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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Just because we are battling against COVID, we should not forget other dangers such as dengue and chikungunya which happen during the rainy season: State Counsellor

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi wrote on her Facebook page yesterday that just because we are battling against COVID, we should not forget other dangers such as dengue and chikungunya which happen during the rainy season.

This was what she wrote:

Monsoon has set in. As the word "monsoon" is derived from the Arabic word "season", we should call it "seasonal wind".

In Myanmar, we are now in the rainy season. However, it is nothing like the rainy season that we are used to as children. This is not to say "oh, when we were young it was not like this" as is the habit of elderly folks. This is just to point out the nature of climate change. What has not changed is the need to protect ourselves from seasonal diseases.

Just because we are battling against COVID, we should not forget other dangers such as dengue and chikungunya which happen during the rainy season. Having a fever reduces our immunity level. Especially at times like this, we need a high immunity level. If fever develops, you should take it seriously and go to the nearest health department and receive treatment. However, there is no need to have excessive worries.

> *The strenuous efforts that we have to make for the development of a country and make the lives of our people safe and secure, cannot be done like a seasonal wind with a time limit.*

Due to COVID, programmes for giving regular vaccinations and oral administrations to children could not be done on time. These vaccinations are very important during the life time of children; for this reason, the Ministry of Health and Sports has initiated this programme even as we are preventing and controlling COVID. I want the parents to cooperate with us with special efforts.

Sometimes I wonder. The strenuous efforts that we have to make for the development of a country and make the lives of our people safe and secure, cannot be done like a seasonal wind with a time limit. It must be a wind that blows continuously at all times.

I pray that people will have spiritual strength and physical strength for all seasons.

(Translated by Kyaw Myaing)

Myanmar COVID-19 cases stand at 224 as 17 more cases reported on 30 May 2020

SEVENTEEN more cases of COVID-19 were reported in Myanmar on 30 May, making the country's total tally 224. The latest cases are nine males and eight females who returned from India.

Out of the country's 224 confirmed cases, six died, 130 persons have recovered and 124 have been discharged from hospitals, according to the report of Ministry of Health and Sports.—MNA *(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)*

COVID-19 in Myanmar on 30 May: 17 new imported cases, total figure reaches to 224

Updated at 8 pm, 30 May 2020

Total Case	New Case (29-30 May)	Total Death Tally
224	17	6

Recovery Update on 30 May 2020 after two consecutive tests

Total Recovery	New Recovery	Discharged from Hospital
130	0	124

New Persons under Investigation from the past 24 hours to 12 noon of 30 May 2020

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1,152 returness arrive back in Myanmar through Myawady border bridge

Authorities are overseeing the returnees from Thailand at the Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge-2 yesterday. **PHOTO: HTEIN LIN AUNG (IPRD)**

A total of 1,152 Myanmar migrant workers from Thailand returned through the Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge (2) yesterday.

Of them, 504 returned under the repatriation programme arranged by Myanmar Embassy in Thailand, and 648 came back by themselves.

Kayin State Hluttaw Representative U Thant Zin Aung, District Administrator U Tayzar Aung, Deputy District Administrator U Aung Chan Nyein, Police Lt-Col Thet Lin Oo, Township Administrator U Phyo Zaw Ko Ko, and officials checked the returnees' health conditions, and fulfilled their needs.

Out of them, the returnees arrived back on 13, 14 and 15 May, and 45 of 90 returnees on 17 May, and 52 of 1,434 returnees on 27 May are those who were freed from the prisons in Thailand. Therefore, Thai officials handed over them to the Myanmar authorities.

Yesterday's returnees include 45 from Kachin State, 7 from Kayah State, 200 from Kayin State, 157 from Mon State, 33 from Sagaing Region, 242 Bago Region, 93 from Magway Region, 32 from Yangon Region, 127 from Mandalay, 19 from Nay Pyi Taw, 120 from Shan State, 18 from Taninthayi, 19 from Rakhine State, and 40 from Ayeyawady Region. — Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Notification on overcoming anxiety during COVID-19

People can face anxiety during COVID-19 and remember not to resolve things with anger, not act out of impulse, avoid alcohol and drug abuse, search for solutions together with family members and close friends, perform physical activities according to weather and health situation, eat nutritional foods, get enough sleep to resolve mental pressure.

Everyone can put these suggestions into practice to prevent their mental health from become fatigued and boost willpower. — Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement & Myanmar Medical Association (Mental Health Unit)

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**

COVID-19 in Myanmar on 30 May: 17 new imported cases, total figure reaches to 224

FROM PAGE-1

New COVID-19 Cases Updated at 8 pm 30 May 2020

Case No	Age	Gender	Address	Contact with positive patient	Overseas travel history	Hospital for medical treatment	Lab result	Remark
208	40	Female	Botahtaung Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India	South Okkalapa Specialist Hospital	Positive	Held under quarantine (Yangon Region)
209	23	Male	Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
210	20	Male	Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
211	29	Female	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
212	49	Female	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
213	46	Male	Pabedan Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
214	52	Female	Pabedan Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India			
215	45	Female	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
216	32	Female	Ahlon Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
217	47	Female	Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India	Waibargi Specialist Hospital	Positive	
218	4	Female	Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
219	61	Male	Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
220	9	Male	Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
221	19	Male	Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
222	47	Male	Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
223	31	Male	Taungtha Township, Mandalay Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	
224	26	Male	Taungtha Township, Mandalay Region	No	Yes, India		Positive	

Ministry of Health and Sports (Translated by Aung Khin)

"People are the key"

Union Construction Minister inspects development projects via virtual meeting

UNION Minister for Construction U Han Zaw inspected the development progress in Magway and Ayeyawady regions via video conferencing yesterday.

Deputy Minister Dr Kyaw Lin, and directors-general, directors and officials from the bridge, road, and rural development departments joined the virtual meeting.

At the meeting, Director (Civil) of Road Department in Magway Region, U San Min Aung, explained the construction progress of roads and bridges in Magway Region using power point. Director (Civil) from the Special Bridge Construction Team (3) of Bridge Department U Htay Aung reported on the construction progress and COVID-19 preventive measures in the projects in Ayeyawady Region.

Union Minister for Construction U Han Zaw and party (right photo) inspect the Yaw Chaung Bridge on Pakokku-Seikphyu road in Magway Region via the video conference on 30 May 2020. **PHOTO : MNA**

Deputy Director (Civil) from the Special Bridge Construction Team (5) of Bridge Department U Aung Nyo, Assistant Director (Civil) from the Special Bridge Construction Team (3) of Bridge Department U Tin Naing Ko Ko, Director (Civil) of Rural Road Development Department U Thein San Hlaing, Director of Urban and Housing Development Department U Tun Myint Aung, and Assistant Director from Special Construction Team (5) of Building Department U Aung Ko also explained their construction projects in Magway Region.

The Union Minister and the Deputy Minister inspected the development progresses in the region via the video meeting, and urged the directors to consider the complement of housing and building projects in time. The Union Minister also urged the directors to cooperate with the Region government in planting trees along the roads to create a green region, and to try hard for the development of transportation sector in the region. — MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Myanmar citizens come back home from Thailand via Kawthoung border

A total of 129 Myanmar migrant workers from Thailand, 70 males and 59 females, arrived back in Kawthoung via Ranong in Thailand by waterway yesterday.

Most of them returned home from Phuket under the arrangement of Taninthayi Region committee for receiving and repatriation of Myanmar migrant workers.

Members of District and Township committee for COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment, departmental officials, and non-governmental organizations checked the returnees' health conditions, and fulfilled other needs for them.

Out of them, those who are from other regions and states were sent back to their native places. In their wards and villages, they will have to receive community-based facility quarantine for 21 days, and home quarantine for 7 days.

Those who are from Kawthoung were quarantined in community-based facility quarantine centres for 21 days, and will be quarantined at their homes for additional 7 days. Then, their swabs will be sent to the National Health Department.—Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung)

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Officials in Kawthoung (right) check the health conditions of returnees (left) in Kawthoung on 30 May. **PHOTO : KYAW SOE (KAWTHOUNG)**

No one injured in veranda collapse at five-storey building in Yangon

The collapsed veranda of the five-storey apartment seen in Sangyaung Township , Yangon. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI**

A veranda of five-storey apartment building collapsed in Sangyaung Township, Yangon, yesterday evening, and members of Fire Services Department and rescue teams evacuated the residents.

"We noticed some concrete particles dropped from the upper level of apartment, and bigger concrete solids fell down before the collapse tonight," said a woman living on the first floor of that building.

The damages occurred at the ceiling, front veranda and façade of the top floor.

Three family members were taken out from this apartment by the rescue members.

Regarding the incident, Yangon Mayor U Maung Maung Soe told the Myanmar News Agency that strength of the building has declined, and construction history of this building will also be investigated.

He added relevant organizations will help the residents with their temporary accommodation and their belongings and household items will be taken out from that building.—Zaw Gyi

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Ministry of State Counsellor Office holds press briefing about handling of prevailing issues

THE Ministry of State Counsellor Office organized a video press briefing yesterday with local and foreign media about the internal issues and the government's handling of them.

Director-General U Zaw Htay spoke on the new 17 imported cases of COVID-19 from India, climbing the figure up to 224, while a total of 130 persons have been recovered from the disease and 122 persons have been discharged from the hospitals despite the death toll of 6; the National Central Committee for Prevention, Control and Containment of COVID-19 has issued an announcement to extend announcements, orders and directives of 28 May to 15 June.

The Ministry of Health and Sports removed the Stay Home restrictions from Bahan, South Okkalapa, Pabedan and Tamway townships of Yangon Region on 28 May, and the central committee also issued an announcement for the Union-level organizations, region/state governments and Nay Pyi Taw Council to resume daily duties of their staff commencing 1 June in line with the rules and regulations of the Ministry of Health and Sports; and to arrange ferry buses with only the half number of staff for each trip to ensure social distancing.

Local and foreign journalists raised questions about Myanmar's recent report to ICJ, legal actions against the responsible person in the Victoria case, ongoing and possible actions on holding a religious festival at the Botahtaung pagoda, situations of Myanmar citizens who were detained after participating in the Islam religious event in India, removal of squatters from the place where fire broke out in Sittway Township and assassination of ward administrative officer, investigation of arson attacks on the houses in Letkar village in MraukU Township, the warning of AA to remove all the administrative sectors and armed forces from Rakhine State, the COVID-19 assistance of Tatmadaw to the control areas ethnic armed groups, aid for internally displaced persons in northern Shan State, the amount of COVID-19 relief aid to public in the next round of assistance, the time for distribution and norms for selecting targeted people, detailed plans for reopening of school, plans for easing restrictions beginning 1 January, relocation of Kyauktalon IDP camp in Kyaukpyu Township, repatriation programme for Myanmar citizens from foreign countries, the latest purchase of helicopter, negotiations with ethnic armed organizations for holding peace conference, criticism of the government's handling of the COVID-19, shares of former military personnel in the military-owned businesses, preparation or holding the 2020 General Election and expenditures of loans for peace and development of ethnic areas.

