewer cases of the coronavirus infection in the last week than before, as daily new cases stayed in the single digits since 12 April, and no case was reported Monday. Four new cases, all imported, were reported Tuesday, taking the total to 1,029. — Kyodo News ■

Singapore extends semi-lockdown another month to combat virus

SINGAPORE — Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong announced Tuesday that a semi-lockdown in the city-state will be extended for another month, as the number of COVID-19 cases jumped by 1,111 to reach 9,125, the highest in Southeast Asia.

Lee said in a live broadcast to the nation that the partial lockdown will be extended until June 1 to curb the spread of the coronavirus. The semi-lockdown called "circuit breaker," introduced 7 April, involves closure of all non-essential businesses, schools and universities, and restriction of

movements. It was previously scheduled to end on 4 May. "We will not be able to completely lift the restrictions after that and go back to business as usual," Lee said. "We will therefore extend the circuit breaker for four more weeks until 1 June." "Then, provided we have brought the community numbers down, we can make further adjustments and consider easing some measures." Most of the infections have occurred among foreign workers living in overcrowded dormitories, though the government is concerned about the persistence of unlinked cases. — Kyodo News

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI ACCORD VOY. NO. (0202-643N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V UNI ACCORD VOY. NO. (0202-643N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR SOLO VOY. NO. (895 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR SOLO VOY. NO. (895 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING
LINE

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V OSLO TRADER VOY. NO. (015S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V OSLO TRADER VOY. NO. (015S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 22-4-2020 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

Visa Foundation Commits \$210 Million to Support Small and Micro Businesses and Immediate COVID-19 Emergency Relief

THE Visa Foundation recently announced a commitment of two programmes totalling \$210 million to support small and micro businesses, aligning with the Foundation’s long-term focus on women’s economic advancement and inclusive economic development, and to address an urgent need from local communities following the spread of COVID-19. The first programme of \$10 million is designated for immediate emergency relief



to support charitable organizations on the frontlines responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as public health and food relief, in each of the five geographic regions in which Visa operates: North America; Latin America and the Caribbean; Europe; Asia Pacific; and Central Europe, Middle East and Africa. “As COVID-19 continues to unfold, communities are feeling the effects and need our immediate support,” said Al Kelly, CEO and chairman of Visa. “As a global company that operates a very local business, we recognize this need.

Keep Calm and Tap On with KBZPay

WHEN the World Health Organization released a statement on 9 March 2020 recommending that people turn to cashless transactions to fight the spread of COVID-19, the number of digital transactions across the globe began to soar. On 24 March 2020, the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) also encouraged people in the country to utilise mobile banking and mobile wallet platforms to avoid having to go out so often. In this regard, the COVID-19 pandemic may actually kickstart a further movement towards mobile payment technology in the long run.

As people in Myanmar stay home to protect themselves against the spread of COVID-19, here are a few ways they can use mobile wallets such as KBZPay for their payment and lifestyle needs.

1. Stay at Home and Be Safe Using Cashless Payments

Worried about heading out to pay bills or to get cash from an ATM? Use your KBZPay mobile wallet for cashless payments!



Simply cash-in funds into your KBZPay mobile wallet at a nearby agent or from your KBZ Bank Savings account to get started.

In accordance with CBM guidelines, KBZPay has increased the daily cash-in limit to MMK 400,000 for Level 1 customers and MMK 2,000,000 for Level 2 customers. This enables customers to keep a higher balance in their mobile wallet for payments, and reduces the need to head out to get cash.

Additionally, the daily money transfer limit has also been raised to MMK 400,000 for Level 1 customers. This provides customers the choice and flexibility to make larger P2P transfers.

- Phone Top-Ups - Do you find yourself spending more time on your devices, accessing social media, enjoying music and video streaming ser-



Al Kelly, CEO and Chairman of Visa. **PHOTO: VISA FOUNDATION**

We're also committed to the long-term recovery and will continue to explore ways we can accelerate economic activity in line with our mission to help individuals, businesses and economies thrive."

The second programme is a five-year, strategic \$200 million commitment to support small and micro businesses around the world, with a focus on fostering women's economic advancement. This action expands the Visa Foundation's long-standing support

for small and micro businesses globally. The funds from the Visa Foundation will provide capital to non-government organizations (NGOs) and investment partners supporting small and micro businesses.

Small and micro businesses are the backbone of the global economy, accounting for more than 90 per cent of worldwide businesses and contributing 50 to 60 per cent of global employment.[i] There is a \$300 billion annual credit deficit in funding for women-owned small and micro businesses, which is expected to grow given the recent economic turmoil unfolding due to COVID-19.

