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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VII, No. 18, 13th Waxing of Kasone 1382 ME www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com Monday, 4 May 2020

People should continue following health guidelines on COVID as Myanmar is not out of the woods yet

"Don't let your guard down just because COVID has been quiet for one or two days: State Counsellor"

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi wrote on her Facebook page yesterday that we should not let our guard down just because COVID has been quiet for one or two days and that the situation when we could all feel secure was still far off. She also added that we should all strictly follow the instructions contained in the educational directives. This was what she wrote:

It is now two weeks since we issued "stay at home" orders for some townships in the Yangon Region. During this time, there were also some additional townships where "stay at home" orders had to be issued. We will have to make a decision what should be done in the future based on the results of this programme.

Although we could say that COVID is something we have not encountered before, all of us have encountered problems before. The main thing we need in solving problems is to be able to assess the situation correctly. That's the element of wisdom.

During the course of this month, we have seen the progress of our understanding and knowledge in the areas of health and economics relating to COVID. All that is needed from us is to have the ability to learn fast. Please strictly follow COVID instructions. Don't let down your guard just because COVID has been quiet for the past one or two days. The situation when we can all feel secure is still far off.

"Protect and practice to perfection with intense mindfulness".

(This time I'm trying not to use Pali).

(Translated by Kyaw Myaing)

Four more new COVID-19 cases on Sunday, total cases reach 155

Update on COVID-19, 8 pm, 3-5-2020

1. The National Health Laboratory (Yangon) issued a report on 3-5-2020 evening on 63 lab specimens by NHL and 60 lab specimens from Department of Medical Research. The results show that 4 lab specimens tested positive for COVID-19.
2. There have been 155 positive COVID-19 results in Myanmar as of 8 pm, 3-5-2020.
3. Out of the old confirmed cases up to 3-5-2020, 43 of them tested no longer having the virus after two reexaminations and 29 out of them have been discharged from the hospital and are under quarantine.
4. Six positive persons have died.
5. The remaining 120 positive persons are receiving medical treatment in hospitals and 2 positive persons are under intensive care.
6. There have been 72 new persons under surveillance between 12 pm 2-5-2020 and 12 pm, 3-5-2020.

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COVID-19 Laboratory results at 8 pm, 3 May 2020

Samples tested at National Health Laboratory on 3 May	63
Samples tested at Department of Medical Research on 3 May	60
COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) (new confirmed case) (positive)	4

	New	Total
Total number of COVID-19 positive cases	4	155
Number of recovered persons	6	43
Number of deaths	0	6

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COVID-19 response team inspects MRTV in Nay Pyi Taw

Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Nyi Tun and official inspect Myanma Radio and Television in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: NYUNT LWIN (MRTV)**

NAY PYI TAW Council member U Nyi Tun, accompanied by Tatkon Township's Pyithu Hluttaw Representative U Kyaw Tint, led the COVID-19 response team to inspect Myanma Radio and Television yesterday.

The team is responsible for control and emergency response to the COVID-19 at the factories, workshops, offices and city areas.

They looked into MRTV's implementations on guidelines of Ministry of Health and Sports to prevent its employees from the disease.

The team inspected offices, production and broadcast rooms, control rooms and radio stations, with making recommendations on measures against the pandemic.— Aung Naing Win (MRTV)

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Low pressure area warning issued for preparatory measures

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has informed to public about a warning of the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology from its observation on a lower pressure area over the South Andaman Sea and adjoining Southeast Bay of Bengal still persists at 18:30 hrs M.S.T yesterday.

The weather condition was forecast to intensify into a depression during next 96 hours and it is likely to move North- Northwest wards, with being cloudy over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and a few clouds to partly cloudy elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

The warning also said if the storm headed towards Myanmar, it will affect coastal regions of Rakhine, Ayayawady and Yangon, causing tidal wave, heavy rain, torrential floods, soil erosions and flash floods in mountain areas. Moreover, the inland areas will suffer other indirect impacts from the storm.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has also advised to the local people in both coastal and inland areas to make the following preventive measures:

(1) Safe shelters are required during the storm. However, it is better to make houses and buildings resist strong wind and heavy rain as people need to stay only at home amid COVID-19 outbreak.
(2) Emergency items, foods, water and important documents should be ready for urgent evacuation. Soaps, hand sanitizers and face masks are kept ready for COVID-19 prevention during evacuation.
(3) Torch, candles and lighters must be in hand, along with fully charged mobile phones.
(4) Gathering point must be set among the family members for possible separations in the disaster. Each family member must keep the contact phone number, name, ward/village, town and contact person.
(5) Those who are living, working or doing fishing businesses near the coastal areas must be alert to the storm and tidal wave.
(6) Inland areas may suffer indirect impacts of storms, with strong winds, heavy rain and thunderbolts.
(7) People living near mountain steams need to be aware of flash floods, and move to safer place, if necessary.
(8) Temporarily move to safer place to avoid soil erosion near rivers and creeks.
(9) Follow guidelines for COVID-19 either in nearby cyclone shelters or in specific place.

People need to closely monitor the situation of possible storm and follow the disaster management of authorities in emergency period.

Information and assistance are available at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement through the hotline numbers: 067 3404666 and 067 3404777.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population Statement on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) concerning factories and businesses

12th Waxing of Kasone, 1382 ME
(3 May 2020)

1. To prevent the spread of the global pandemic Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Ministry of Health and Sports issued directives and guidelines for factories and businesses to open during the spread of the virus. The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population issued a statement on 19-4-2020 that factories and businesses can only reopen after being checked by MoHS, MoLIP and joint expert group between 20-4-2020 to 30-4-2020 and received their results and recommendations.
2. The following businesses and services have been categorized as essential for the public during the pandemic:
   (a) Essential businesses
      (1) State-owned factories, workshops and businesses.
      (2) Water distribution.
      (3) Electricity and fuel production and distribution.
      (4) Firefighting services.
      (5) Private hospitals, clinics and health services.
      (6) Communication, information and technological services.
   (b) Public services
      (1) Transportation, warehouses and wholesale centres.
      (2) Ports, cargo transportation and logistics.
      (3) Import, export and trade services.
      (4) Municipal development services.
      (5) Banking and financial services.
      (6) Insurance companies and companies without goods production.
      (7) Job agencies.
      (8) Information services.
      (9) Tollgates, road and bridge toll collection services.
      (10) Hotels, motels and accommodation services.
   (c) Essential public services
      (1) Printing and publishing services.
      (2) Mineral and natural resource services.
      (3) Chemical-based services.
      (4) Construction services.
      (5) Fish and prawn breeding, catching and freezing services.
3. The businesses and services mentioned in the second paragraph can continue to open by amending to the Ministry of Health and Sports' directives on COVID-19 protection and containment processes. After doing so, evidence of having doing so should be prepared for the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population and Ministry of Health and Sports and joint groups for inspection.

Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population
(Translated by Zaw Htat Oo)

THE ASEAN INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION (ASEAN-IPR) INVITES ASEAN NATIONALS TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR) based in Jakarta, Indonesia is seeking for an Executive Director to lead the Institute's efforts as ASEAN'S research institute for the term of three years from 19-10-2020 to 18-10-2023. Detail information including responsibilities and qualifications are available at https://asean-aipr.org/resources/vacancy-executive director/ and https://asean.org/opportunities/ vacancies-asec/.

"People are the key"

Online capacity building classes coming for volunteers

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye held a video conference with the national leading body on volunteers for training volunteers who will be assisting in the quarantine facilities.

The conference was attended by Deputy Minister U Soe Aung, national body member and MoHS Permanent Secretary Prof Dr Thet Khine Win and members, Myanmar Medical Association Chairman Prof Dr Htin Aung Saw and members and secretary office officials.

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye holds the virtual meeting with the members of national leading body on volunteers. **PHOTO: MNA**

During the meeting, the Union Minister said quarantine is a central component of combating COVID-19 and that area will be assisted as best as it can. He said the role of volunteers in that aspect is important and the national leading body on volunteers was formed to increase the skills of volunteers.

The Union Minister said they are willing to provide safety, accommodation, food, travel assistance, adequate rest and recognition from the nation to the volunteers. He said MoHS, Ministry of Office of the Union Government, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, and state/regional chief ministers and social affairs ministers will coordinate for this.