Director-General of Ministry of State Counsellor Office U Zaw Htay holds an online press briefing with journalists about government's handling of prevailing issues yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

In answering the questions, the Director-General said that it was reported that three police officers who are mainly responsible for investigating the Victoria case have been suspended from promotion; Myanmar citizens who took part in an Islamic religious event were intercepted by the Gaya immigration authorities, while trying to board a relief flight to Yangon, they were charged with the laws on communicable disease, natural disaster management and tourism, as they were detained at a hotel in Gaya, the India authorities also filed legal actions against the six religious leaders who organized the event, hundreds of persons from 34 countries are also facing legal actions in this case, the Myanmar embassy will closely watch the case of 22 Myanmar citizens and report back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Myanmar.

As regards the government's measure in solving the problems of Kyauktalon IDP camp, the DG said the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is the organization mainly responsible for the Kyauktalon IDP camp. The country is drawing a strategy in connection with the IDP camps, and consultation is carried out with the involvement of international organizations. The National Plan Strategy covering the whole country has been drawn, and the drawing of the region/state-wise action plan is underway.

He said, because of the regional diversity, a pilot program was first launched. IDPs staying at the Kyauktalon IDP camp have arrived there since 2012. It is a Closing Action Plan of the IDP camps in Rakhine State. Consultation was carried out by Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye and Chief Minister U Nyi Pu with the aim of conducting the resettlement programme after the consultation is done by the Union Minister and the Chief Minister level. Some want to return home. Normally, resettling them at their native place is a better idea. But we must study the situation. The plan is to arrange a better home for them. The Ministry of Border Affairs has already explained the matter at the parliament. Embankment is required, as without the embankment land reclamation will have to be done again in the rainy season. Such delays may cause misunderstanding among some IDPs. We will not use force in the resettlement programme. If the land reclamation is stopped, there will be inundation in the rainy season, and it may cause too much loss for the country. So, we are trying to complete the work. Officials of the Ministry of SWRR and Rakhine State government will carry out consultation again at the place. Moreover, the officials will meet with the IDPs and look into their requirements and help them overcome their fears.

The Kyauktalon camp is important as it is a pilot project, and the adoption of the action plan will be based on the lessons gained from the pilot project. According to our knowledge, some IDPs want to move to a new place and others want to stay at the camp. Only few IDPs want to return to their native place, as some had already sold their land. So, there will be no forced resettlement. The Ministry of SWRR will take coordinated measures.

> The government had raised the issue of holding the Union Peace Conference: 21st Century Panglong. The Union Election Commission has already said that the elections will be held in the coming November.

The DG said the State leaders are giving guidance for the observance of the Union Peace Conference: 21st Century Panglong. The Government and the EAOs, the signatories to NCA, have held meetings for two times, apart from holding frequent informal meetings. According to the consent, the part (3) of the Union Agreement will be signed at the conference. There will be three phases in signing the part. The NCA implementation framework includes 10 agreed points. They are agreed by the both sides. Another ten points are still under negotiations. Of them, an accord for four or five points can be reached between the Government and the EAOS through sharing views.

The stage by stage work programmes for post-2020 elections and phase by phase implementation work have eight major topics. Seven of them have been agreed and the last one is the security issue. The Tatmadaw and the Government want to proceed under the topic "security reconciliation". So it is still under negotiations.

The State Counsellor in her keynote speech at the fourth anniversary of the NCA said that the policy for the establishment of a federal had five points. EAOs have already accepted them, and the government has also agreed the points and made a proposal to present them. The EAOs also agreed the five points as the ones so supportive for the federal. The government had raised the issue of holding the Union Peace Conference: 21st Century Panglong. The Union Election Commission has already said that the elections will be held in the coming November. UEC designated the three-month pre-election period as the campaign period. According to the proposal, the conference will not be held later than July. The representatives to the conference will be invited five days ahead of the conference.

The country will send a passenger plane to Chiang Mai where the majority of EAOs leaders live in coordination with the Thai government. A direct Nay Pyi Taw-Tachilek flight has also been proposed. 150 representatives of the Government and the parliament, 150 representatives of the Tatmadaw, 150 representatives of political parties group, 150 representatives of EAOs, 50 essential representatives and 50 representatives of ethnic groups attended the previous conference. A proposal has been made to limit the number of representatives to one third of the number of the previous conference.

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Myanmar earns over $ 542 mln from rice export as of 15 May

THE volume of exported rice and broken rice between 1 October and 15 May in this fiscal 2019-2020 is estimated to have reached nearly 1.9 million tonnes which is worth over US$542.9 million, according to the official data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

During the period, over 1.25 million tonnes of rice worth more than $374.3 million were exported to 62 countries while more than 643,722 tonnes of broken rice worth over $168.6 million were exported to 53 countries.

Myanmar exports rice through the border and via maritime trade. Myanmar's rice goes to China through the Muse border and to EU and African markets through a maritime trade route.

China is the main buyer of Myanmar rice, followed by Madagascar and the Philippines. Guinea is the fourth-largest buyer while Malaysia is the fifth-largest buyer of Myanmar rice. The European Union countries account for over 14.84 per cent of rice exports while 37.55 per cent of rice grown in Myanmar goes to African countries.

"At present, Myanmar's rice is highly demanded in the international market amid coronavirus pandemic. Foreign buyers are offering a higher price," said an MRF official.

The export value of rice and broken rice via border trade route reached more than $78.08 million accounting for 14 per cent of total rice export value. The export value of rice and broken rice via maritime trade route hit $470.8 million, accounting for 85 per cent of total rice export value. —Aye Cho

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Farmers packaging the rice bags at a warehouse in Yangon. **PHOTO: TIN ZAR HLAING**

Monywa commodity depot to reopen on 2 June

Monywa commodity depot is arranging to reopen its market on 2 June, said U Tin Ko Ko, the person in charge of Monywa commodity depot information.

"The proposal is submitted to the Monywa township labour inspection department. The officials from the labour inspection department and health department inspected the market. They said they will give the permission card to reopen the market on 30 May. If we received the permission card, we will reopen on 2 June," said U Tin Ko Ko.

File photo shows merchants are evaluating the quality of beans as Myanmar is one of a big markets for various kinds of bean.
PHOTO: MYO WIN TUN (MONYWA)

The Monywa commodity depot was closed temporarily starting from 1 April to prevent the spreading of coronavirus disease. If the commodity depot reopens, the shop owners and their staff must wear the mask, wash their hands, measure the temperature and stand with four feet away from each other.

During the closure of the commodity depot, the shop owners are selling their products by using their phone via online system. —Myo Win Tun (Monywa)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Total border trade value exceeds $7.13 bln

THE total trade value at 18 border trade camps as of 15 May, this fiscal year (FY) exceeded US$7.13 billion, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The total border trade value amounted to $7.126 billion between 1 October and 15 May of 2019-2020 FY, up to $446 million compared with the same period last year.

The total border trade value, as of 15 May this FY, included $4.95 billion in exports and $2.18 billion in imports. Compared with the last FY, the export earnings went up by more than $86.8 million, while the import value increased by $359 million. This time last year, the border trade was valued at $6.68 billion.

Myanmar border trade is being conducted through 18 border trade points with four neighbouring countries – China, Thailand, India and Bangladesh.

Among all the border points, the Muse border sees the largest volume and value of border trade, with an estimated value of more than $3.08 billion this FY, followed by Hteekhee with $1.28 billion and Myawady with $768 million.

Myanmar's major export items are farm, animal, marine, forest, mining, CMP and other products. Myanmar mainly imports capital goods, industrial raw materials, personal goods and CMP raw materials. —Zwe

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Magway reopens express bus lines outside region

THE passenger highway bus lines in Magway region have been granted permission to resume their services outside of the region, according to the Magway Region Licencing and Transportation Supervision Department.

To prevent spreading of coronavirus in Magway region, the passenger highway bus lines were suspended from 10 April to 15 May under the instruction of the regional government. On 16 May 2020, the regional government permitted the buses to resume in the first phase.

"On 16 May, the buses are permitted to resume in Magway region. Under the decision made at a meeting held on 28 May, the Magway regional government granted the highway bus lines to run the buses to other states and regions as well as to Nay Pyi Taw," said U Thein Han, the regional head of Magway Region Licencing and Transportation Supervision Department.

The passenger highway buses must follow the rules and regulations adopted by the Ministry of Health and Sports. A total of 343 bus lines are operating across the country and 79 bus lines are being operated in Magway region while 141 bus lines are being operated from Magway region to other states and regions and the remaining 123 bus lines are being operated from other states and regions to Magway region.—Naing Tway

Translated by Hay Mar)

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Call
Thin Thin May,
09251022355,
09974424848.

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

CHIEF EDITOR
Aungthu Ya
aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm

DEPUTY CHIEF EDITOR
Aye Min Soe
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT
Kyaw Myaing

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Aung Khin

LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITORS
Ye Htut Tin
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Aung Htein
Tun Tun Naing
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

SENIOR TRANSLATOR
Zaw Htet Oo

TRANSLATORS
Hay Mar Tin Win, Ei Myat Mon,
Kyaw Zin Lin, Kyaw Zin Tun

REPORTER
Nyein Nyein Ei,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

PHOTOGRAPHER
Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar
Kyaw Zeya

COMPUTER TEAM
Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,
Hnin Pwint, Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin, Thein Htwe,
Nyi Lin Thu

EDITORIAL SECTION
(+95) (01)8604529,
Fax – (+95) (01) 8604305

CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION
San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 974424114

ADVERTISING & MARKETING
(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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gnlmdaily@gmail.com
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
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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.

Eindu-Kawkareik road improvement project expected to be completed in 12 months

A road roller operates on the Eindu-Kawkareik road in Kayin State.
PHOTO : SAW MYO MIN THEIN (IPRD)

The Road Department is preparing to resume the improvement of Eindu-Kawkareik road in Kayin State as the dispute on land compensation has been settled this month, said Assistant Director Min Banyar Htaw.

The upgrade of two-lane road with a total length of 64.735 kilometre—40 .44 km of Lot-1 between Eindu village and Gyine bridge and 24.295 km of Lot-2 between Gyine bridge and Kawkareik— was started in December 2016. It is a part of the Greater Mekong Subregion East-West Economic Corridor, linking Myanmar to Thailand, which begins from the Danang Port of Viet Nam.

Although the improvement of Eindu-Kawkareik road was funded by US$100 million loan from the Asian Development Bank, $20 million loan from ASEAN Infrastructure Fund and $1.8 million from state revenue, the ADB loan was suspended in 2017 as the project was said to breach environment conservation rules in extracting rocks for the road in Lyunnya Mountain. The loan was given again only in May 2019, delaying the project one and half years. As the local authorities have negotiated land compensation this month and the remaining 4-km road section could be upgraded after rainy season, the entire Eindu-Kawkareik road could be finalized by 31 May 2021. The China Road and Bridge Corporation Co. Ltd., has won the bid to improve the road under the management of Ministry of Construction, and the road is a major transportation routes for both passengers and cargoes between Myanmar and Thailand.—Saw Myo Min Thein (IPRD)

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Yangon water ferries to resume as usual starting from 1 June

YANGON Pansodan-Dala water ferries will resume as usual starting from 1 June for the passengers to be able to travel conveniently, according to the Delta Division of the Inland Water Transport (IWT).