"Now more than ever, we must accelerate our support for small businesses on the frontlines driving economic growth," said Kelly. "As many small and micro business owners are women, there will be a ripple effect supporting women's economic advancement, which we believe is one of the most important ways to achieve gender equality, reduce poverty and foster inclusive economic development."

The disparity is evident in Myanmar where more than 80 per cent of formal businesses are small and medium enterprises and only one in four small and medium businesses are owned by women. In addition, only 51 per cent of women participate in the

labour force compared to 80 per cent of men.

"Small and medium businesses make up the main source of livelihood in Myanmar and hold the potential to bridge the gender gap," said Lillian Wang, Country Manager for Visa Myanmar. "We have invested in educating the Myanmar population on the importance of personal financial management. We will continue to play our part to digitize commerce while at the same time supporting the many communities in Myanmar to be more inclusive, especially for women."

Through the \$200 million small and micro business programme, the Visa Foundation will provide \$60 million in grants to NGOs dedicated

to supporting small and micro business owners, many of whom are women, in every region where Visa operates. The Visa Foundation will also allocate \$140 million with investment partners that generate positive social and financial returns for small and micro businesses.

"Two hundred million dollars in new financial resources demonstrates our continuing commitment to support small and micro businesses, with a focus on women's economic advancement globally" said Graham Macmillan, President of the Visa Foundation. "When women thrive, communities thrive. We know this matters now more than ever as the global economy seeks to recover and rebuild." —GNLM



Lillian Wang, Country Manager for Visa Myanmar.



vices or making video calls to loved ones and for work? Purchase top-ups and data packs easily using KBZPay!

- Payments of Electricity and YCDC Bills - Make electricity, water and municipal fee payments with a few easy taps by using the 'Bill Payments' feature in the KBZPay App.
- Payments to Service Providers - If you need to pay your internet, insurance, online shopping or other service-related bills, use the 'QuickPay' function in KBZPay mobile wallet, select the service provider and make the payment directly!
- Payments to Delivery Platforms - Staying home doesn't mean you don't get to enjoy your favourite foods. You can order a variety of food and have it delivered to your doorstep through online delivery platforms such as Food2U. You can follow social distancing measures and need not handle cash by making payment for deliveries using KBZPay!

To celebrate Thingyan, every customer who makes a payment with KBZPay (QR Payment, Top Up, Quick Pay, Bill Payment, Gift card purchase) from 10 to 20 April will be eligible to participate in a Thingyan Spin Wheel contest to win attractive prizes.

2. Sending Money to Loved Ones

With travel not recommended in the coming weeks, many people in the country may not get to visit their families and loved ones during the upcoming Thingyan and Myanmar New Year holidays. However, KBZPay

offers ways to send free money transfers to your loved ones seamlessly.

- P2P Transfers - Using the 'Transfer' function in the app, enter the phone number of the recipient, type in the amount, enter your secure PIN and the money will be transferred immediately! Three simple steps!
- Receiving Transfers and Withdrawals at the ATM - Help protect your loved ones by giving them an alternative to going to the bank to withdraw a remittance. With KBZPay, you can send the money to their KBZPay wallet, and they can withdraw from an ATM without a card. Help them practice social distancing by avoiding crowded places and waiting in bank branches. What's more, your loved one will receive an SMS and an in-app notification the moment you make the transfer, so they know exactly when to check their balance, and go to the ATM to make the withdrawal.
- Pocket Money - Wish to give younger relatives or friends some pocket money for the holiday period? Use the 'Pocket Money' function in the KBZPay app to send money to a group of people along with a personalised message! Not only do people get your gift of money, but it's also a fun game to see who is the luckiest!

3. Doing Good Deeds

There are ways to do good deeds during the Thingyan and Myanmar New Year holidays using your KBZPay mobile wallet! Click on the 'Donation' tab in your KBZPay mobile wallet to make donations to different

philanthropic organisations which help those in need.

KBZPay also recently launched a 'We Love Yangon COVID-19 Fund' to support the activities of We Love YGN, a philanthropic organisation which supports communities in Yangon during these challenging times. In less than two weeks of its inclusion in the KBZPay mobile wallet, more than 1,800 donations valued at MMK 15.2 million have been contributed to the fund.

4. Paying with QR codes to Keep Safe Distance and Avoid Handling of Cash

For those essential trips to get food or medicine, paying with KBZPay QR payments allows you to keep a safe distance from the counter and the cashier; to protect both yourself and the staff serving you.

QR payments make it possible to complete your payment while only touching your mobile phone; no need to hand cash to the cashier or accept potentially contaminated cash that you then put into your wallet and no need to sign for card usage with a communal pen. QR code transactions remove the need to wait for change - it's quick and easy to complete your payment safely and leave the store.