The Union Minister said they are compiling a list of volunteer trainers and doctors to teach the volunteers online. The meeting then continued with attendees explaining and discussing their respective sectors.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Notification on COVID-19 prevention in IDP camps

1. The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is implementing action plans to prevent, contain and treat COVID-19 in IDP camps across the nation.
2. Management committees and temporary residents of the IDP camps are notified to proceed with the following action points:

- Regularly and systematically wash hands with the hand basins and soaps provided in the camps.
- Be wary of personal hygiene and minimizing contact with other persons when using public toilets and showers.
- Be extra vigilant for the elderly and persons with chronic illnesses living in the camps.
- To regulate camp residents from going outside and to maintain records of persons going outside for compulsory reasons. Every time they leave or enter the camp, their body temperatures should be checked, surgical or cloth-sewn masks should be worn and hands should be washed systematically.
- Always wear fabric-woven face mask. Mark two colours for interior and exterior of face mask. Completely cover nose and mouth. Never touch mask with hand when worn on face. Remove from face using the strings attached to the mask. Clean the fabric-woven face mask thoroughly every day.
- Prevent external persons from entering the camp.
- Report immediately to authorities for unusual activities or requirements concerning COVID-19.
- Carefully read SMS messages from Ministry of Health and Sports on updates and information related to COVID-19.
- Follow patient referral procedures in case of COVID-19 symptoms.
- Connect with local general administration department, health department and philanthropic organizations to swiftly transport patients under surveillance and suspected persons to their designated locations.
- Adhere to notifications issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports and local governments concerning COVID-19

Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

No migrant returnee from Thailand through Myawady border on 3 May

MYANMAR has allowed the returns of Myanmar migrants from Thailand through Myawady border town in Kayin State since 1 May, but no one came back to home under this programme yesterday.

U Bo Bo Wai Maung, the Social Affairs Minister of Kayin State and the reception in-charge, said, "Myanmar government is discussing with Thai authorities through our embassy in the Kingdom. We are expecting more Myanmar migrants from Bangkok, and a clear result could be seen in a couple of days to be able to continue our plan."

The numbers of returnees to Myanmar through Myawady borders on 1 May and 2 May were 60 and 54 respectively. —Htin Lin Aung (IPRD)

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Four more new COVID-19 cases on Sunday, total cases reach 155

Case no.	Age	Gender	Address	Contact with COVID-19 positive cases	History of travel abroad	Name of hospital transferred	COVID-19 lab test result	Remark
152	32	Female	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	Persons are quarantined in designated locations.
153	19	Female	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	
154	20	Female	Insein Township, Yangon Region	Yes	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	
155	48	Male	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	No	No	Specialist Hospital, South Okkalapa	Positive	Persons under investigation

Ministry of Health and Sports (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

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Printed and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

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

Kyunchaung gas power plant project to be completed soon

THE 20.54MW gas power plant project in Kyunchaung is going to be finished soon.

As the current running gas turbine has been used for many years, its capacity reduces to only 4MW, said U Myo Thiha, chief engineer of Kyunchaung power plant.

The electricity produced by Kyunchaung gas power plant is supplying to the national grid.

Hong Kong-listed VPower KC1 and CNTIC Vpower YG2 companies are engaged in the generation of electricity, supply and sale. VPower KC1 invested US$18.155 million in the generation of 20.54MW electricity from LNG, and supply and sale of electricity on IPP (BOD) basis at the Kyunchaung power plant in Magway Region.

Furthermore, CNTIC VPower YG2 is to build 350MW LNG power plant at No. 14 plot of Thilawa Port in Thanlyin Township, Yangon Region, bringing in investments of $297.39 million for power generation, supply and sale, according to the data released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

The Ministry of Electricity and Energy is endeavouring efforts to meet the increasing power demand, and gas power project is one of them. —Ko Zaw (chemistry), Ko Khant

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Electrical technicians seen at the Kyunchaung natural gas power plant in Magway Region . **PHOTO: KO ZAW (CHEMISTRY)**

Factories to reopen in Pathein after due inspection

AYEYAWADY Region government gave greenlights nine factories in Pathein Town to resume their operations after the inspection team conducted the mandatory inspection in line with health guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports (MoHS), according to the regional government's notice released on 1 May.

The factory workers are also advised to follow the health guidelines to contain the possible spread of the virus when they start working on 4 May.

The inspection teams are comprised of officials from the Supervision Committee on Industrial Zone, the General Administration Department, the Public Health Department, the Department of Labour, the Industrial Supervision and Inspection Department.

The state has urged people to work from home for certain businesses. The inspection team checks if the factories have marked off six-feet distance for social distancing and have prepared the mandatory face mask and glove for every individual worker, systematic seating plan for transportation, thermometers, handwashing basin, systematic waste management, enough green space and healthy food. They also ensure that the factories must be ready for their workers to send the hospital if the common symptoms of coronavirus disease are found.

The factories and workplaces in the respective industrial zones across the country undertook mandatory inspection between 20 and 30 April to resume their operations, in line with the regulations and guidelines on coronavirus pandemic issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population announced.

During the inspection, pharmaceutical factories, food production factories, factories, workplaces and departments that are ready for re-operating in line with health instructions, factories and workplaces with more than 1,000 workers, and other factories, workplaces and departments are prioritized in order, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population stated. — Hla Kyi

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

COVID-19 Call Centre opens daily

In efforts to speed up the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 disease, the call centre is established by 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 have been working at the centre since 8th April.—**MNA**

Trade Mark Ads Call Thin Thin May, 09251022355,09974424848

Lychee demand drops in MraukU amidst coronavirus pandemic

THE coronavirus pandemic slows the trade flow and lychee demand is dropping in MraukU Township, Rakhine State.

Lychees are started to harvest in the last week of April in MraukU Township. However, the market is relying on local and foreign travellers. Following the coronavirus crisis, tourism industry halted. So the lychees are priced lower than the previous years due to the decline in demand, said a grower.

The lychees fetched K6,000-7,000 per 100-fruits bag in the previous years.

The lychees will be plentiful after rainfalls in May. About 30 to 60 fruits can be harvested per branch of the Lychee tree.

Myanmar's mangosteen, rambutan, lychee, watermelon, muskmelon, mango and plums have been cleared for import by China's food safety inspection mechanism — the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection, and Quarantine (AQSIQ). China accounts for 95 per cent of Myanmar's fruit exports. At present, Myanmar's border trade with China is not going well as China has tightened border security measures to control the possible spread of the virus. —Tin Tun Oo (IPRD)/ Htet Myat

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

lychee demand is dropping in MraukU Township, Rakhine State. **PHOTO: TIN TUN OO (IPRD)**

Myanmar's mango export unaffected by coronavirus pandemic

MYANMAR'S mango is steadily sent to China on a green-channel amid coronavirus impacts and border trade suspension. Yet, quality plays a crucial role in maintaining the market, said a trader from Khwar Nyo Trading Co., Ltd.

Myanmar started to export mango to China via the Muse border. The traders are also preparing to ship them to the Singapore market.

Seintalone fetches 70-130 Yuan per 16-kg basket, said an official of Muse fruit depot.

About 80 trucks carrying mangoes are entering China's market every day.

During the opening season of mango, the entry of mango (Seintalone variety) at early maturity stage harmed the market, General Secretary U Kyaw Soe Naing of Myanmar Mango Market and Technology Development Association told the Global New Light of Myanmar on 23 April.

The mango growers are urged to supply the quality mango to maintain the market reputation, he said.

"To maintain the market for a long term, we don't want the mangoes of early maturity place in the market," he pointed out.

Another problem is that transport delays to China can cause quality damage to Seintalone, according to the association.

Additionally, the mango farm-owners need to follow the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). They also need to obtain GAP certification. The Agriculture Department has been instituting criteria for long-term organic farming.

In the 2017-2018 financial year, Myanmar exported 50,000 tonnes of Seintalone mangoes. The country aims to raise the export volume of Seintalone to 100,000 tonnes in 2020, according to the online news released by the Ministry of Commerce.

Of about 200 mango varieties originated in Myanmar, Seintalone, Shwehintha, Padamyar Ngamauk, Yinkwe, Machitsu varieties are primarily grown. The foreign market prefers Seintalone variety.

Myanmar's mangoes are primarily shipped to China, and also to India, Bangladesh, Thailand, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, and Japan.

Ayeyawady Region possess the largest mango plantation acres, having about 46,000 acres. Bago Region is the second-largest producer with 43,000 acres and Mandalay has 29,000 acres of mango. There are over 24,000 acres in Kayin State, over 20,400 acres in Shan State and over 20,000 acres in Sagaing Region, according to the association.— Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Trade at Htikhee border falls by $287 mln as of 17 April

BILATERAL trade between Thailand and Myanmar through the Htikhee border between 1 October and 17 April in the 2019-2020 financial year sharply fell to US$1.1 million from $1.39 billion registered in the year-ago period, according to the Commerce Ministry's data.

Over half of the current fiscal, exports through the Htikhee crossing stood at $1 billion, while imports fell short of $18 million.

Exports of natural gas from Taninthayi Region has contributed to the enormous increase in trade through the Htikhee checkpoint since the previous fiscal, said an official from the ministry.

Earlier, the Myawady border sees the largest trade among the Myanmar-Thailand checkpoints. The rise in exports through the Htikhee checkpoint has boosted the value of the Myanmar-Thailand border trade in the 2018-2019 FY. In the current fiscal, trade values at Htikhee border also surpassed those registered at Myawady crossing.

Of the seven border-trade points between Myanmar and Thailand, Myeik and Htikhee crossings have witnessed a decrease in trade in the current financial year, while the remaining checkpoints have reported an increase.

Trade values stood at $82.28 million at Tachilek border, $672.25 at Myawady, $241.24 million at Kawthoung, $103.2 million at Myeik, $1.1 billion at Htikhee, $12.68 million at Myawady and $2.64 million at Maese respectively, as per the Commerce Ministry's data.