The Pansodan-Dala jetty is the only gateway for the local people in southern Yangon -- Dala, Twantay, Kawhmu, Kungyangon townships and some townships in Ayeyawady Region to link with the commercial city hub of Yangon. However, the operation routes of the water ferries have been reduced from April to May because of declined number of passengers in the coronavirus outbreak period.

"The number of water ferry passengers has increased these days compared to last month. This Pansodan-Dala jetty is one of the crowded places with the people because it is the entrance gate of the Yangon Region. After the coronavirus-positive patients have been found in Myanmar, the operation of water ferry has been reduced. The travelling of the passengers with water ferry is not normal in the water festival period. Starting from the second week of May, the people started to go outside their home. On 27 and 28, May, around 15,000 passengers travelled. So, the water ferry service is running 46 routes, as usual, starting from 1 June. With the increased routes, the passengers do not need to wait for the ferries and their travelling time will not be delayed, said Pansodan Jetty Manager Daw Khin Khin Nu.

Three 'Cherry' water ferries, operating between Pansodan and Dala daily, are reopening to provide transportation service as in normal period starting from 1 June. Moreover, the Z-crafts are operating up and down from 6 am to 7 pm, transporting the vehicles and cargos. The Yangon Pansodan-Dala water ferries are running from 5:30 am to 9 pm daily. —Naing Lin Kyaw (Dala)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

The water ferry seen in Yangon River.
PHOTO: NAING LIN KYAW (DALA)

Ministry of State Counsellor Office holds press briefing about handling on …

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The opening ceremony will be held at MICC-2 where seating arrangement will be under the social distancing guidelines. The important UPDJC and JMC meetings will be held at the MICC-1. MICC-1 is more spacious. A six-foot space can be arranged between one seat and another. The most important meetings will be held at the MICC-2 and the signing ceremony and the opening ceremony will be held at MICC-1. The issue has been proposed to the EAOs. The points of the part (3) of the Union Agreement will be discussed between the Government and the EAOs in June. Programmes are underway to call UPDJC and JICM meetings, which will be followed by the conference. The coming conference is important as some changes might occur in the part of Tatmadaw after 2020, and the situation of the government depends of the election results. As uncertainty might appear in relaying the results reaped from the ongoing discussions during the five years, it is required to reach an inclusively acceptable ground. EAOs and Tatmadaw will remain as participants, but there might be changes in the government. The representatives of the elected government will take part in the negotiations. The peace process can be continued if an accord is reached on its continued implementation after 2020 as stated in the Union Agreement, through thorough discussions. It is an important issue and an essential task for the Government, the Tatmadaw, the EAOs and the political parties. Another factor is that the conference and the general elections are the inevitable process for the national cause, peace process and federal building.

As regards the involvement of retired Tatmadaw officers in the list of directors of the Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited, the DG said the director-general of Customs Department and the managing director of Myanma Port Authority have been included in the list of directors since the establishment of the UMEHL. But we have the knowledge about it only now. The relevant ministries also know about the matter only at present. But according the ministries, the two officials have never attended the BOD meetings. But legal assessment of the case will be made after reviewing it and the legal counsel is sought from the Attorney General's Office. —Kyaw Han Aung *(Translated by Aung Khin & TMT)*

Coronavirus: latest global developments

PARIS (France) — Here are the latest developments in the coronavirus crisis.

Trump cuts ties with WHO

US President Donald Trump delivers a major blow to the finances of the World Health Organization, making permanent his decision to break off ties with the agency and redirect WHO funds "to other worldwide and deserving urgent global public health needs".

The move sparks a fierce backlash.

Germany blasts the decision as "disappointing" and a setback for global health, while Richard Horton, editor of The Lancet medical journal, says it is "madness and terrifying".

"The US government has gone rogue at a time of humanitarian emergency," he tweets.

The European Union calls on the US to "reconsider".

More than 364,000 deaths

The pandemic has killed at least 364,362 people worldwide since it surfaced in China late last year, according to an AFP tally at 1100 GMT on Saturday, based on official sources.

Nearly six million cases have been registered in 196 countries and territories.

The United States is the worst-hit country with 102,836 deaths. It is followed by Britain with 38,161, Italy with 33,229, France with 28,714, Brazil with 27,878, and Spain with 27,121.

Uruguay leader in quarantine

Uruguayan President Luis Lacalle Pou is in quarantine after attending a meeting with an official who tested positive for the virus.

Return of NBA?

NBA commissioner Adam Silver tells team owners he is targeting a July 31 return to play, US media reports, but the format for completing the top basketball league's season remains unclear.

Formula 1 green flag

Formula One's season will finally get underway with the Austrian Grand Prix on July 5, the Austrian government announces. The Spielberg circuit will also stage a second race the following weekend.

Both races will be go ahead without spectators.

Pisa tower and Paris parks

In further signs of European countries progressively emerging from lockdowns, Italy's famed Leaning Tower of Pisa reopens to visitors as do the parks in Paris, both shuttered for months.

Hands off Gibraltar monkeys

Authorities in Britain's tiny enclave of Gibraltar, fearful of a virus outbreak among its famous Barbary monkeys, ban tourists from touching the animals. —AFP ■

People walk at a scramble intersection in Tokyo's Shibuya area on May 30, 2020, on the first weekend after Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced an end to the coronavirus state of emergency.
PHOTO : KYODO NEWS

Most areas in Japan to fully reopen Mon. as new infections fall

TOKYO — Thirty-eight of Japan's 47 prefectures are set to fully reopen their economies on Monday as they seek to strike a balance between rebuilding the economies hit by the coronavirus and implementing measures to prevent a second wave of infections.

Schools will also reopen across the country, a week after Prime Minister Shinzo Abe fully lifted the nation's state of emergency declared over the pandemic. With businesses resuming in stages from early May, a total of 38 prefectures such as Hokkaido, Aichi and Hyogo will lift restrictions on operations of shops and leisure facilities on Monday. Given their small number of infection cases, Okayama and Tokushima prefectures had not filed requests that businesses suspend operations as part of efforts to curb the virus spread.

In the remaining seven prefectures including Tokyo and Fukuoka, such requests will be maintained for businesses with records of having clusters of infection, such as clubs with live music.—Kyodo News ■

Chile, Peru secure credit lines from IMF amid pandemic

WASHINGTON (United States) — The IMF approved a two-year $24 billion credit line for Chile on Friday as the South American nation battles the growing impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The announcement came a day after Peru secured a two-year, $11 billion credit line, and as Latin America becomes a growing hotspot for COVID-19.

The Flexible Credit Line is a renewable funding mechanism granted to countries with strong economic policy track records, and Chile is only the fifth country to receive one. Along with Peru, Mexico and Colombia currently have FCLs in place.

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva praised Chile for its "very strong fundamentals ... and track record of implementing prudent macroeconomic policies" that have helped the country to weather the economic shocks so far.

However, "Chile's open economy is exposed to substantial external risks as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, including a significant deterioration in global demand for Chilean exports, a sharp decline or reversal of capital inflows toward emerging markets, and an abrupt tightening of global financial conditions," she said in a statement.—AFP ■

Chile has had its highest single-day death toll from COVID-19, and the numbers are rising in Peru as well. **PHOTO: AFP**

Indian states ban consumption, spitting of tobacco in public places to prevent COVID-19

MUMBAI — Indian states are on a spree to ban consumption, spitting and smoking of tobacco and tobacco products in public places following a directive by federal government to all states in the country.

On Saturday, India's western state of Maharashtra and South-Western state of Karnataka announced a ban following a similar ban announced by the Northern state of Rajasthan and North Eastern state of Jharkhand.

"Spitting also contributes to spreading Covid-19. Considering this, we have decided to implement the prohibitory laws more strictly. Violators will have to pay a fine of 13 dollars for first offence, 40 U.S. dollars for second and 66 U.S. dollars for subsequent offence," Rajesh Tope, Maharashtra health minister said.

Maharashtra is the worst affected Indian state with over 62,000 positive COVID-19 cases and its political capital Mumbai tops the list among cities in Asia's third largest economy with close to 37,000 positive cases so far. —Xinhua ■

31 MAY 2020
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Stop tobacco industry exploitation of children and young people

MORE than three decades since the world started observing the World No-Tobacco Day in 1987, smoking remains a major health problem, blamed for so many illnesses such as lung cancer.

The number of deaths caused by cancer, hypertension, and respiratory diseases would be higher in the coming years if the current levels of consumption of tobacco products, including betel quid and cigarettes, do not decline.

The harmful effects of tobacco smoking are well documented. It is blamed for the death of seven million people around the world each year, mostly from direct tobacco use and around 890,000 from exposure to second-hand smoke. Smoking and consumption of tobacco products kill more than 60,000 people every year in Myanmar.

> The harmful effects of tobacco smoking are well documented. It is blamed for the death of seven million people around the world each year, mostly from direct tobacco use and around 890,000 from exposure to second-hand smoke.

Myanmar has lost about 3.3 per cent of its GDP due to consumption of tobacco products.

The Ministry of Health and Sports has warned that if we cannot control smoking and tobacco products consumption, half of the budget of the ministry would have to be spent on providing medical services to patients with preventable diseases caused by smoking and tobacco products consumption.

With a focus on protecting children and young people from exploitation by the tobacco and related industry, the World Health Organization is today launching a new kit for school students aged 13-17 to alert them to tactics used by the tobacco industry to hook them to addictive products.

Even during a global pandemic, the tobacco and nicotine industry persist by pushing products that limit people's ability to fight coronavirus and recover from the disease. The industry has offered free branded masks and delivery to your door during quarantine and has lobbied for their products to be listed as 'essential'.

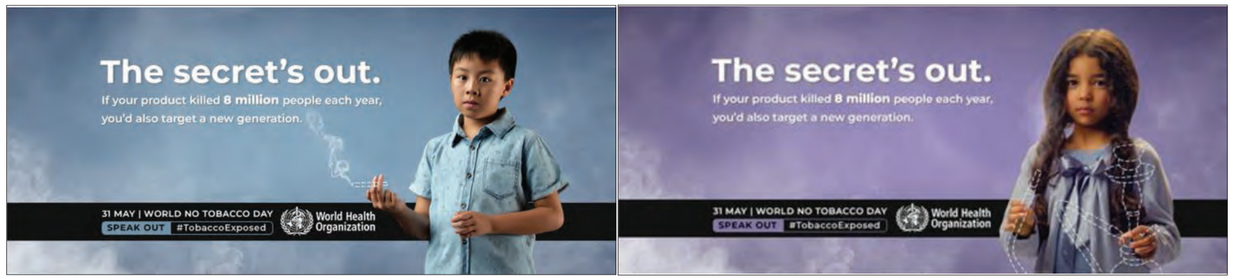
WHO calls on countries to protect children from industry exploitation by putting in place strict tobacco control laws, including regulating products like e-cigarettes that have already begun to hook a new generation of young people.