Some KBZPay merchants are adapting to delivery services, and will bring their QR code with them so that you can do a safe QR payment when they deliver the food to your door; rather than having to hand over cash.

As we respond to the challenges of COVID-19 together, remember to keep calm and tap on with KBZPay!

Shan United prepares to sign defender Win Min Htut

TO fix the club's defense weakness, Shan United Football Club is preparing to sign defender Win Min Htut, according to the Myanmar National League website.

After Week-9 of the MPT Myanmar National League 2020, Shan United is standing in the fourth place of standing table earning 17 points.

"We are preparing to call Win Min Htut at the will of the coach and to fix the weakness of our team's defense. But we will wait and see his fitness. If it is okay, we will sign him for second round of the season," said U Han Win Aung, general manager of the club.

Defender Win Min Htut previously played for Shan United FC (former Kanbawza FC) and My-

anmar national football team from 2009 to 2018.

In 2019 season, he was injured while he was playing for Southern Myanmar FC, and retired from the team.

"As a footballer, I always want to play football. Shan United negotiated with me. The team used to be my mother team. Therefore, I decided to play for my old team. All football matches are currently suspended due to COVID-19. What happen next is unpredictable," said the defender.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Myanmar National League, like international matches, was suspended in its Week-10. The date for resuming the matches could not be confirmed yet. —Kyaw Khin



Defender Win Min Htut. PHOTO: MFF

Back-rower to hospital cleaner - Meite joins France's fight against coronavirus

PARIS (France)—Bakary Meite's story of volunteering at a Paris hospital during the coronavirus pandemic has been seen, heard and read across the world, but the Ivory Coast back-rower remains humble about his efforts.

Meite, 36, has been helping out cleaning wards in the west of the city where he was born since late-March and has been interviewed by the BBC, numerous national radio and television stations as well as newspapers.

More than 20,000 people have died from COVID-19 in France and over 30,000 are in hospital across the country as of Monday with the capital's larger region the worst hit.

"My acts have been brought to the fore in the media but it's the personnel involved every day in the hospitals that you have to praise," he told AFP.

"It's the carers, the nurses, the cleaners... those with which I work now and who will still be there when I've stopped," he added. After returning from holiday in Brazil the Parisian who plays for second-tier side Carcassonne and qualifies for the Ivory Coast due to his family answered a relative's request.

"My sister's brother-in-law works for a cleaning company



Bakary Meite (l) has had playing spells with French clubs including Stade Francais, Massy and Beziers. PHOTO: AFP

contracted by Sainte-Perrine hospital," Meite said. "He called my sister, because they were looking for someone, my nephew offered himself spontaneously and I followed suit," he added.

Ramps, elevators, door handles

Former Stade Francais forward Meite's shift begins at 7:30am (0530 GMT) and finishes in the early afternoon.

"I clean every day. The ramps, the buttons on the elevators, the door handles. There's a lot of ground to cover but it's nothing compared to the work the people in the hospital do," he said.

"The simple fact of doing

something that they don't have to do extra, I'm doing something," he added.

The top two tiers of French rugby have been put on hold since March 13 due to the illness.

Meite, who has also had spells with Massy and Beziers, said he was itching to getting back on the field before hanging up his boots in 12 months' time.

"What I'm doing, I'll do it for as long as I need but I'd really like to get back playing rugby with Carcassonne," he said.

"I still have a year left of my contract. It will be my last season. For now I'm preparing my coaching qualifications. I don't know yet what I'll do, we'll see."—AFP ■

Teenager Davies extends Bayern Munich deal

BERLIN (Germany)—Talented Canadian teenager Alphonso Davies says it is a "dream come true" to extend his Bayern Munich contract until 2025, joining Thomas Mueller and coach Hansi Flick who have also prolonged their involvement with the German champions.

Davies is the latest Bayern star offered an extension after Mueller and Flick both recently signed new contracts until 2023.

Davies, 19, was originally signed until June 2023, but the versatile teenager has impressed this season, both on the left wing and at left back.

"I'm very happy. Bayern Munich is one of the best clubs in the world, and for me it's a dream come true to play here," Davies said in a statement.

"I want to win as many titles as possible with this club.

"The mentality of always wanting to win everything is in FC Bayern's DNA." Davies was born in a refugee camp in Ghana in 2000, his parents fled the civil war in Liberia and the family moved to Canada when Davies was five years old.

He joined the German giants from Vancouver Whitecaps in 2019, but has made the breakthrough to Bayern's first team this season.—AFP ■



Bayern Munich's teenage Canada international Alphonso Davies, 19, has extended his contract with the reigning Bundesliga champions until 2025. PHOTO: AFP