Myanmar primarily exports natural gas, fishery products, coal, tin concentrate (SN 71.58 per cent), coconut (fresh and dry), beans, and bamboo shoots to Thailand. The country imports capital goods such as machinery, raw industrial goods such as cement and fertilizers, and consumer goods such as cosmetics and food products from the neighbouring country. — Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Sri Lanka offers to purchase 10 basic foodstuffs

SRI LANKA has offered to buy 10 basic foodstuffs from Myanmar, said an official of the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization (MYANTRADE).

In April, Sri Lanka sent a purchase proposal for Myanmar foodstuffs such as lentils, onion, canned fish, coriander, garlic, green gram, sole fish, dried chilli pepper, black-eyed pea and chickpea, said MYANTRADE Director U Myo Thu.

"They made a proposal to buy basic commodities through the embassies of the two countries. The quantity of them has not been decided yet. The purchase proposals include onion, beans and chilli pepper and we have an adequate supply of them. Once they notify to purchase them, the MYANTRADE will arrange them by linking with Myanmar's commercial attaches in Sri Lanka. At the present time, onion price is dropping. Last year, Bangladesh's demand for Myanmar's onion dramatically hiked the price. Whether it is Bangladesh or Sri Lanka, we need to maintain the export market. The MYANTRADE is also making efforts to explore the new foreign markets," he added.

"At present, onion prices plunge to a low of K400 per viss (a viss equals to 1.6 kg) in the domestic market. The market is likely to raise its head upon demands of the external markets. We heard the purchase proposal from Sri Lanka and we welcome it. We are ready to export them," said Chairman U Zaw Myo Oo of Mandalay Region Kitchen Crop Producers and Exporters Association.

Additionally, Sri Lanka has purchased about 100,000 tonnes of rice three years ago under the bilateral trade agreement. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

In the battle against COVID-19 in Myanmar and Lessons to be learned from South Korea

By Professor Chaw Chaw Sein

AS the world turned red with the virus infection, people and government of Myanmar went about its normal business until 23rd March at 23:45 when the Myanmar Ministry of Health and Sports (MoHS) announced that they now have two patients tested positive with COVID-19. The authority came to discover that these two patients were overseas travelers who had been mingling within the community for some times. We woke up to the reality of the new world on the 23rd March. Even up to the 23rd March, our university went about administering exams for the first semester (which was scheduled for 18th to 31st March) of our academic year. All of that changed on the 23rd. As of April 12th, thirty eight patients have been tested with COVID-19 and three had died from the disease. Countries in the world had been grappling with this outbreak for past three months and now Myanmar has joined the ranks. When this horrendous pandemic reached the Myanmar shores, the government has been having to deal with the side-effects in addition to the health emergencies. In this circumstance, it is necessary to understand how other countries in the world are coping with this issue.

South Korea might be the most successful virus-response case study that Myanmar can learn. As global deaths from the virus surge past 70,000, South Korea has become the world's attention for its success. Korea is one of the countries with large outbreaks, alongside with China. However, it has been praised by many countries around the world due to the effective response on reducing the spread of COVID-19. The head of the World Health Organization urged countries to "apply the lessons learned in Korea and elsewhere." Many leaders around the world such as President of France, and Prime Minister of Sweden have called President of South Korea to request details of the country's measure. Korea has been in success as both "political and public will" match in the fight for this pandemic. It is noteworthy to see how Korea government and the citizens work together to reduce the spread of virus and their effective response such as widespread testing, contact tracing and early treatment that reduced number of daily confirmed case.

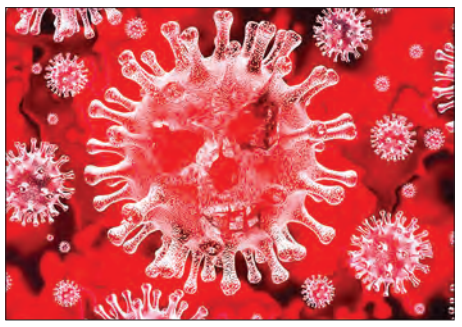
Several lessons can be drawn from Korea as some of its measures have been tremendous. Some cities were not even locked down and no restriction movements during the peak of infection. They overcome this crisis with the approach of four key concepts: speed, transparency, innovation and voluntary civic participation which are remarkable ones. South Korea has been conducting more than 10,000 test a day and as of 28 March 2020, 376,961 tests has been done. The government has also set up multiple test stations and the government training centers have been converted to COVID-19 quarantine centers. In terms of innovation, South Korea is tracking the people who are confirmed to have coronavirus by GPS. This is a kind of "live map" showing their locations and available for anyone who wish to avoid them. It is clear that using IT is a key and effective in responding the spread of COVID-19. The diagnostic tests are conducted promptly by 117 testing institutions across the nation including national quarantine stations, Korea Center for disease control, private medical labs and hospitals. The government also focuses on recovery of those infected with COVID-19 through their advanced medical care in a prompt manner. As South Korea is a democratic country, voluntary civic participation can also be seen such as social distancing, self-quarantine, frequent handwashing and wearing of face masks in combating the COVID-19.

From this point, Myanmar can also learn from South Korea to overcome this pandemic. Myanmar, like other countries in the region is trying to cope and break free from the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to tackle this crisis, the national high-level of Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of the Coronavirus Disease (CPCTCD) was formed on 13th March 2020 and is chaired by State Counsellor, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. She has started her crisis communication forum to update the populace on status of the government's response to COVID-19. She recently created her own Facebook account so as to be in touch with grass root needs. The Emergency Response Committees are also formed on 30th March in every State and Region of Myanmar to provide foods, to conduct healthcare quarantine and to give psychological support to the quarantined persons. National call center has been established on 9th April 2020 in order to get information on COVID-19. With the guidance from CPCTCD, the MoHS is now at the forefront of the fight for COVID-19. The Yangon Regional Government in collaboration with MoHS and other ministries have been preparing Civil Service Academy to transform into quarantine center which is located in Hlegu Township, Yangon Region. The religious centers, schools, and training camps are planning their facilities to house the quarantine individuals and to take in overflow of patients from the hospitals. By taking good example of Korea IT effectiveness in tracing the COVID-19 victim, Myanmar government has also been introducing diagnostic mobile application by broadcasting from radio and TV channels.

A couple wearing face masks walk through Seoul Plaza in front of the City Hall in Seoul on 23 April, 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

The pandemic has brought immediate impacts so far such as declining in tourism and business flows and disruption of air travels across the region. To address the negative impact of COVID-19 on the country's economy, Working Committee on Alleviating Economic Repercussions of COVID-19 was formed and chaired by Minister for Investment and Foreign Relations. On 9th April, the Committee started issuing COVID-19 Fund for 88 businesses as a first batch.

There came up several debates and comments from the journalists and social media on locking down the cities. Closing of some industries is negatively impacting the most vulnerable population of our society and the working poor who live hand-to-mouth on the daily basis. With the guidance from the CPCTCD, each and every State and Region in Myanmar have been donating household supplies for those who do not have regular income. The Yangon Regional Government, so far yet lock down the business city. Although there is no official order to lock down the major cities, the authorities are trying to inform the people to stay home during the Myanmar New Year holidays that lasted from 10 to 18 April 2020 in order to avoid the spread of COVID-19. This is the first ever suspension of New Year festival in my life time. As we have learned from other countries and also from Korea that have gone through this pandemic earlier than Myanmar, the community's involvement and the populace' behavior can slow down the spread of the virus and save lives.



The year 2020 is a remarkable year for Myanmar and South Korea as both will celebrate 45 years of establishing diplomatic relations. This anniversary also coincides with general elections for both countries. Korea is going ahead of voting for the election in the mid of April even though some countries are delaying due to COVID-19. It is noteworthy for Myanmar to learn how Korea will balance its obligation to both civil liberties and public health as our country will hold general election in coming November. With the aim to illustrate "a friend in need is a friend in deed", Korea Embassy in Myanmar donated medical protective equipment including surgical glove, nurse caps and test kits to MoHS on 24th March 2020. This can be understood as this donation is a part of commemorating the 45 years of friendship. A notable remark at the donation ceremony is the message from Korean Ambassador to Myanmar. It is three T which stands for Trace, Test and Treat, the effective techniques practiced by Korea government. As Korea does have an experience in effective response, management and movement control at a large scale that have gone through this pandemic earlier than Myanmar, it is an excellent opportunity for our government to exercise effective crisis communication to ensure the citizens are getting timely and accurate information. By learning the effective measures taken by Korean government as well as implementing to fight the battle of COIVD-19, we wish both Myanmar and Korea including people all over the world to escape from the prison of COVID-19 in the future.

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Daw Chaw Chaw Sein is a professor and head of the Department of International Relations at the University of Yangon.

Coronavirus news updates from around the world

• Doctors treating Boris Johnson for coronavirus had prepared to announce his death after he was taken to intensive care, the British prime minister said on Sunday, in his first detailed comments about his illness.

• Italy was spending its last day in total lockdown Sunday, but the partial easing of strict coronavirus measures after a two-month shutdown was causing anxiety and confusion rather than elation.