To protect our children, we need to make our tobacco-free policy realistic by imposing fines on businesses that sell tobacco products to kids and in restricted areas.

Most important, we need to make young people understand how incredibly foolhardy it is to inhale and swallow chemicals whose effects we do not understand and which lead to an addiction many cannot escape

World No Tobacco Day 2020

By Dr Aung Tun



This year's global campaign is extra special because it serves to educate and arm our youth with knowledge that enables them to make informed decisions about their health.

EVERY year, on 31 May, WHO and Partners celebrate World No Tobacco Day. The theme of 2020 is protection of younger generations, focusing on "protecting youth from industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use. The specific goals of the World No Tobacco Day 2020 campaign are as follows:

- Unmask myths and expose manipulation tactics employed by the tobacco and related industries, particularly marketing tactics targeted at youth, including through the introduction of new and novel products, flavours and other attractive features;
- Provide young people with knowledge about the tobacco and related industries' intentions and tactics to hook current and future generations on tobacco and nicotine products; and
- Enable influencers (in pop culture, on social media, in the home, or in the classroom) to protect and defend youth and catalyze change by engaging them in the fight against Big Tobacco.

Global Tobacco Epidemic

Tobacco epidemic is one of the world's leading health threats, and a main risk factor for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) including: cancers, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and cardiovascular disease. According to WHO's new report on global tobacco use trends (2019), there are 1.3 billion tobacco users globally. Every year, more than 8 million people die from tobacco use, approximately half of its users. More than 7 million of those deaths are from direct tobacco use while around 1.2 million are due to non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke. Most tobacco-related deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries that are targets of intensive tobacco industry interference and marketing. Other key findings of the report included:

- Children and youth: Approximately 43 million children (aged 13-15) used tobacco in 2018 (14 million girls and 29 million boys).
- Women: The number of women using tobacco in 2018 was 244 million.
- Asian trends: WHO's South East Asian Region has the highest rates of tobacco use, of more than 45% of males and females aged 15 years and over, but the trend is projected to decline rapidly to similar levels seen in the European and Western Pacific regions of around 25% by 2025.
- Poverty: Tobacco use contributes to poverty by diverting household spending from basic needs such as food and shelter to tobacco. The economic costs of tobacco use are substantial and include significant health care costs for treating the disease caused by tobacco use as well as the lost human capital that results from tobacco-attributable morbidity and mortality.

Tobacco use among young people in Myanmar

The global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) was conducted in Myanmar at the national level in 2001, 2007, 2011 and 2016 to assess the prevalence of tobacco use among Myanmar youth. The 2016 GYTS, like its predecessors, was a national-level representative survey based on a sample of students 13–15 years of age enrolled in grades 9–11. The following points are key findings from this survey.

* **Tobacco use:** There has been no significant change in the prevalence of current use of any tobacco product (15.3% in 2007 to 13.6% in 2016). However, there was an increase in the prevalence of current cigarette smoking between 2007 and 2011 (from 4.9% to 8.3% overall, 8.5 to 17.0% in boys and 1.3% to 1.5% in girls) with no significant change in current smokeless tobacco use.

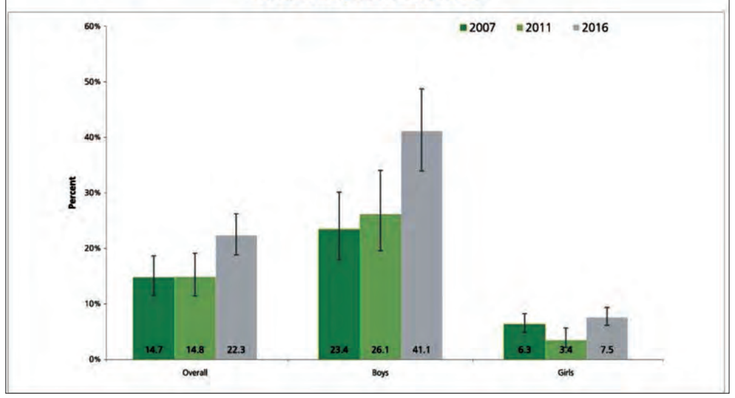
*__Secondhand smoke :__ Exposure to secondhand smoke(SHS) in homes did not change significantly between 2007 and 2016. One third of the students were still exposed to SHS in these circumstances. In contrast, the reported exposure to SHS in enclosed public has declined significantly from 46.4% (all public places) in 2007 to 28.4% (enclosed public places) in 2016.

*__Access and availability:__ Despite the ban on the sale of tobacco to minors, 54.5% of the smokers reported that they obtained cigarettes from a store, shop or street vendor and more worryingly about two-thirds reported that they were not prevented from buying those cigarettes because of their age; these indicators have remained largely unchanged over the years.

*__Anti-tobacco messages :__ The percentage of students who saw anti-tobacco messages in the media dropped significantly from 93.4%in 2007 to 80.2% in 2016.

* __Tobacco marketing :__ The percentage of students who saw someone using tobacco on TV or in videos or movies was high at 83.4%. Tobacco marketing has also declined. The percentage of students who were offered free tobacco products by tobacco companies and those who reported ownership of tobacco branded objects was found to be less than 6%.

Fig 2: Trends in the prevalence of ever cigarette smokers – GYTS 2007, 2011 and 2016



Tobacco Industry Tactics to attract younger generations

Tobacco and related industries promote its products to potential smokers, including young people, to ensure the market for tobacco continues to increase and that dying smokers and those who quit smoking are replaced. The tobacco industry targets young people through misleading messages that help shape attitudes to tobacco use.

The tobacco Industry is targeting a new generation with their tricks and tactics as follows:

(a)Direct Advertising

- Advertising in entertainment media like movies and TV shows -Attractive displays at children's eye level, near toys sweets and sugary drinks
- Tobacco products ads that imitate popular memes to appeal to children and young adults

(b)Indirect advertising

- Use of social media and sponsoring influencers to promote certain tobacco and vaping products ©Promotion
- Promotion of tobacco products at popular events for young people -Distribution of free samples and promotional materials to young people

(d) Sponsorship

- Apprenticeships and school and university scholarships for students, and other support for schools
- Sponsorship of major sporting events/teams, including placement of tobacco company logos

(e) Other marketing tactics

- Flavours appealing to children in smokeless tobacco, shisha and e-cigarettes
- Kiddie packs and single stick sales

Tobacco industry interference in Myanmar

The tobacco industry lobby is strong in Myanmar. According to the fourth Tobacco Industry (TI) Interference Index, Myanmar ranks third highest out of 9 ASEAN countries analyzed. According to the survey, TI interference in Myanmar increased from 2015 to 2016. Based on the report, the industry has worked to delay implementation of the 2016 legislation requiring pictorial health warnings on cigarette packs. There are still tobacco packs being sold which are not compliant with the requirement. Policymakers in Myanmar should consider strengthening safeguards against TI interference, for example by instituting a code of conduct for Government officials that requires disclosure of conflict of interests.

The Current Burden of Tobacco Use in Myanmar

Tobacco use undermines economic growth. In 2016, tobacco use caused 64,033 deaths in Myanmar ,56 per cent of which occurred among citizens under the age 70. As a result, Myanmar lost productive years in which those individuals would have contributed to the workforce. The economic losses in 2016 due to tobacco-related premature mortality are estimated at MMK 1.32 trillion.

While the costs of premature mortality are high, the consequences of tobacco use begin long before death. As individuals begin to suffer from tobacco-attributable diseases (e.g. heart disease, strokes, cancers), expensive medical care is required to treat them. Spending on medical treatment for illnesses caused by smoking cost the Government MMK 71.9 billion in 2016, and caused Myanmar citizens to spend MMK 226.7 billion in out-of-pocket (OOP) healthcare expenditures. In addition to generating healthcare costs, as individuals become sick, they are more likely to miss days of work (absenteeism) or to be less productive at work (presenteeism).

SEE PAGE-10

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 30th May, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is weak to moderate over the Andaman Sea and Southeast Bay of Bengal. Weather is a few cloud to partly cloudy elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 31st May, 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Magway Region, fairly widespread in Naypyitaw, Sagaing and Mandalay Regions, Kachin, Shan and Rakhine States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with isolated heavyfalls in Nay Pyi Taw and Mon State. 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 thundery activities in the Deltaic areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 31st May, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 31st May, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 31st May, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

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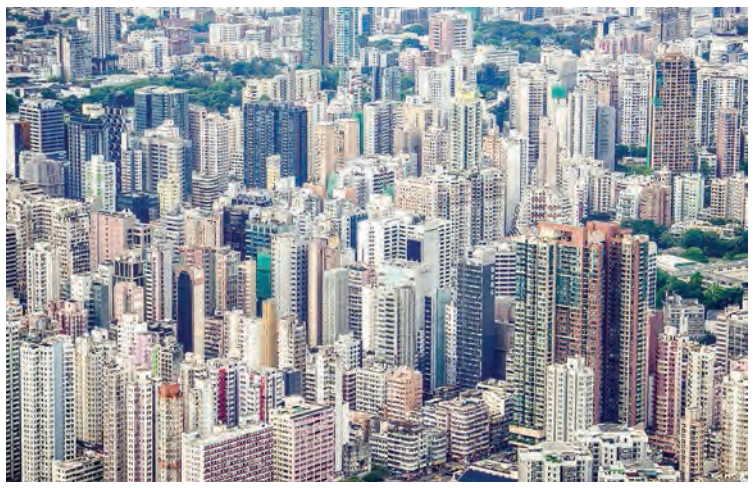
U.S. to start eliminating special treatment for Hong Kong: Trump

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Donald Trump said Friday that his administration will start the process of eliminating special treatment for Hong Kong, blasting China for breaking its "word to the world" on ensuring the territory's autonomy.

The announcement came after China on Thursday decided to introduce a national security law to crack down on what it views as subversive activity in Hong Kong, which saw massive pro-democracy protests erupt into violence last year.

Trump said the United States will take steps to sanction Chinese officials directly and indirectly involved in eroding Hong Kong's autonomy and suspend the entry of certain foreign nationals from China identified as potential security risks.

The president also said he will be "terminating" the U.S. relationship with the World Health Organization, which he criticizes for being China-centric amid the coronavirus pandemic, and redirecting funds to other global public health needs.—Kyodo ■



A picture taken on May 16, 2017 shows a general view of the buildings in the Kowloon district of Hong Kong. **PHOTO: AFP**

Virus-battered Italy faces worst recession since WWII

ROME — Facing its deepest recession since World War II and with business confidence collapsing, the coronavirus pandemic is hitting Italy's economy hard.

Business confidence in the eurozone's third largest economy in May plummeted to its lowest level since official statistics institute ISTAT started the index in March 2005.

Italy was the first European country to be hit by the pandemic and imposed a strict two-month lockdown which paralyzed much of the country's economic activity. **PHOTO:AFP**

The figure is "alarming", said small business federation Confesercenti.

"The health and economic emergency has swept businesses away, especially in shops, services and tourism," it said.

Its members are particularly concerned "by the lack of liquidity necessary to pay costs and salaries... we are close to a point of no return and that's why the measures decided by the government (loan guarantees, SME subsidies) must be operational immediately," said federation head Patrizia De Luise.

"We need to reduce bureaucracy and accelerate and simplify procedures, because if support is delayed again, many businesses will have no option but to stop," she said.

The government last week accused banks of not acting quickly enough, but they said that they had already passed on around 400,000 loan requests worth more than 18 billion euros ($20 billion) to the state-backed Central Guarantee Fund.

- A million jobs threatened -

Italy was the first European country to be hit by the pandemic and imposed a strict two-month lockdown which paralysed much of the country's economic activity.—AFP ■

Los Angeles restaurants reopen as virus lockdown eases

LOS ANGELES — Los Angeles restaurants and hair salons were granted permission to reopen immediately Friday, as restrictions were eased despite fears the city has become a coronavirus hotspot.

Restaurants in Los Angeles county – which has suffered more than half of California's virus deaths -- will be allowed to offer dine-in services with capacity limited to 60 per cent.

Customers will be required to wear face coverings while not eating, must wait for their tables outside the restaurant, and will be screened for symptoms on entry.

Bar areas of restaurants will remain closed.

"This further brings our communities together and resumes a sense of normalcy, representing monumental progress for Los Angeles County on the path toward recovery," Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Kathryn Barger said.

Densely populated Los Angeles county has suffered more than 50,000 confirmed coronavirus cases including 2,290 deaths, and has lagged behind most of California in reopening. —AFP ■

World No Tobacco Day 2020

FROM PAGE-9

Finally, even in their healthy years, working smokers are less productive than non-smokers.

In total, tobacco use cost Myanmar's economy MMK 2.62 trillion in 2016, equivalent to about 3.3 per cent of Myanmar's GDP that year.

Recent developments of Tobacco Control in Myanmar

Myanmar signed the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) in 2003 and ratified the treaty the following year. Since that time, Myanmar has made significant progress in tobacco control. For example, it passed a strong tobacco control law in 2006 and has enacted several policies to reduce tobacco use, including: prohibiting smoking in many indoor public places, mandating that graphic warning labels cover 75 per cent of cigarette packs, and banning tobacco advertising on traditional and new forms of media (e.g., television, the internet). By legislating and funding these important measures, Myanmar is helping to curb the tobacco epidemic and has set the stage for strengthened efforts.

Myanmar is one of 15 countries worldwide receiving FCTC 2030 project support. The FCTC 2030 Project is a global initiative funded by the UK Government to support countries to strengthen FCTC implementation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In consultation with the Government of Myanmar, five FCTC provisions were selected to model within the investment case:

- Increasing tobacco taxation to reduce the affordability of tobacco products (FCTC Article 6);
- Enforcing bans on smoking in all public places to protect people from tobacco smoke (FCTC Article 8);
- Implementing plain packaging (FCTC Article 11: Guidelines for implementation);
- Instituting mass media campaigns against tobacco use (FCTC Article 12); and
- Implementing and enforcing a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, sponsorship, and promotion (FCTC Article 13).

Join the fight to become a tobacco-free generation

Young people need to be provided with information about the harms of tobacco use and tobacco industry marketing tactics. They have a right to protection from tobacco marketing and second-hand smoke.

Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC requires countries to protect their tobacco control policies from the vested interests of the tobacco industry. Furthermore, implementation of the WHO FCTC requires Parties to take measures to protect youth against the harms of tobacco use.

The Ministry of Health and Sports remains committed to take more effective measures to reduce tobacco use among adolescents and to raise awareness on harmful effects of tobacco. Myanmar had already rolled out the "Five Year Strategic Plan for Young People's Health (2016–2020)", which recognizes the importance of improving adolescent health. These youth related policies will serve as one of the avenues to promote the agenda of reducing tobacco consumption among youth. Myanmar will also undertake the following actions.

- Develop and implement a code of conduct for government officials and civil servants for their interactions with tobacco industry, in line with Article 5.3 and its guidelines
- Continue to raise awareness on protection of public health policy from the vested interested of the tobacco industry among all government agencies and public officials, in collaboration with civil society

Ref: -Investment case for tobacco control in Myanmar: The Case for Investing in WHO FCTC Implementation, MOHS/WHO/UNDP/FCTC Secretariat/RTI Int. December 2018 - Report of Fifth Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS), Myanmar, MOHS/WHO, 2016 -Report on global tobacco use trends, WHO, 2019 -The Tobacco Atlas, 6th Edition, American Cancer Society, 2018 - Word No Tobacco Day Tool Kit, WHO, 2020

Malaysia's Mahathir challenges his removal from ruling party

KUALA LUMPUR — Former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad mounted an official challenge Friday against his removal from the ruling party he founded, as the war with his successor and party president Muhyiddin Yassin heats up.

In separate letters dated Thursday and signed by Bersatu organizing secretary addressed to Mahathir, his son Mukhriz and three others, the five were told their memberships were "nullified" for opting to sit among the opposition during the May 18 Parliament meeting, thus breaking party rules.

"The organizing secretary has exceeded his authority. I am still the chairman. Please remember that. They tried to remove me, but it's not valid," Mahathir told a press conference at Bersatu headquarters where he promptly announced that Muhammad Suhaimi Yahya has been sacked from his post as organizing secretary.

He also claimed that there is no provision in the party constitution that touches on where a legislator should sit.

"I have done nothing that is against the constitution," he said, adding, "Where you sit should not be a cause for sacking."

Mahathir's lawyer Haniff Khatri, in a statement, said his office has submitted a notice to the Registrar of Societies, an agency under the Home Ministry that regulates non-governmental organizations and political parties, to reject Bersatu's termination letter and applied to refer the dispute to the registrar.

A similar notice has been served to the party headquarters.—Kyodo ■

File : Former premier Mahathir Mohamad said that he resigned because he had lost the support of his allies. **PHOTO: AFP**

First flight of returning European employees lands in China

BEIJING — A Lufthansa plane carrying around 200 mainly German workers landed in China on Saturday, marking the first return of Europeans since the country suspended visas over the coronavirus.

China drastically cut international flight routes in late March and imposed an entry ban on most foreigners -- including those with valid residence visas.

The move underlined its fears over imported coronavirus cases and a second wave of infections as the virus epicentre shifted beyond China, where the deadly pathogen was first reported late last year.

Many workers found themselves stranded abroad and unable to return after leaving China at the height of the epidemic.

Lufthansa's flight from Frankfurt landed shortly before noon at Tianjin airport, southeast of Beijing, the German flag-carrier said.

The group, made up of employees of German companies and their families, were tested for COVID-19 after they landed and will have to quarantine for two weeks.

"We did not know if this plane would leave or not" until the last minute, said passenger Alexander Ophoven before takeoff.

A second aircraft -- reserved for people whose who need to be in China for economic, commercial, scientific or technological purposes, or for urgent humanitarian reasons -- is scheduled to depart from Frankfurt for Shanghai on June 3.

There are more than 5,000 German companies operating in China, according to the local German Chamber of Commerce.

Two months after closing its borders, China is beginning to lift restrictions on foreigners.

Beijing announced on Friday that some Singapore nationals will be allowed to return from early June. They will only be allowed entry into six cities and provinces initially, including Shanghai.

The number of international flights between China and the rest of the world will increase from 134 to 407 per week as of Monday, according to the Chinese Civil Aviation Administration.—AFP ■

China drastically cut international flight routes in late March and imposed an entry ban on most foreigners -- including those with valid residence visas . **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS In BRIEF

Singapore's plan for "fast lane" with China draws criticism at home

SINGAPORE — Netizens in Singapore have reacted sharply to the government's announcement of an agreement reached with China to launch a "fast lane" in early June to facilitate essential travel between the two countries.

A statement released by the Foreign Ministry late Friday said that, with effective coronavirus prevention and control measures in place, the arrangement would first be applied between Singapore and the six Chinese provinces or municipalities directly under the central government -- Shanghai, Tianjin, Chongqing, Guangdong, Jiangsu and Zhejiang.

It will be gradually expanded to other parts of China, it said, adding that the two governments also agreed to explore increasing air links between the two countries for the proposed fast lane.

Since Feb. 1, Singapore has banned the entry or transit of Chinese nationals and anyone with a travel history to mainland China within 14 days of arrival in Singapore.

The ban was subsequently extended to all short-term visitors from overseas as the COVID-19 pandemic worsened and spread to other countries outside China.

Following the announcement, the Facebook page of Channel News Asia, the English-language news website for Singapore's national broadcaster, was flooded with criticism of the agreement.

"Of all countries you open up to the country where the virus originated...too risky," one reader commented.—Kyodo ■

Vietnam's COVID-19 cases increase to 328

HANOI — Vietnam reported a new case of COVID-19 infection on Saturday, bringing its total confirmed cases to 328 with zero death so far, according to its Ministry of Health.

The latest case was a one-year-old Vietnamese boy recently returning to the country from Russia, said the ministry, noting that 33 other passengers on the same flight with the baby had been confirmed to have contracted the virus.

Meanwhile, 279 patients have totally recovered from the disease, according to the ministry.

Vietnam has recorded no local transmission for 44 straight days while there are nearly 7,900 people being quarantined and monitored in the country, according to the health ministry.
—Xinhua ■

Trump cuts ties with WHO as pandemic grips Latin America

WASHINGTON — US President Donald Trump said he is severing ties with the World Health Organization over its handling of the coronavirus pandemic, as the death toll from the disease spiked again in the United States and Brazil.

The virus, which has killed more than 364,000 people and devastated the global economy, is progressing at different speeds across the globe, with Europe continuing to open up from lockdown on Saturday after seeing its number of infections steadily fall.

Italy's iconic Leaning Tower of Pisa reopened, while Parisians flocked to parks open for the first time in months.

But countries in Latin America are bracing for difficult weeks ahead, especially Brazil, where the death toll shot up by 1,124 on Friday and there was a record number of new infections. The unprecedented challenge of the pandemic has put pressure on the WHO, and Trump's decision to end hundreds of millions of dollars in funding comes when the UN agency needs it most.

People enjoy the sunshine in Paris, as France continues to ease its lockdown restrictions. **PHOTO: AFP**

Trump initially suspended funding to the WHO last month, accusing it of not doing enough to curb the early spread of the virus and being too lenient with China, where the virus emerged late last year. On Friday he made that decision permanent in a major blow for the agency's finances, as the US is by far its biggest contributor, pumping in $400 million last year. The president told reporters the US would be redirecting WHO funds "to other worldwide and deserving urgent global public health needs."

'Madness and terrifying'

The move sparked a fierce backlash on Saturday, with German Health Minister Jens Spahn saying the "disappointing" decision was a setback for global health.—AFP ■

Israel police kill Palestinian they mistakenly thought was armed

JERUSALEM -- Israeli police in annexed east Jerusalem on Saturday shot dead a Palestinian with special needs they mistakenly thought was armed with a pistol, Israeli and Palestinian sources said.