• Nearly 3,000 cruise ship workers quarantined aboard a liner will undergo tests for the novel coronavirus, German travel group TUI said Sunday. "Mein Schiff 3" was being used to ferry 2,899 TUI employees and crew home with both cruises and the usual means of transport in much of Europe shut down by the pandemic.

• The United States has long hailed its aid overseas as a sign of good intentions, but friends and foes alike are seeing opportunities of their own by helping the global power ravaged by the coronavirus.

• US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Sunday that there was "enormous evidence" that the coronavirus pandemic originated in a laboratory in Wuhan, China. But while highly critical of China's handling of the matter, Pompeo declined to say whether he thought the virus had been intentionally released.

Lufthansa hopeful on deal for German state aid

Europe's biggest airline group Lufthansa said Sunday it was close to a deal with the German government on state aid to ease the impact of the coronavirus crisis.

The group, which warns it is bleeding cash and might have to declare insolvency, had appeared to be stalled in its bid for up to 10 billion euros ($11 billion) in aid, according to a report in the weekly Der Spiegel.

But in a note from Lufthansa directors to staff seen by AFP, the company said it has held "intense and constructive exchanges" with the German government on the financial help.

Women face increased risk of sex attacks on France's deserted streets

For many women venturing out during France's coronavirus lockdown, the absence of crowds has made them easier targets for sexual assault and harassment, a threat that could increase as officials prepare to ease stay-at-home orders.

Feminist advocacy groups are reporting an increase of incidents in broad daylight by aggressors who know their victims are unlikely to be able to summon help.

Fatima Benomar, a 36-year-old rights activist, said she was hounded by several youths on the Rue de Rivoli in Paris, a wide-open thoroughfare that has been emptied of cars and passers-by.

Italy reports lowest toll since first day of lockdown

Italy reported 174 new coronavirus deaths on Sunday, its lowest toll since 168 fatalities were registered when the country's stay-at-home orders were imposed on 10 March.

The Mediterranean country's toll on the eve of its first easing of lockdown measures on Monday officially stands at 28,884, second only to the United States.

French drivers fined for crossing Luxembourg border to buy fuel and cigarettes

Police monitored the A31 for three hours on Saturday, and among the 300 drivers inspected, 37 were breaching Covid-19 travel restrictions.

According to Lorraine media outlets, offenders crossed the borders to restock on fuel and cigarettes despite the ongoing lockdown and travel restrictions.

Commissioner Bordereau explained to the Républicain Lorrain that the roads were significantly quieter due to the restrictions with 50% fewer drivers on the streets.

Florida man dresses as Grim Reaper to protest opening of beaches

Florida's governor Ron DeSantis announced last Friday that state parks will reopen in the near future. The decision was not welcomed by everyone...

Florida attorney and campaigner Daniel Uhlfelder morphed into the Grim Reaper to stalk public beaches. He took the metaphorically coloured decision to raise awareness about the potential pitfalls of reopening Florida's economy too soon while the novel coronavirus still poses considerable threat.

Footage of interviews with the personification of death and pictures posted on social media quickly went viral. Uhlfelder told CNN that "we aren't at the point now where we have enough testing, enough data, enough preparation for what's going to be coming to our state from all over the world from this pandemic.

UAE airlines say years needed to restore demand

Top executives of Emirates and Etihad, two of the Middle East's biggest airlines, have said passenger demand may not return to pre-coronavirus crisis levels until 2023.

About 85 percent of the world's airlines could face financial distress by the end of the year without government aid, Emirates President Tim Clark and Etihad CEO Tony Douglas told a video conference hosted by the US-UAE Business Council last week.

Clark and Douglas reiterated their beliefs that until an effective vaccine for the COVID-19 respiratory disease becomes widely available, how passengers fly will be different, a statement by the council said.

Lasting restrictions like 14-day quarantines, testing, and social distancing will impact demand and operations, they said.

World's tallest tower to light up with coronavirus donations

One pixel at a time, Dubai will light up the facade of the world's tallest building to represent each donation made to relieve coronavirus-hit communities across the United Arab Emirates.

The Burj Khalifa, which stands 828 metres (2,717 feet) high, will be transformed into the "world's tallest donation box" as part of a campaign to provide 10 million meals to low-income people.

The appeal comes during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, a time of self-reflection, prayer and charity for the faithful.

Florida attorney and campaigner Daniel Uhlfelder morphed into the Grim Reaper to stalk public beaches. **PHOTO: AFP**

Kunio Hayakawa, a fishmonger, poses in his shop in Tokyo on April 21, 2020. Hayakawa decided to keep his shop open, because he wanted to do "everything for Shinagawa people." He said there were no changes due to the virus, with the same number of customers, and that he "will stay open until the end" of the crisis, or until the government says otherwise. **PHOTO: AFP**

Nearly quarter of a million dead

The novel coronavirus has killed at least 243,637 people since the outbreak first emerged in China last December, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP at 1100 GMT on Sunday.

More than 3,441,540 cases were registered in 195 countries and territories. Of these, at least 1,055,500 are now considered recovered.

The tallies, using data collected by AFP from national authorities and information from the World Health Organization (WHO), probably reflect only a fraction of the actual number of infections.

Many countries are testing only the most serious cases. The United States has the highest number of total deaths with 66,385 out of 1,133,069 cases. At least 175,382 have been declared recovered.

Italy has the second highest toll with 28,710 deaths out of 209,328 cases, followed by Britain with 28,131 deaths from 182,260 cases, Spain 25,264 deaths and 217,466 cases and France with 24,760 deaths and 168,396 cases.

Belgium has the highest proportion of fatalities per population with about 67 deaths per 100,000 people, followed by Spain with 54, Italy with 47, Britain with 41 and France 38. China — excluding Hong Kong and Macau — has to date declared 4,633 deaths and 82,877 cases. It has 77,713 recovered cases. Europe has a total of 142,611 deaths from 1,535,203 cases, the United States and Canada have 70,018 deaths and 1,189,649 cases, Latin America and the Caribbean have 13,156 deaths and 246,581 cases, Asia has 9,061 deaths and 237,852 cases, the Middle East has 6,929 deaths and 181,730 cases, Africa has 1,740 deaths from 42,408 cases, and Oceania 122 deaths from 8,125 cases.

SOURCE: AFP

4 MAY 2020
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Sign up for the fight against COVID-19

To win the war against the spread of COVID-19 in our country, we need to mobilise faster than before to win the battle against the disease.

To do this, the Union Government has been inviting volunteers to take part in community-based facility quarantine services ,which require assistance from well-trained volunteers.

With the return of some 50 Myanmar migrant workers from Thailand yesterday, the Union Government resumed its well-practiced acceptance process. Only when the returnees from foreign countries are quarantined systematically, following the health guidelines, can we put our country on its current success trajectory to contain the COVID-19 disease.

> Only when the returnees from foreign countries are quarantined systematically, following the health guidelines, can we put our country on its current success trajectory to contain the COVID-19 disease.

The government hoped the number of returnees from foreign countries would exceed 100,000, with most arriving from Thailand and Malaysia.

The Union Government has requested the assistance of civil service societies and individual volunteers. Under the umbrella of the National Volunteer Corps, they will also be equipped with protective gear while volunteering.

We would like to urge those who have specialist expertise or skills to provide online courses and workshops in areas such as sports, arts, languages, health or how to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Meanwhile, mental health professionals who have experience with senior citizens are also welcomed to take part.

As the rainy season is drawing near, the online teaching courses for the volunteers should also focus on other diseases, such as waterborne diseases, influenza, leptospirosis and dengue fever, which occur in the rainy season.

The responsibilities of volunteers should include providing support in medical and allied health practice and public health awareness, and other services, depending upon the situation at the quarantine centres.

They are required to work for the entire period of 21 days. They will also have to live at specific places for the 7-day recreation. They will have to do this work for a total of 28 days at least one time.

They are warmly invited to provide time, labour, skills and expertise.

We are confident that these measures would bring out the best in Myanmar citizens by giving them direction and opportunities to contribute in the war against COVID-19.

Fourth Year Performances of the Union Attorney General Office: Working towards better rule of law and access to justice by all

By Naing Lin Kyi
Photo: Thaw Phone Khant

"Rule of law is the basic foundation for the emergence of democratic system. The government has formed a team to combine the rule of law and the justice matters in 2017.

STEPPING ahead with the three aim and objective namely that of providing legal protection to the people; that of creating better condition of rule of law; and that of access to justice by all citizens; the Union Attorney General (UAG) Office has successfully vetted (130) bills and gave suggestions on them. Moreover, (296) assortments of by-laws, rules, notifications, orders, instructions, and procedures have been scrutinized and gave suggestions during the fourth year period.

Despite the heavy work load, the UAG Office has dealt with (1,473) legal documents and (540) general documents, and provided suggestions. Moreover, legal advice has been provided before the actual prosecutions and trials, and that the UAG Office acted as legal representation of behalf of the government.

On regular basis, the UAG is always there in helping hand to other ministries and also to the Supreme Court of the Union on legal matters.