The incident happened in the alleys of the walled Old City near Lions' Gate, an access point mainly used by Palestinians.

"Police units on patrol there spotted a suspect with a suspicious object that looked like a pistol," an Israeli police statement said.

"They called upon him to stop and began to chase after him on foot. During the chase, officers also opened fire at the suspect, who was neutralized.

"No weapon was found at the scene after the area was searched," the statement said.

The Palestinians' official news agency Wafa identified the dead man as Eyad Hallak, a resident of the Wadi Joz neighbourhood of east Jerusalem with special needs.

There has been an uptick in violence in east Jerusalem and the occupied West Bank in recent days, although it has yet to reach the levels of 2015-2016 when Israeli security forces struggled to stop a wave of so-called lone wolf attacks unconnected to any established militant group.—AFP ■

Israeli security forces routinely carry out checks and patrols around the Lions' Gate entrance to Jerusalem's walled Old City. **PHOTO: AFP**

Merkel a 'no' for Trump's in-person G7 summit

BERLIN — German Chancellor Angela Merkel will not attend an in-person summit of G7 leaders that US President Donald Trump has suggested he will host despite concerns over the coronavirus pandemic, a German government spokesman said Saturday.

Leaders from the Group of Seven, which the United States heads this year, had been scheduled to meet by videoconference in late June after COVID-19 scuttled plans to gather in-person at Camp David, the US presidential retreat in the state of Maryland.

Trump last week, however, indicated that he could hold the huge gathering after all, "primarily at the White House" but also potentially parts of it at Camp David.

Merkel, a scientist by training, has declined.

"As of today, considering the overall pandemic situation, she cannot agree to her personal participation, to a journey to Washington," the spokesman said, confirming an earlier report on the Politico website.

"The federal chancellor thanks President Trump for his invitation to the G7 summit," he added. The 65-year-old chancellor is the oldest G7 leader after Trump, who is 73. Japan's Shinzo Abe, also 65, is several months younger than Merkel. Their age puts them at higher risk from the coronavirus.

The White House has said it is putting the huge diplomatic gathering back on the agenda as a "show of strength" when world economies are gradually reemerging from shutdowns. —AFP ■

Officer charged with murder of black American as unrest sweeps US

MINNEAPOLIS — Violent protests erupted across the United States late Friday over the death of an unarmed black man at the hands of police, with murder charges laid against a Minneapolis officer failing to quell seething anger.

Demonstrators clashed with police for a fourth straight night in the midwestern city of Minneapolis, where fires raged and there was widespread looting as well as sustained cat-and-mouse clashes between protesters and police.

US President Donald Trump ordered soldiers prepare to deploy to the city, Minnesota National Guard Major General Jon Jensen confirmed early Saturday.

The state has become the epicenter of violence since George Floyd died there in an arrest by an officer who pinned him to the ground for several minutes by kneeling on his neck.

Derek Chauvin was charged Friday with one count of third-degree murder -- unintentionally causing a death -- and one count of negligent manslaughter.

"This case is now ready, and we have charged it," said county prosecutor Mike Freeman as outrage grew over the latest death of an African American in police custody.

But the charges failed to calm a shaken nation whose deep wounds over racial inequality have been torn open anew, with riots raging from New York to Los Angeles in one of the worst nights of civil unrest in years.

In Atlanta police cruisers were attacked and set ablaze as rallies spun out of control, while in the capital Washington protesters collided with Secret Service agents in heated midnight scenes in front of the White House.

Protests took hold in a swathe of cities including Boston, Dallas, Denver, Des Moines, Houston, Las Vegas, Memphis, and Portland.—AFP ■

Germany, Brussels seal pact on Lufthansa rescue plan: sources

FRANKFURT — Germany and the European Commission have reached agreement on a giant Berlin-funded rescue plan for coronavirus-hit Lufthansa, a Commission spokeswoman and a source close to the negotiations said Friday.

Since the pandemic hit Europe, the Lufthansa group — which also includes Brussels and Austrian Airlines and Swiss – has been bleeding one million euros per hour, with around 90 per cent of its 760-aircraft fleet grounded.

Since the coronavirus pandemic hit Europe, the Lufthansa group has been bleeding one million euros per hour, with around 90 per cent of its 760-aircraft fleet grounded.
PHOTO: AFP

The deal would see the German carrier give up eight planes and their associated landing rights, the spokeswoman and the source said.

Lufthansa said in a statement it had "decided to accept the commitments offered by Germany to the EU Commission" for the rescue package, adding it would surrender up to 24 take-off and landing slots that could be allocated to rival airlines.

German media had previously reported the European Commission would demand the group give up valuable takeoff and landing rights at its Frankfurt and Munich hubs in exchange for Brussels' green light.

The nine-billion-euro ($10 billion) German state lifeline, would see Berlin take a 20-per cent stake in the group, with an option to claim a further five percent plus one share to block hostile takeovers.

That would make the federal government Lufthansa's biggest shareholder. On top of a total 5.7 billion euros in extra capital and 300 million to buy the shares at face value, public investment bank KfW would also lend Lufthansa three billion euros.

The company would agree to pay back much of the capital plus interest, while granting the state two seats on its supervisory board.

Hammering out the details of the package took so long because Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives were keen to minimize state control over the company's day-to-day running.—AFP ■

Trump announces probe of Chinese companies listed in US

WASHINGTON — US President Donald Trump on Friday ordered a probe into the actions of Chinese companies listed on American financial markets as tensions flared anew between the world's two biggest economies.

The announcement followed Beijing's move to implement a new security law on semi-autonomous Hong Kong that critics say would stifle freedom, as well as with Trump's claims that China obfuscated the origins of the coronavirus that has killed more than 100,000 people in the United States.

"I'm instructing my presidential working group on financial markets to study the differing practices of Chinese companies listed on the US financial markets with the goal of protecting American investors," Trump said, without providing details on what steps his administration might take.

"Investment firms should not be subjecting clients to the hidden and undue risks associated with financing Chinese companies that do not play by the same rules. Americans are entitled to fairness and transparency," he added.

As of February 2019, 156 Chinese companies with a market capitalization of $1.2 trillion were listed on US markets, at least 11 of which were state-owned, according to the Congressionally-mandated US-China Economic and Security Review Commission. Among the largest were e-commerce giant Alibaba, China's largest oil producer PetroChina and Sinopec, the world's largest oil refiner.— AFP ■

Global energy leaders call for greater investment in clean electricity systems amid Covid-19 crisis

PARIS — Energy ministers and electricity industry CEOs from around the world have called for mobilizing investments for secure and sustainable power systems to offset the impact of Covid-19 crisis on the electricity sector.

The participants in a high-level virtual meeting hosted by the International Energy Agency (IEA) recognized the critical importance of the electricity sector in response to the pandemic to keep essential services running, hospitals open and communication flowing.

"Resilient electricity systems are vital for modern societies today and for a sustainable energy future, but they need much greater investment," said IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol.

The IEA's World Energy Investment 2020 report earlier this week highlighted that global investment in the power sector is set to fall 10 per cent this year, compounding previous declines.

"The drop in investment in electricity grids, an essential but often overlooked part of the shift to cleaner energy, is set to be even steeper," said Birol."Renewables like wind and solar will not be able to fulfil their great promise without a robust infrastructure that reliably delivers the power they produce to consumers," he added. — ANI ■

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S MITSUI O.S.K KANKAI, LTD

Phone No: 2301178

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V YANTRA BHUM VOY. NO. (719E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V YANTRA BHUM VOY. NO. (719E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 31-5-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/MIP where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S GOLD STAR LINES

Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY. NO. (1121S/N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 31-5-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

Gwa-Makyayngu Bridge connecting Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State nearly 25 per cent complete

By Kyaw Htike Soe

INFRASTRUCTURAL development of a region plays a vital role in helping the country's GDP increase and uplifting the standard of living of poor people. Development of infrastructural projects provides economic growth, creates job prospects for local residents and lifts people out of the poverty. The road transport network plays an important role in fostering economic and social development of a region, improving socioeconomic status of local people, and speeding up the flow of trade.

Photo shows construction site of the Gwa-Makyayngu Bridge being built with the use of heavy machinery.—(Photo: IPRD)

Reliable road transport networks could support businesses of the locals and promote their socioeconomic status. Some foreign companies show interests in building urban development projects and constructing roads, bridges and deep seaports in Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State. Sustainable development of the road transport networks would help Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State reachable without consuming much time. Being located in a strategic position of Rakhine State's road transport network, Gwa Township connects some townships in other regions and states in the country through Ayeyawady Region and links other areas in Rakhine State via Thandwe Township. Majority of local people in Rakhine State's Gwa Township rely on motor road for travelling.

Residents in Gwa Town-

New international level wholesale market to emerge in Yangon City

By Swe Oo Wai

AS now is time to improve multiple sectors of Yangon City, high-rise buildings, high-rise hotels, high-rise business centres and shopping malls mushroom in many parts of the city. Some of the buildings are under construction and some have completed. Currently, Seamanea Yangon wholesale market which would be the largest modern trade centre is being built in Yangon City to commission it into service soon.

Mutual cooperation

The project of international level wholesale market is under construction on 167 acres of land at the corner of Bago River and Yadana Road in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township, Yangon Region. The project is being jointly implemented by Singapore-based Seamanea Group and Ei Co Ltd of Myanmar in a mutual cooperation.

The project aims to emerge a modern wholesale market where a large volume of commodities are available at a single place as well as to become the largest and most advanced trade centre in Myanmar. To become Yangon City as a business hub of Myanmar, industrial zones and special economic zones must be operated successfully with investments from international community and businesses. So also, it is necessary to emerge the wholesale markets meeting international standards so as to give paces for sales of products.

Construction of more than 700 shops

To be able to address such situation, an international level wholesale market is being built in the place that will be a business hub of Yangon City. The first phase of the project on 100,000 square metres of land will comprise more than 700 shops.

Car parks

A wholesale market to be formed with more than 700 shops, banks, restaurants, su-

The Gwa-Makyayngu Bridge under construction in Gwa Township will connect Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State.—(Photo: IPRD)

ship use the 146-mile long Yangon-Ngathainggyoung-Gwa Road, a major road linking Ayeyawady Region, a delta area full of rivers, creeks and fertile lands with Rakhine State, an area rich in natural resources such as oil and gas reserves, for travelling to other areas. The road connecting Yangon City via Gwa Township with famous Ngapali Beach leads through the vast, evergreen flatlands in Ayeyawady Region before crossing the the Rakhine Yoma Mountain Range. The road crossing the Rakhine Yoma Mountain Range has many curves and is vital to link Rakhine State with other regions and states in the country. The distance between Yangon and Ngapali Beach, one of the most famous beach resorts in Myanmar, is around 230 miles and the travelling time from Yangon to Ngapali Beach is about 10 hours' drive.