"Rule of law is the basic foundation for the emergence of democratic system. The government has formed a team to combine the rule of law and the justice matters in 2017. A strategic project 2019 – 2023 in the name of "Justice for People" was released in January 2019. Among the team and the states / regions, there were (179) cases of complaints and submissions. The matters have been settled. There were (34) rounds of discussions taken place," Union Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo explained.

On the other hand, the UAG Office has released the strategy namely "Towards the Rule of Law" for 2015 – 2019. After review, the second five year strategy 2020 – 2024 was laid down.

Legal advice and recommendations have been provided to the Supreme Court of the Union in connection with the advocates and lawyers, including the cases over the breach of ethic and morality whether to take action or otherwise.

"Bill to amend the Bar Council Act was discussed and approved in Amyotha Hluttaw and is now being prepared for discussion and approval in Pyithu Hluttaw. Once the bill to amend the Act is enacted as law, Bar Council will be expanded to 15 members and will include up to 11 Supreme Court lawyers. Supreme Court lawyers are urged to raise their capacity and value their ethic and morality so that the people obtain a fair justice," said the Union Attorney General.

Propagation of knowledge on law

With as view to propagate knowledge on law, the UAG Office is publishing motley assortments of law books.

Interesting law knowledge propagation is that the law website being uploaded by the UAG Office. The Myanmar Law Information System (MLIS) is a website providing service of the Myanmar law information. It has more than (510,000) visitors.

Translation of existing law

Another interesting point is the translation of law. The existing laws written in English have been translated into Myanmar. There are (81) laws that needs to be translated into Myanmar, and so far (20) laws have been translated.

On 14 February 2020, the "Criminal Investigation and Prosecution Committee" held their first meeting at the office of the Union Attorney-General. The final report of "the Independent Commission of Enquiry" (ICOE) said crimes have been committed during those conflicts in 13 areas of Maungtaw, Buthidaung and Yethedaung townships. The UAG Office said they are to investigate into these alleged crimes and pursue legal action where required. He said this committee was formed with Order 19/2020 from the President's office on 24 January 2020.

UAG U Tun Tun Oo, who is also chairman of the committee, first said ARSA attacked police outposts, police stations and a Tatmadaw battalion in northern Rakhine State on 25 August 2017. ARSA and security forces then clashed after this.

The final report of the Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) said crimes have been committed during those conflicts in 13 areas of Maungtaw, Buthidaung and Yethedaung townships. The crimes were said to have been committed by ARSA and its affiliates and by security forces and civilians. The UAG Office has formed relevant legal aid teams to assist in the matter.

Legal service to emerge

The Universal Periodic Review(UPR) is a mechanism of the United Nations Human Rights Council that emerged from the 2005 UN reform process. Myanmar communicated UPR in 2011 and 2015, and that Myanmar received (281) recommendations (166) suggestions from (93) countries. The third draft is ready to be submitted to the national level committee.

In various legal spheres, the UAG Office is lending hand including the legislative, administrative and judicial pillars, concentrated with the intent for the emergence of a system offering legal service to the public.

Legal advice and suggestions over the draft bills prepared by other ministries have been responded officially by the relevant departments of the UAG Office.

"Advice and suggestions on the intended law are being provided after consideration on many faceted such as that of in conformity with the existing policies; that of inline with the interest of the people; that of in agreement with the international convention; that of no negative impact on the sovereignty of the nation," said Deputy AG U Win Myint.

Two parts in a law

With regards to a law, there are two portions such as that of the "Theme portion of the law" and "Writing format portion of the law", and therefore, the UAG Office is paying greater attention on the portion of writing format to be accurate and precise.

The UAG Office is properly handling on all the drafts with regards to laws as well as the by-laws, rules and regulations, notifications, orders, instructions, procedures, being sent from other ministries and departments. In November 2019, the UAG Office published the "Legislative Drafting Guidance".

Elimination of Child Labor

The 37-member Myanmar National Committee on Child Labor Eradication, led by the Vice President (1), was formed by Notification No. 23/2018 dated 5 February 2018 from the Office of the President.

"Main responsibility of the legal affairs committee is to draft the bill and submit to national committee, and that necessary meetings were conducted with relevant organizations for three occasions, and discussed on various aspects. Cooperation and collaboration are the key components in the process," explained U Win Myint.

The Union Attorney-General's Office launches a guidebook for drafting bills at the Kempinski Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on 28 November, 2019.

U Tun Tun Oo
(Union Attorney General)

Accelerating cooperation among lawyers

Established in 1979, initiated by Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines, the ASEAN Law Association (ALA) is a non-governmental organization that brings together the ASEAN legal fraternity of judges, government and practicing lawyers and teachers of law. The ALA is providing assistances in legal matters of the region.

Myanmar joins ALA

Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo, in his capacity as Chairman of the ASEAN Law Association (Myanmar), attended the association's meeting No. 1/2019 at his office's meeting hall on 31 May 2019. Speaking at the meeting, the Union Attorney-General said the ALA was formed during the "Legal Development in ASEAN Countries Conference" in Jakarta, Indonesia in February 1979 from a proposal to form a lawyers' network for the ASEAN region.

He said this association works closely with the ASEAN Law Ministers Meeting while simultaneously promoting co-operation between law officials within ASEAN and participating in regional law affairs.

The UAG said Myanmar became a member to ALA on 18 February 2012 and formed the Myanmar branch in line with ALA's directives.

"Myanmar National Committee was reorganized in September 2014 with new members. It was

SEE PAGE-10

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 4:00 pm Sunday 03rd May, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (13:30) hrs M.S.T today, the low pressure area over the South Andaman Sea and adjoining Southeast Bay of Bengal remain stationary in current condintion. Weather is a few cloud over Central Bay and partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 04th May, 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Shan, Chin, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States and scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions, Kachin State and isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5-8) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of isolated to scattered rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Northern Shan, Chin, Kayin and Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 04th May, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 04th May, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 04th May, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

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.).—
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Fourth-Year Performances of the Union Attorney General Office: Working towards better rule of law and access to justice by all

FROM PAGE-9

again reorganized in April 2019, and held its first meeting. It raised the cooperation in legal sphere, and help assist in the rule of law," said Deputy AG U Win Myint.

"The first strategy 2015 – 2019 was adopted with the motto, "Moving forward to the Rule of Law". At that time, due to lack of expertise and expertise, there was no "baseline" drawn. At the time of monitoring and evaluation in 2019, unexpected achievements are being realized.

"We have accomplished in establishing a "System" that is amazingly instrumental and helpful to the users in the law sphere to have access on laws, by-laws, orders, and procedures. As the system could provide wide ranging data and information, we could accomplish various tasks with regards to the law related topics," explained Permanent Secretary Dr. Thida Oo.

Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo addresses the work Committee meeting on Drafting the National Land Law and Harmonization of Laws Related with Land Management in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 December, 2019.

U Win Myint
(Deputy Attorney-General)

New strategy

First strategy was completed in 2019, and that the new strategy 2020 – 2024 would be released soon. The main focus is to win the trust of the people and to reform in the justice approach.

"For the effective and successful achievement of the tasks of UAG Office, the expertise and skills of the officers and the staff members are very much vital and critical. Therefore, they have been imparted with varied and wide ranging training courses. On top of that newly innovated teaching methodology is in the pipeline," the Permanent Secretary said.

Laws vetting and Advisory Department at the UAG Office has many divisions overseeing the issues of laws. During the fourth year period, the department has provided with relevant advice and suggestions over the legal documents sent from government departments. Detailed vetting has been done on the legal documents before sending back to the relevant departments.

"With regards to the laws written in English, the translation tasks were shouldered by the UAG as Chairman, and I took the duty as Secretary of the Committee. We accomplished the translation tasks on (24) laws," explained Director-General Dr. Swe Swe Aung.

During the fourth year period, the guidebook for drafting bills has been published with the assistance of the UNDP.

"Training course on law subject translation task has been convened twice with the assistance of British Council and the My Justice Program under the aegis of the EU. The publishing of 'Translation Guide Book' is in the process. Moreover, the UAG and I have been working in the implementation of national land use policy related to laws connected with the land management," said Director-General Dr. Swe Swe Aung.

The work committee convened two workshops by inviting all stakeholders, and the outcome of the workshops have been compiled into a final draft, and that the public would be informed in soliciting advice their advice.

"The legal advisory department is formed with three divisions, and the department is offering legal advice on regular cases with miscellaneous nature," explained Director-General Dr. Thi Thi Myint.

During the fourth year period, the UAG Office has dealt with the matters with regards to International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

"In some of the documents that we have had vetted involved 'Consultant Contract' in connection with the Bagan historic sites. We replied with legal suggestions on these consultant matters and also on 'Nomination Dossier," explained Director-General.

The UAG office has provided the suggestions on the land lease agreement document with regards to Dawei Special Economic Zone.

The Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone Management Committee and the CITIC Consortium are planning to sign an agreement. The documents are the "Concession Agreement (Draft)" and the "Shareholder's Agreement (Draft)" with regards to the project, and that due reply have been given back.

UAG Office is cooperating with the JICA in legal matters, and that meetings and training course were conducted at (11) states / regions. "Contract Manual Guideline" will be published soon in collaboration with JICA.

"We are trying our best to offer good suggestions and recommendations in all the legal documents in the context of investments and commercial matters," said Director-General Dr. Thi Thi Myint.

"The UAG office is rendering necessary legal representation in connection with the Union level organizations, ministries, departments, the Supreme Court of the Union, the Union Election Commission, the Constitutional Tribunals Commission," said Director-General Daw Phu Mar Wai.

Expediting cases

New system has been implemented in the "case management" and the "document management" with the assistance of the USAID. Moreover, (8) units of "Pilot Law Office" have been opened, and that the cases were being expedited in their disposals.

In the concluding part of the interview, "Capacity building of officers of different ministries and departments and law officers of legal departments has been realized by convening (7) rounds of workshops being arranged by the 'Special Prosecution Unit' constituted with the Director-General of Prosecution and Case Proceeding Department and (24) law Officers, in dealing with the cross border crimes," said Director-General Daw Phu Mar Wai.

In summing up, the UAG Office is dashing ahead while working towards better rule of law in the country.

Translated by UMT (Ahlon)

The Deputy Attorney General U Win Myint attends and delivers the speech at the opening ceremony of the Refresher Course for Law Officers on 11 June, 2019.

FUTURAMA

Robots and cameras: China's sci-fi quarantine watch

ROBOTS delivering meals, ghostly figures in hazmat suits and cameras pointed at front doors: China's methods to enforce coronavirus quarantines have looked like a sci-fi dystopia for legions of people.

Authorities have taken drastic steps to ensure that people do not break isolation rules after China largely tamed the virus that had paralysed the country for months.

With cases imported from abroad threatening to unravel China's progress, travellers arriving from overseas have been required to stay home or in designated hotels for 14 days.

Beijing loosened the rule in the capital this week — except for those arriving from abroad and Hubei, the province where the virus first surfaced late last year.

Robots are helping care for coronavirus patients in isolation. **PHOTO: AFP**

At one quarantine hotel in central Beijing, a guard sits at a desk on each floor to monitor all movements.

The solitude is broken by one of the few visitors allowed near the rooms: A three-foot-tall cylindrical robot that delivers water bottles, meals and packages to hotel guests. The robot rides the elevator and navigates hallways on its own to minimise contact between guests and human staff. When the robot arrives at its destination, it dials the landline phone in the room and informs the occupant in an eerie, childlike voice: "Hello, this is your service robot. Your order has arrived outside your room."

Its belly opens and the guest takes the delivery items before the robot turns and rolls away.

Doctors in hazmat suits go from room to room daily reminding occupants, including an AFP journalist who had been in Hubei, to take their temperatures with the mercury thermometer provided at check-in, and to ask if any are experiencing symptoms.

People under home quarantine elsewhere in the city have had silent electronic alarms installed on their doors.

Officials put up a notice on each quarantined household's door asking neighbours to keep an eye on the confined inhabitants. In one Beijing residential compound, officials told AFP that people under home quarantine must inform community volunteers whenever they open their doors.

SOURCE: AFP

CRITICAL FOR IMMUNE FUNCTION

Nutrient Supplements Might Help In Fighting Against COVID-19, Says Study

A new study conducted by the researchers of the Oregon State University, suggests that supplements of Vitamin C and other micronutrients may help the human immune system in fighting Coronavirus.

The study has been published in the journal - Nutrients - and it suggests that supplements rich in vitamins C and D and other micronutrients, sometimes in amounts exceeding the federally recommended levels, are a safe, effective and low-cost means of helping the human immune system fight off COVID-19 and other acute respiratory tract diseases. Adrian Gombart of OSU's Linus Pauling Institute and collaborators at the University of Southampton (United Kingdom), the University of Otago (New Zealand) and University Medical Center (The Netherlands) say public health officials should issue a clear set of nutritional recommendations to complement messages about the role of handwashing and vaccinations in preventing the spread of infections.

"Around the world, acute respiratory tract infections kill more than 2.5 million people every year," said Gombart, professor of biochemistry and biophysics in the OSU College of Science and a principal investigator at the Linus Pauling Institute.

"Meanwhile, there's a wealth of data that shows the role that good nutrition plays in supporting the immune system. As a society we need to be doing a better job of getting that message across along with the other important, more common messages," Gombart added.

Specific vitamins, minerals, and fatty acids have key jobs to play in helping your immune system, he says. In particular vitamin C, vitamin D, zinc, and an omega-3 fatty acid found in fish, docosahexaenoic acid, also known as DHA, are critical for immune function.

Omega-3 fatty acids are a class of essential fats that the human body cannot make (hence their classification as essential) and must be obtained from the diet. **PHOTO: AFP**

"The roles that vitamins C and D play in immunity are particularly well known. Vitamin C has roles in several aspects of immunity, including the growth and function of immune cells and antibody production," he said.

"Vitamin D receptors on immune cells also affect their function. This means that vitamin D profoundly influences your response to infections.

SOURCE: ANI

ROLLS-ROYCE: Visitors look at the Rolls-Royce Trent XWB engine displayed during the Singapore Airshow in Singapore on February 11, 2020. **PHOTO :AFP**

A GIGANTIC IMPACT

Virus impact puts thousands of jobs risk at Rolls-Royce

THOUSANDS of jobs could be at risk at British aircraft engine manufacturer Rolls-Royce, which on Sunday said it was in talks with unions about the impact of the coronavirus outbreak on operations.

As many as 8,000 jobs could be affected, according to one person familiar with the matter, as the firm grappled with what it said was the "unprecedented" fall-out from the global pandemic.

"We have taken swift action to increase our liquidity, dramatically reducing our spending in 2020, and strengthen our resilience in these exceptionally challenging times," a spokesman said.

"But we will need to take further action," he added.

The company, which has 50,000 staff in 50 countries, including some 24,000 in the UK, is working with employee and union representatives.

Further details on job losses would be given to staff before the end of the month, the spokesman said. The global aviation industry has been badly affected by the outbreak, forcing flights to be cancelled because of lack of demand and restrictions on travel.

SOURCE: AFP

North and South Korea exchange gunfire at border: Seoul

SEOUL — North Korean troops fired multiple gunshots towards the South in the DMZ dividing the peninsula on Sunday, prompting South Korean forces to fire back, Seoul said.

The rare exchange of gunfire comes a day after North Korean state media reported that leader Kim Jong Un had made his first public appearance in nearly three weeks following an absence that triggered intense speculation about his health and fears about the stability of the isolated nation.

A South Korean guard post was hit by several shots from the North, the joint chiefs of staff (JCS) in Seoul said in a statement, adding no casualties were reported in the South.

"Our military responded with two rounds of gunfire and a warning announcement," the JCS said.

The Demilitarized Zone dividing North and South Korea is one of the most fortified places in the world. **PHOTO: AFP**

The South Korean military later said the North Korean gunshots were "not deemed intentional", according to the Yonhap news agency.

The two neighbours remain technically at war, after fighting in the Korean War was halted with an armistice in 1953.

Despite its name, the demilitarized zone is one of the most fortified places on earth, replete with minefields and barbed-wire fences. The last time the two sides exchanged fire on the border was in 2014, with North Korean soldiers also shooting at a defector in 2017 but the South did not fire back.

Swirling health rumours

Easing military tensions on their border was one of the agreements reached between Kim and South Korean President Moon Jae-in at a summit in Pyongyang in September 2018.

But most of the deals have not been acted on by North Korea, with Pyongyang largely cutting off contact with Seoul.

North Korea's discussions with the United States over Pyongyang's nuclear arsenal are also at a standstill, despite three meetings between Kim and US President Donald Trump. — AFP ■

India's military salutes virus workers with rose petals, flypasts

NEW DELHI — Helicopters showered masked health workers with rose petals and jets roared across the skies Sunday as India's military paid tribute to frontline workers battling the coronavirus pandemic.

Petals fell on to the upturned faces of medical personnel clad in protective gear. **PHOTO: AFP**

In one of the first of several gestures on Sunday, petals fell on to the upturned faces of medical personnel clad in protective gear as an army band played patriotic tunes including "Jai Ho" (May victory prevail) from the popular Slumdog Millionaire film.

In several states and territories across the vast nation of 1.3 billion people, fighter jets and transport aircraft in formations took part in low-flying aerial salutes to thank the country's so-called "corona warriors".

"The entire nation stands united in these challenging times," Defence Minister Rajnath Singh tweeted Sunday as he praised the "commendable work" of the "frontline warriors", including police which have been enforcing the nationwide virus lockdown in place since late March.

The navy will light up its ships off the sub-continent's shores when night falls as part of the tributes.

The performances were the third public show of gratitude to health and other frontline workers, after Indians took part in nationwide clapping and lamp lighting efforts led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on previous Sundays.

The lockdown was extended for another two weeks by the government on Friday, although some restrictions were lifted in regions that have lower numbers of virus cases.— AFP ■

Health official warns of epidemic rebound risks

BEIJING — The number of existing confirmed COVID-19 cases on the Chinese mainland had dropped for 11 consecutive days as of Saturday, a Chinese health official said Sunday.

The mainland reported 12 new asymptomatic cases on Saturday, the lowest figure since the daily report on COVID-19 cases included this figure, said Mi Feng, a spokesperson for the National Health Commission, at a press conference in Beijing.