In order to solve road transport barriers encountered by people with travel difficulties and boost infrastructural development in Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State, A coastal road stretching 170 miles is being built at a cost of around Ks. 300 billion. Construction of bridges also plays a crucial role in building the coastal road. Upon completion of the coastal road that connects Chaungtha and Ngwehsaung Beaches, Gaw Yin Gyi Island in Ayeyawady Region and some beach towns in Rakhine State, it is expected to take around six hours to travel from Yangon to Ngapali Beach. Officials from the Ministry of Construction take the grievances of local people into consideration in order to lessen negative effects on the environment when constructing the coastal road.

Of the bridges to be built along the coastal road, the Gwa-Makyayngu Bridge under construction will be a major bridge connecting Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State. Construction of the Gwa-Makyayngu Bridge began on 18 November 2019 and the estimated cost of the project including its approaches is Ks. 9.32 billion. The structure is being built by Special Bridge Group-8 of the Department of Bridge under the Ministry of Construction. The bridge is of a reinforced facility and measures 1,399 ft. in length, 24 ft. in width, and has the capacity to withstand 75 tonnes of weight. Its clearance is about 20 ft. and waterway under the bridge is 85 ft. and has a 3 ft. long pedestrian walkway on each side. The project has been about 25 per cent finished so far, said Daw May Ma Tun, an in-charge engineer from the bridge construction site.

Once completed, the bridge would serve as a new trade route between Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State and residents from nearby areas would be able to use the facility in all seasons with greater ease. With the new road link, travellers from all corners of the country would be able to visit tourist attraction sites such as beaches and islands in Gwa and Thandwe Township by road, and Rakhine State would likely see tourism boom. In addition, the bridge would contribute to development of trade in the area, facilitate swift flow of commodities and reduce transportation charges for local people.

■■■

Caption: A scale model of international level wholesale market to be built on 167 acres of land at the corner of Bago River and Yadana Road in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township in Yangon Region.

permarkets as well as car parks for systematic parking of vehicles in various sizes will be built in addition to modern warehouses and advanced wide rooms.

The second phase of the project will be implemented on 300,000 metres of land where the market to emphasize wholesale trading, the halls for expositions and hotels will be built. Such implementation aims to give better facilities to businesspersons from global countries and local and foreign manufacturers in all aspects.

Striving for implementation

The project will be implemented with three phases in construction tasks. Utmost efforts are being made for inauguration of the construction of the first phase in coming April. The second phase which will consist of more than 1,000 shops will be built after April of coming year.

The third phase of the project will comprise housing apartments, shopping malls and shopping centres as well as hotels. Arrangements are being made for the international level wholesale market in order to create business linkages and give services for production, sales and distribution in a single place.

When the first phase of the project has been commissioned into service, it aims to give services of renting shops to small-scale businesspersons and merchants of Myanmar to do their businesses. Better stay facilities will be arranged for local and foreign entrepreneurs who arrive in Myanmar so as to operate various kinds of businesses in a single place.

Smooth transportation

Such kind of international level wholesale market in Yangon takes a position on the route to Thilawa Special Economic Zone and international ports. Moreover, the wholesale market has easy access to Yadana Hninsi Housing and Aya Chantha Advanced Housing Project as well as Emerald Bay in a short time.

Danyingon wholesale market has already been commissioned into service in Yangon. Such wholesale market emphasizes sales of various kinds of products such as fruits, vegetables, meat and fish, dairy products. The wholesale taking a position in Insein Township of Yangon Region comprises more than 500 shops.

Sales of variety goods

The undergoing international level wholesale market will accommodate a large number of products such as textile, electronics, cosmetics, digital products, information technological products, foodstuffs, construction materials, luxuries, personal goods, household utensils and electronic products.

Emergence of an international level wholesale market and business environment in Yangon City will contribute much towards not only businesspersons but also investors so as to operate their businesses in new market and to develop economy of Yangon City.

Translated by Than Tun Aung

■■■

Myanmar's pool star Phone Myint Kyaw match to be streamed live

Myanmar's pool player Phone Myint Kyaw. **PHOTO: KO AR TI'S FACEBOOK PAGE**

MYANMAR'S pool player Phone Myint Kyaw versus Chinese player Chu Bing Jie match in the first round of the 8 Ball Chinese Pool Super Match 2020 Tournament, being held in Chao Yang, China, to be played today, will be streamed live starting from 5 pm on the official Facebook page of the pool player named Ar T, according to Phone Myint Kyaw. The link for the match is https://www.facebook.com/ArtiPhone-Myintkyaw.999 and the match will start 5:30 pm of Myanmar Standard Time. Today's match will be seventh and last match of the first round of tourney for Myanmar's pool player Phone Myint Kyaw. Myanmar pool star player already advanced to the next stage of the tourney with six straight wins in the tourney and today's match is a point collection match for him. Currently, Phone Myint Kyaw is standing in the first place with full 37,800 points. Top three players will directly advance to the second round while fourth and fifth positioned players will fight for a play-off for their hope of next stage. —Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Fans could return for 2020-21 season,says Premier League chief

LONDON—Premier League chief executive Richard Masters said on Friday that fans could be allowed to attend top-flight matches in the 2020-21 season on a "phased basis".The Premier League plans to resume the 2019-20 campaign on Jun 17 following the coronavirus lockdown.

But the remaining 92 fixtures will be played behind closed doors to minimize the health risks of football's return in a country badly hit by the pandemic.

The prospect of playing the next season with no fans is unappetizing for the Premier League and Masters suggested it could be possible to being back supporters at some stage.—AFP ■

Serie A confirms June 20 return

MILAN—Serie A on Friday confirmed that top-flight football will return to Italy after a three-month coronavirus-enforced absence on the weekend of June 20-21.

Sports Minister Vincenzo Spadafora on Thursday gave the government's approval for a restart on June 20, in a championship which has been suspended since March 9.

"The clubs welcomed the green light given yesterday by Minister Spadafora for the resumption of Serie A and voted unanimously to play the four postponed matches on the weekend of June 20-21," Serie A said in a statement.

The four matches in question are Atalanta v Sassuolo, Hellas Verona v Cagliari, Inter Milan v Sampdoria and Torino v Parma.

The league added that the 27th round of matches would be organized from the week of June 22.

"Dates and times of the matches will be announced in the coming days," it added.

As Spadafora had requested, Italian Cup matches will take place the previous week with the final of that tournament on June 17.

No dates have been given yet for the return legs of the semi-finals, with Napoli set to host Inter Milan and Juventus at home against AC Milan, but they could be played on the weekend of June 13 and 14.—AFP ■

Italy's Serie A will return on June 20. **PHOTO: AFP**

UEFA considers 'all options' for Champions League format

ISTANBUL—UEFA is studying "all the options" for the format of this season's interrupted Champions League, amid reports on Friday that European football's governing body is considering moving the final from its scheduled venue in Istanbul.

The Turkish city was due to host the final this Saturday at the Ataturk Olympic Stadium, but the tournament was suspended in mid-March at the last-16 stage because of the coronavirus pandemic.

UEFA still hopes to conclude the competition by the end of August, but with major changes to the format likely and games set to be played behind closed doors.

"We are looking at all the options regarding the calendar and the format of the competition in the working group involving the clubs, leagues and national associations," a UEFA spokesman told AFP.

"No decision has been taken yet but there should be at the Executive Committee meeting on June 17."

The Ataturk Olympic Stadium in Istanbul, where the final of this season's Champions League was due to be played this weekend. **PHOTO: AFP**

According to a UEFA document seen by AFP, August 29 could be chosen as the new date for the final.

The New York Times reported Friday that the final would be moved from Turkey but that Istanbul could be chosen as host of a future final, when it is safe for fans to travel from abroad in large numbers.

Turkey, a country of 83 million, has so far recorded 4,461 coronavirus-related deaths and nearly 161,000 confirmed cases.

The country is currently in the process of loosening lockdown measures introduced to halt the spread of the virus and its domestic football season is set to resume on June 12.—AFP ■

SUNDAY SPECIAL

The Global New Light of Myanmar

By Htet Wai Yan
Uni- Second year English specialization student from EYU

Have you ever seen a man squandering a million dollars for the latest model car? Frankly, staying in an extravagant lifestyle everyone grudges is what everyone wants to be. But only a handful of people can get so rich although everyone has an opportunity to get rich. Why? The answer is simple. Because not everyone dares to be rich.

In our lifetime we spend about 20 years of our lifespan in learning, and we are employed for the government service or for other companies. We work for them till the end of our life in order to get our monthly salary. This is the mundane life routine that millions of people are accustomed to it. Let consider you are a government servant. The average salary in Myanmar is between 2 lakhs and 3 lakhs. With that salary, you have to live just for your survival. You will always have to be thrifty in your expenses, lest you could not make both ends meet and would run out of money before the end of the month. Later, you will get used to being parsimonious. I am awakened to the fact that dedicating our whole life as employees for others just for the sake of such a low salary doesn't make sense. But millions of people are still enjoying this. Maybe because jobs are getting rare. But this is not the life we all want.

So why don't they try to be rich? First of all, they do not dare to risk their present situation but stay in their comfort zone. Business is a kind of venture. In other words, it does not have stereotypical income. They are not stable. They are always fluctuating. For instance, the recession of your business can make you impoverish in no time. On the other hand, you can get rich if you can make your impact flourish. It all depends on you: your perseverance and your competency. It means you will get what you deserve. It looks like gambling. Win or lose depends on you once you bet. It does not sound good for the most of people. They don't have enough confidence in their ability. That is why they spurn the idea of taking venture but insist on the monthly salary while others make a fortune. The ingrained mindset of people also makes them falter to venture. They consider that being a government servant or workers at a subsidiary of any company is enough, whether it is an affluent life or not. That's why they can't bet their present life.

I am not arguing that being government servant can lead you astray. I am just pointing out that everyone has the potential to get rich. Instead of working for others, you should work for yourself: self-employed. We should not dedicate our whole life for working for others. Do not follow the sterotype model, but try to be different and original, which would be your advantage. Remember millionaires are not a type belonging to 99 out of 100.

In Praise of the Lady

By Htoo Cin Aung
Final Year, English, Yangon University of Education

Oh, Man,
With her kind heart,
A family she brings up;
With her gentle hands,
There a mansion stands;
With her effective teaching methods,
She guides her students along the right paths;
With her foresightedness,
Our society she leads to success;
With her empowering speeches,
To a nation she brings peace;
With her efforts, she offers her service
For putting an end to the environmental crisis;
The little children's love of Nature
She unfailingly nurtures.
The Queen of the Earth is she
Who alleviates the world's inequalities
For she stands for the hero of the equalities.
So why not put our trust in our respected leader,
Heed her words and be good followers.
Women are the beauty of Nature,
Yet they can lead us to a brighter future.
Wait and see
How she can build the Tree of Plenty
For you and me.
Why not praise the Lady?