However, 10 provincial-level regions had reported new locally transmitted cases or asymptomatic cases over the last 14 days, which highlighted that risks of a resurgence and even spread of the epidemic still existed, Mi noted. "We need to keep highly vigilant and make epidemic prevention and control a part of our regular work agenda while advancing efforts to resume production and daily life," Mi added. —Xinhua ■

A tourist poses for a selfie in front of the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests at the Temple of Heaven in Beijing, 29 April, 2020. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

NEWS In BRIEF

COVID-19 cases in Indonesia surpass 11,000

JAKARTA — The Indonesian government on Sunday announced 349 new confirmed cases of COVID-19, bringing the total number of infections in the country to 11,192.

There were also 14 new deaths, taking the total number of fatalities to 845, the government's spokesperson for the COVID-19-related matters Achmad Yurianto said at a press conference.

Yurianto added that as many as 211 more people have been discharged from hospital after their recoveries, taking the total number of recovered patients to 1,876. — Xinhua ■

US threatens Taliban with retaliatory actions if violence in Afghanistan continues

KABUL — The US military called on the parties to the conflict in Afghanistan to settle the disagreements through political means and threatened with retaliatory actions if the Taliban militants did not reduce the scale of violence, Col. Sonny Leggett, spokesman for US forces in Afghanistan, said on Saturday.

Leggett sent a two-page letter to the Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid, posted on Twitter. According to the US side, all parties must embark on the path of a "political solution" to the conflict, urging Afghans to sit down and start discussing the country`s future.

"Reducing violence is an absolute necessity--and this is up to the leaders of all military forces — [Afghan National Security Forces] ANDSF, Taliban fighters and, yes, the Coalition. Attacks generate attacks, while restraint produces restraint. All sides must choose restraint to prevent more killing and violence," Leggett wrote on Twitter.

The Taliban spokesman responded to the call on his social media account, saying that the path to resolution of the conflict "lies in the implementation of the agreement concluded in Doha." He also called upon Washington not to "harm the current state of things".—ANI ■

A formation of the Thunderbirds and Blue Angels fly over the National Mall in Washington D.C., the United States, on 2 May, 2020. The US Navy's Blue Angels and US Air Force's Thunderbirds honored frontline COVID-19 responders and essential workers with formation flights over here on Saturday. **PHOTO :XINHUA**

Flyover around Washington D.C. salutes healthcare workers fighting COVID-19

WASHINGTON — The US Navy Blue Angels and US Air Force Thunderbirds conducted a flyover on Saturday in Washington D.C., Northern Virginia and Prince George's County in Maryland in support of the frontline healthcare workers fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

The show is one of a series of flyovers the squadrons have been making around the country.

The 20-minute Washington D.C. flyover, which followed one in Baltimore of Maryland earlier in the day, started at 11:45 am. Eastern Time in Prince George's County of Maryland. The planes then hovered around Montgomery County of Maryland and headed into Northern Virginia via Arlington.

After passing over Fairfax City, the planes looped back in Prince William County, and then flew toward the National Mall in the downtown D.C. area, where the flyover was brought to an end at around 12:05 pm.

Saturday's flyover was part of the "America Strong" tour, which President Donald Trump announced at a recent news conference.

"What we are doing is paying tribute to our front-line health care workers confronting COVID, and it's really a signal to all Americans to remain vigilant during the outbreak," Trump said at an 22 April news briefing.

"Operation America Strong was the idea of our great military men and women — the Thunderbirds and the Blue Angels crews who wanted to show support to the American medical workers who, just like military members in a time of war, are fiercely running toward the fight," said the president. — Xinhua ■

UK COVID-19 deaths top 28,000 as government pledges support for "most vulnerable"

LONDON — Another 621 COVID-19 patients have died in Britain, bringing the total coronavirus-related death toll in the country to 28,131, Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick said Saturday.

The figures include deaths in hospitals, care homes and the wider community.

Chairing Saturday's Downing Street briefing, Jenrick said 182,260 people have tested positive for the novel coronavirus in Britain. Meanwhile, 105,937 tests were carried out on Friday, Jenrick said. British Health Secretary Matt Hancock said Friday that the country has met the goal of 100,000 tests per day.

The communities secretary also announced a package of 76 million pounds (about 95 million US dollars) to support "the most vulnerable" in society.

A veteran wearing a Royal Hospital Chelsea hat, and in PPE (personal protective equipment) of a face mask, as a precautionary measure against COVID-19, stands outside the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital in London. **PHOTO :AFP**

The fund would go to charities to address such issues as domestic abuse, vulnerable children and modern-day slavery, he said.

Jenny Harries, England's deputy chief medical officer, confirmed that "the pressure on the NHS (National Health Service) is now moving down" as the number of hospital admissions has been declining. The number of people in hospitals has decreased by 13 percent in the last week, she said.— Xinhua ■

Europe prepares to ease lockdowns as signs pandemic ebbing

ROME — European nations on Sunday prepared for further cautious easing of coronavirus restrictions following signs the pandemic

may be slowing, with hard-hit Italy set to follow Spain in allowing people outside after weeks of confinement.

More than 243,000 people have been killed and 3.4 million infected worldwide by the virus, which has left half of humanity under some form of lockdown and pushed the global economy towards its worst downturn since the Great Depression.

With signs that the spread of the disease is coming under control, parts of Europe, Asia and the United States have begun to lift restrictions to try to inject life into economies crippled by weeks of closures and ease the pressure on populations weary of confinement.

In Europe, some cafes and restaurants are open for take away service only. **PHOTO: AFP**

After a two-month lockdown, Italians on Monday will be allowed to stroll in parks and visit relatives. Restaurants can open for takeaways and wholesale stores can resume business, but there was some confusion about the extent of the easing.

Romans were doing aerobics on their rooftop terraces and exercising indoors on Sunday and the squares in the city centre were mostly empty on the last day Italians were obliged to remain within 200 metres of their homes.

"On the one hand, we're super excited for the reopening, we're already organising various activities the kids will be able to do with their grandparents outdoors, workshops in the garden, that sort of thing.

The kids can't wait to see them," said Rome resident Marghe Lodoli, who has three children.—AFP ■

Confusion as Italy prepares to ease lockdown

ROME — Italy was spending its last day in total lockdown Sunday, but the partial easing of strict coronavirus measures after a two-month shutdown was causing anxiety and confusion rather than elation.

Across the country, attempts to make plans for the first day of freedom were hampered by uncertainty over the rules. The government has a list of permitted activities, but regions are also making up their own regulations.

"I'm hoping this morning's paper will clear it up. I want to take my old mum to the sea-side, can I?" asked 53-year old cleaner Pietro Garlanti as he queued patiently in the sun at a kiosk in the capital's historic centre.

In this first stage, Italy's 60 million inhabitants will be able to move more freely within their own regions, visiting relatives, going to the re-opened parks with their children and going cycling or running further from home.—AFP ■

Dolphin in the Ayeyarwaddy River. **PHOTO : WCS MYANMAR**

Make a safe environment for dolphins as a source of tourism sector

By Maung Thar
(archaeology research)

I WAS excited as I sat in hull of the small boat that was paddled along the flowing Ayeyawady River. I was sitting between two fishermen, one at the bow and another at the stern of the boat as they skilfully rowed and guided the boat.

Ko Tha Chan sitting at the bow was striking the boat hull rhythmically with a short stick. The stick was like a drumstick used on a drum set in a rock band.

"If they are around and hear the sound of my stick, they'll come" he said. So I kept my gaze on the water that has yet to show anything yet. I was with the two fishermen between Mingun and Kyaukmyaung in the Ayeyawady River hoping to see the world famous Ayeyawady dolphins working together with the local fishermen to catch fish. This is the home of the Ayeyawady dolphins where the fishermen befriended and worked with them.

Dolphin lovers from all over the world come to this place to see fishermen and dolphin cooperating to catch fish.

"They remember the way I strike the stick. We fishermen has different way of striking a stick and a dolphin associated to a fisherman respond to the particular way a fisherman strikes a stick. It is like a fisherman having a specific dolphin as a friend or a partner and that dolphin respond to that fisherman." What Ko Pan Sein said as he rowed the boat from the stern was quite interesting.

Of the ten fishing villages between Mingun and Kyaukmyaung, fishermen from villages of Sin Kyun, Aye Kyun, Sein Pan Gon, Myit Kan Gyi, Hinthama, Se The and Myit Soon fish in cooperation with dolphins. A fishing boat had two fishermen with one rowing the boat and another handling the net. The rower had two oars, a short one and a long one. The short one was used for normal rowing while the long one was used as a pushing pole when the boat was in shallow water.

"There are a lot of fishermen but the dolphin remembers the specific fisherman it works together with. Of course it didn't remember the fisherman as a person but in a way the fisherman strikes the stick. On our part we remember our dolphin as they have different faces!" said the two as I was kept in awe by their words.

Even though some time went by and not a dolphin came into view even though Ko Tha Chan was striking his stick regularly.

"We just have to seek out where they are this way. If we can't find them we asked those on shore about them. As the dolphins stay in a group and they regularly went up to the surface to breath, those on shore usually could see them. It looks like my dolphins are not here. Don't worry, we'll find them," he said.

Dolphins are mammals and they couldn't stay beneath the water for long and they came up to the surface to breath. As they breathe, they blow out waters so the fishermen were said to be able to identify their partner dolphin at sight. An average Ayeyawady dolphin is six feet long and had a circumference of about four feet.

As our boat approaches a sandbank near the middle of the river suddenly we saw two dolphins poking their heads out of the water. Ko Tha Chan immediately said, "Those are my dolphins. They're here because they heard the sound of my sticks. My group had three dolphins. Just watch, they'll signal once they find fish."

As he said that a dolphin stuck a tail fin straight up the water surface and then hit the water with a big splash. Ko Tha Chan said this was a signal to follow it and rowed the boat to follow the dolphins.

Soon the dolphin stuck a tail fin straight up again. This was

another signal to prepare for casting the net as it had found fishes beneath the water said Ko Tha Chan who then stood up in preparation to cast his net.

The dolphin leader that had stuck a tail fin was then seen swimming in a circle while other dolphins were doing the same. They were said to be circling the fishes tighter and tighter into a small circle and once the fishes were huddled together, the dolphin wiggles it tail fin above the surface of the water which was an indication to cast the net.

As the lead weighted net was casted fishes remaining outside the casted net were feasted upon by the dolphins. The dolphins were said to never feast on the fishes in the net as they seems to have an understanding with the fishermen that the one in the net was for the fishermen while only fishes outside the net was theirs. They also have the uncanny knack of indicating to cast the net at a shallow depth so that some fishes remains outside the net for them rather than having the whole school of fish caught in the net if it was casted in deep water.

As I looked in wonder at the way the two fishermen and dolphins cooperate to catch fish, my thoughts drifted toward the dolphins.

Documentaries on Ayeyawady dolphins and fishermen cooperating to fish were shot and screened by television stations from Japan and Germany in 2007 and 2008 making the world knew more about these animals.

In the world dolphins, whales and dugongs were the only mammals to live in the water. Of the more than 30 dolphin species in the world, Ayeyawady dolphins are the only freshwater dolphin and were zoological called Orcaella brevirostris.

The earliest record of Ayeyawady dolphin was made by Sir Richard Owen who found it in the harbour of Visakhapatnam on the east coast of India. From 1871 to 1879 an English Naturalist John Anderson explored along Ayeyawady River and found the Ayeyawady dolphins for the first time in its namesake river. On his return to England, he read a paper titled "Description of a new cetacean from the Irrawaddy River, Burma" at Zoological Society of London where he used the term Ayeyawady (Irrawaddy) dolphin for the dolphin he found. Later, when same species were found elsewhere, they were also called Ayeyawady dolphin.

Professor G.H. Luce published a research paper titled Ancient Pyu in the Journal of Burma Research Society vol. 27, Part III (1937). Among the writings of Tang Dynasty on the Pyu, a word "River Pig" was used to describe an animal in the Ayeyawady River which is most likely the Ayeyawady Dolphin indicating that the animal has been thriving in the river for more than a thousand years.

Ayeyawady dolphins were found not only in Myanmar but also at Chika Lake in Odisha State, India; Mahakan River, Borneo Island, Indonesia; Songkla Lake in Thailand and in the Mekong River. Anderson recorded his sighting of Ayeyawady Dolphin in Ayeyawady River between Yenangyaung and Bhamo but was now only found in upper Mingun area.

Six locations along the 275 miles stretch of Ayeyawady River between Mingun and Bhamo were designated as protected areas for Ayeyawady dolphin by Wildlife Conservation Group and Fishery Department.

Once the river was full of dolphins but according to a survey conducted in 2014 there remains only about 70 dolphins. Despite the strict control against catching of dolphins and preventing battery shock fishing that kills the dolphins too, two dead dolphins were found recently. As the memories of the fishermen befriending and working with dolphins remain permanently etched in my mind, I thought that it is very important for the locals to value and cherish the dolphins and preserve and protect them.

(Translated by Zaw Min)

Dolphins in the Ayeyarwaddy River. **PHOTO : WCS MYANMAR**

Fishermen in the Ayeyarwaddy River have been fishing cooperatively with dolphins for generations. **PHOTO : WCS MYANMAR**

WLC YouTube Channel to rebroadcast full fight of Pite Htwe and San Thu Oo today

THE YouTube Channel of World Lethwei Championship (WLC) will rebroadcast the full fight between Pite Htwe and San Thu Oo at 7 pm today (4 May), according to the championship's website.

This is one of the best fights of WLC: Heartless Tigers, which took place in Thuwunna Indoor Stadium, Yangon, on 29 September 2018.

The event was the first WLC's return to Yangon in 2018, after its two earlier events in 2018 were held in Nay Pyi Taw on 17 February and 2 June 2018. —Kyaw Khin

Pogba using lockdown to prepare for return after injury woes

LONDON (United Kingdom)— Manchester United midfielder Paul Pogba is using the coronavirus lockdown to step up his return to fitness after an injury-plagued season.

Pogba had made just eight appearances for United this season before the health crisis forced the suspension of the Premier League in March.

The French World Cup winner hasn't played a single match in 2020 due to his persistent ankle problems.

His last appearance came in a December 26 win over Newcastle, but Pogba has been keeping fit during the virus break and hopes to be ready if the Premier League can return in the summer.

"I have a little home gym in my house," Pogba told United's website.

"I can do some training, some running, some bike, go outside and do some things with the ball. I am just keeping busy and keeping healthy.

"We have got to stay motivated, there is no other choice. It is a period and we don't know until when it will be like this, but I still have goals in my head and one day hopefully this (pandemic) will stop. "And then we have to get back on the pitch, so we have to be ready.

"For myself, I have been out for a long time as well, so for me I just want to come back playing football."

Pogba, 27, has been in regular contact with his United team-mates during the lockdown as they follow the club's fitness regime from home.

Linked with a move away from fifth-placed United earlier this season, Pogba's presence would boost their bid for Champions League qualification if matches can be played again eventually.

"My advice first of all is to stay safe, stay at home and keep practising," Pogba said.

"There is always a way to work, you can work with anything you have at home, you can still do sit-ups, push-ups." —AFP ■

Manchester United midfielder Paul Pogba is working his way back to fitness. **PHOTO: AFP**

Italy gives Serie A clubs hope with training ruling

ROME (Italy)—Italy offered Serie A clubs a glimmer of hope on Sunday after it said footballers could take part in individual training sessions as the strictest coronavirus lockdown measures begin to ease.

The interior ministry's go-ahead for players to attend their club's training facilities offered fans in the football mad country the first sign that the 2019-20 season might yet be saved.

Matches were abandoned on March 9 in the face of a health crisis that has now officially claimed nearly 29,000 lives in Italy and 245,000 worldwide.

Some of the bigger clubs with title aspirations from the less affected regions have been talking about going back to training for weeks.—AFP ■

Global season in 'embryo stage' for World Rugby chief Beaumont

World Rugby chairman Bill Beaumont played 41 Tests for England and the British and Irish Lions before retiring in 1982. **PHOTO: AFP**

PARIS (France)— Newly re-elected World Rugby chairman Bill Beaumont said on Sunday plans for a global season are in the early phases of discussion.

Former England captain Beaumont, 68, who beat ex-Argentina skipper Agustin Pichot to the position this weekend, said the coronavirus pandemic had encouraged the idea about northern and southern hemisphere campaigns aligning.

Reports in Britain's The Rugby Paper claim European sides and teams from countries such as World Cup winners South Africa could play at the same time of the year.

"These are very much in the embryo stage at the moment. People are talking because what has stimulated the debate is the position regarding this year," Beaumont said.

"The north go south in one month then immediately afterwards the sides would go north. We have to bear in mind that we have to take all stakeholders with us," he added.

Beaumont admitted to facing a challenge from various leagues, unions and domestic sides based in Europe.

"In the north we have to take the club game with you, we have to take the European game with us. We are in dialogue with all the stakeholders," he said.

"It's more problems in certain areas when you have more stakeholders."

The prospect of a united season includes a global Nations Championship competition, which was scrapped in June as the Six Nations were worried about potential relegation from the top level of the game.

Beaumont said the new tournament would have multiple layers allowing sides to move between the competitions.

"My job is hopefully to get consensus from everybody in the game. I do think there is an appetite from the Six Nations to look at the Nations Championship," Beaumont said.

"Within that you could have competitions with all the countries who play in those windows and sitting below that you would have a subsidiary competitions for the emerging nations so they could play at the same time in another competition.

"You could well have promotion and relegation into that," he added.

In his first press conference since his re-election, Beaumont said he would like to change eligibility rules to permit individuals to represent different nations despite having already featured for another.

"It would allow players who might have played in a sevens tournament, they might have played an odd game for a Tier 1 nation, to go back," the former lock said.

"I think it gives an opportunity to help certain countries who are limited in their player resource.

"It has to be signed off by the council and both unions but it would improve the competitiveness of a Rugby World Cup without a doubt," he added.—AFP ■