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, or by email to **dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com** with the following information: **(1)** Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), **(2)** Own name and (if different) your penname, **(3)** Your level of education, **(4)** Name of your School/College/University, **(5)** A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, **(6)** A color photo of the submitter, **(7)** Copy of your NRC card, **(8)** Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.).– **Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar**

LOVE IS NOT LIFE, BUT LIFE IS LOVE

By Kyaw King

It was a sunny day after two consecutive days of raining. I have been in a conversation with a security man from our company. I accidently knew about him that he went to university and left the university over two decades ago.

I was amazed and interested in the change of his life from a university student to a security man during a couple of decades.

Though he was a university student in the 1990s when only few per cent of the people in the country could join university. He was one of them and had many chances to get high-ranking jobs if he continued to pursue the university education, but he is now in opposite. He is working as a security man, one of the lower ranks of a small company.

He left the second year of university in 1996. He said he has become aimless after his girlfriend has died of snake bite. Love changed his life.

I asked him, "Didn't you find another love." He replied, "No."

He said he and his girlfriend made a promise to love one another for the whole life. He continued that he also doesn't want to substitute another woman in the place of his beloved one.

He said he even tried to end his life after his girlfriend's death. But, at that time, he was staying in a monastery, and got relief from the painful experiences by listening to the sermons of presiding Sayadaw daily.

He then went to Singapore, and Malaysia, and earned money to support his aged parents.

After his parents had died, he didn't want to earn money anymore, came back home and stayed without income for several years.

After staying without job for several years, he felt bored and hadn't much money to survive, and decided to work. He didn't want to do the job with much responsibility, and eventually chose to work as a security man.

He said he was now okay with his life. I asked him whether he doesn't want to be successful. He replied that he didn't want to be successful since his beloved one was dead.

I said nothing. But, the phrase "Love is not life" appears in my mind. If I said this to him, I know that he will reject it.

In the following night, I missed my girlfriend and thought about "love". A stream of thoughts brought me to the past.

It was more than a decade ago. Nyi Maung is my university friend as well as my roommate in the hostel.

He comes from Pyapon, the town next to my town. We are zoology students of the Maubin University. He is white and tall. He is calm and peaceful. During our holidays, we mostly went back home together.

One time, we got four holidays, and decided to visit one another's village. First, I took him to my village. He stayed at my house for two days, going to the beautiful places in my village.

Then, he brought me to his house, which is located in the southernmost part of a village in Pyapon Township. It takes around 45 minutes from Pyapon to his house by motorcycle.

When we arrived, his mother wearing a warm smile welcomed us in front of the house. His younger sister, who is about eight or nine years old, gave us two glasses of water.

His mother asked us how we came back, and how we spent last two holidays. She also asked about my parents. I stayed with my friend at his room.

In the evening, we were called to have dinner. The dining room was filled with the aromas of variety of curries. I already tasted the curries cooked by Nyi Maung's mother during our stay at hostel in Maubin. They are delicious. Nyi Maung's father smiled and asked me to enjoy the dinner.

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31 MAY 2020
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

A Glimpse of the late Sayagyi Dr Than Tun's *History of Buddhism in Burma:* A D 1000 to 1300

Sayagyi Dr Than Tun
PHOTO: UNIVERSITIES' CENTRAL LIBRARY

By Dr Myint Zan

Sayagyi ('Revered teacher') the late Dr. Than Tun (6 April 1923-30 November 2005) would turn (if he were still alive) 97 on 6 April 2020. Dr Than Tun was a preeminent and native historian of Burma of the late 20th century. His undergraduate degrees were from Rangoon University specializing in history. He obtained two earned doctorates from the University of London in 1956 and 1990 respectively (see below). He was Professor of History from University of Mandalay from 1965 till his retirement in 1983. He was a Visiting Professor in Northern Illinois University in the United States and in Kyoto University in Japan in the 1980s. He published English language academic journal articles on history both in Burmese and English and many books in Burmese mainly on historical themes.

In his historical writings Than Tun gave major reliance not (not) on what the Burmese (now Myanmar) or indeed foreign chroniclers wrote in their 'histories'. Instead his research methodology and historical research was based mainly on empirical work by collecting, collating and interpreting the historical events recorded in epigraphs, inscriptions and votive tablets throughout the ages.

In late March 2020 I bought and read History of Buddhism in Burma, 1000 to 1300 AD by Dr Than Tun (4th printing January 2020). I am grateful to the publishers for not 'reverting' or changing the word Burma, Burmese, Burman, Pagan mentioned in the original manuscript of Than Tun to the current vogue of expressions: 'Myanmar' 'Bamar' and 'Bagan'. In any case, it is a historical distortion (I trust Sayagyi Dr Than Tun would not necessarily disagree with this) to wily-nilly change formally, officially as well as informally and unofficially and retrospectively the terms used in historical documents like Than Tun's Ph.D. thesis of 1956.

Seik Ku Cho Cho စိတ်ကူးချိုချို publishing house republished a 'revised and enlarged' edition of then Ph.D. candidate Than Tun's thesis for his Ph.D. submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of London in the year 1956.

As a dilettante but with an interest in history and things historical I have learned a lot from Than Tun's tome or treatise (no less). There are quite a few typos (not Than Tun's but probably those of the publishers) of the 4th edition. There are a few grammatical or stylistic expressions a few of those may be those of (or by) Than Tun himself of which I would respectfully point out only one stylistic issue.

Throughout his thesis Than Tun used the phrase 'It is interesting to note' at the very least about 15 times. I recall that the post graduate theses guidelines in 1979 at the Faculty of Law at Monash University in Australia states to the effect that 'Do not overuse phrases such as it is noteworthy, it is interesting .. just make it noteworthy or interesting but eschew the over-use of these phrases'.

Notwithstanding such stylistic issues it is intellectually challenging to learn from the late blunt-speaking, forthright historian.

Another landmark achievement of Than Tun should be stated. About 34 years after Than Tun was awarded a Doctorate (Ph.D.) by the University of London in 1956 the same University awarded him a second Doctorate (D. Litt, Doctor of Literature) in 1990 for his 10 volume (over 7000 pages) collection, collation and skeletal translations of the royal orders issued by various Burmese kings from the years 1598 to 1885 in The Royal Orders of Burma published by the University of Kyoto, the Center for Southeast Asian Studies between the years 1983 to 1990.(The publication of The Royal Orders of Burma was, in part, a collective effort. In the first volume Than Tun thanked about 46 persons by name for their assistance in their collection and compilation).

This writer would only 'skim' the postulates provided with strong, convincing epigraphic evidence Than Tun made in his earlier work (in his first doctoral thesis). Around 95% of the time this writer was unable to read the phonetic transliteration of the medieval Burmese (that was the term used by Than Tun). There is one photographic reproduction of a single sentence inscription in medieval (or is it early?) Burmese from a votive by or about King Anirud- dha (Anawrahta). This writer is una- ble to de- ci- pher a single alphabet or letter though the English translation provided by Dr Than Tun helps at least indirectly to understand it.

Apparently, Than Tun did not translate his full thesis from English into Burmese. (Incidentally colloquial Burmese was Dr. Than Tun's style of writing from the mid-1960s). Still, I have seen a few segments of his thesis being translated by himself into Burmese in the Universities Central Library website.

In History of Buddhism in Burma, A.D. 1000-1300 Than Tun claimed or at least opined that:

(1) The Buddhist monk *Shin Arahan* ရှင်အရဟံ did not quite bring Buddhism to Pagan. If he did, it was not 'pure' Buddhism as the chronicles claimed. Buddhism (Theravada, Mahayana, mixed with Hinduism) already existed in various forms quite some time before Anawrahta became King.

(2) *King Anawrahta* အနော်ရထာ *(Aniruddha)* အနုရုဒ္ဓါ apparently did not invade Suvanabhummi, 'Thaton') to obtain the the three baskets of Buddha's discourses' as the chronicles stated but almost as an after thought after Aniruddha incursions into Pegu and lower Burma.

(3) The 'revered' King *Kyan Sittha* ကျန်စစ်သား (Dr Than Tun transliterated as *Thiluin Man*) ထီးလှိုင်မင်း was (a) usurper (page 24) and (b) interloper (page 319)! Than Tun listed only Thiluin Man as a 'usurper' among the 12 Pagan kings during the period he discussed (page 24).

(4)Than Tun stated that Aniruddha 'only' prayed that he attained 'nirvana' but the arguably more ambitious or egotistical (my words not that of Than Tun) Thiluin Man (Kyan Sitt Thar) and Cansu I (One)စည်သူ 1 (Alaung Sithu)အလောင်းစည်သူ prayed not only for nirvana (nibbana) နိဗ္ဗာန် but for Buddhahood (in contemporary Myanmar language hsu-gyee-pan?)

(5) The peak of the Pagan Empire at least in terms of territorial demarcations (based on conquests) was not during Kings Aniruddha's and Thiluin Man's time but during the time of 'Cansu II' (Narapati Sithu) နရပတိစည်သူ

(6) Before Aniruddha's time the Burmans (Bamas) were a 'raw' ethnic group' and the Mons 'the conquered were, in a sense, conquerors' culturally over the Burmans.

(7) Mon language was used extensively starting from Aniruddha's time and especially in Thiluin Man's time. Mon rather than Burmese was ostensibly the Court language and definitely the main language of most of the inscriptions of the period from about 1084 when Thiluin Man became king of Pagan to about 1174 when 'Cansu II"စည်သူ ၂ (*Narapati Sithu*) became king.

(8) 'The Burmanisation' (Than Tun's term) started with Cansu II (Narapati Sithu) around 1174. Quite a few times Than Tun inferred that the Burmans owe a lot to the Mons linguistically and culturally. 'Burmanisation' started around 1174 and the Burmese language *Myanmar Sar* မြန်မာစာ or should it be/is it ? *Bamar Sar* ဗမာစာ) became more in use only in late 12th century.

(9) The Arigyi the supposedly corrupted 'monks' have been debased or denigrated by the chroniclers. Than Tun argued that the Ari did not exist before the supposed arrival of 'pure' Theravada Buddhism to Pagan around 1057 (through Shin Arahan) but only in the 13th century where they were quite popular at that time. Monks belonging to that particular sect, in some religious festivals, drank liquor and ate meat and that was about all the 'deviant' monks of the era did. Later chroniclers not only exaggerated the supposed shenanigans of the Arigyis but wrongly assigned the Aris to the earlier (11th) rather than the 13th century.

Almost all of the the points mentioned above do not conform to what this writer was taught (until middle school) in the history texts and in history lessons. Arguably, it can perhaps be stated that some if not almost all of the points summarised above have not (not) been incorporated in current middle and high school texts,

In relatively recent Myanmar contemporary history and to be 'provincial', the writers (perhaps not yet the 'chroniclers') of the eighth standard history text of 2018-19 academic year mentioned the artificial or 'puffed up' term khitpyaung taw hlan yae ခေတ်ပြောင်းတော်လှန်ရေး (*'epoch-changing revolution'* in its literal translation) to describe the take over of March 1962 and subsequent events that engulfed if not almost blighted the country.

The text also used the derogatory term *pyi pyae* ပြည်ဖြေး

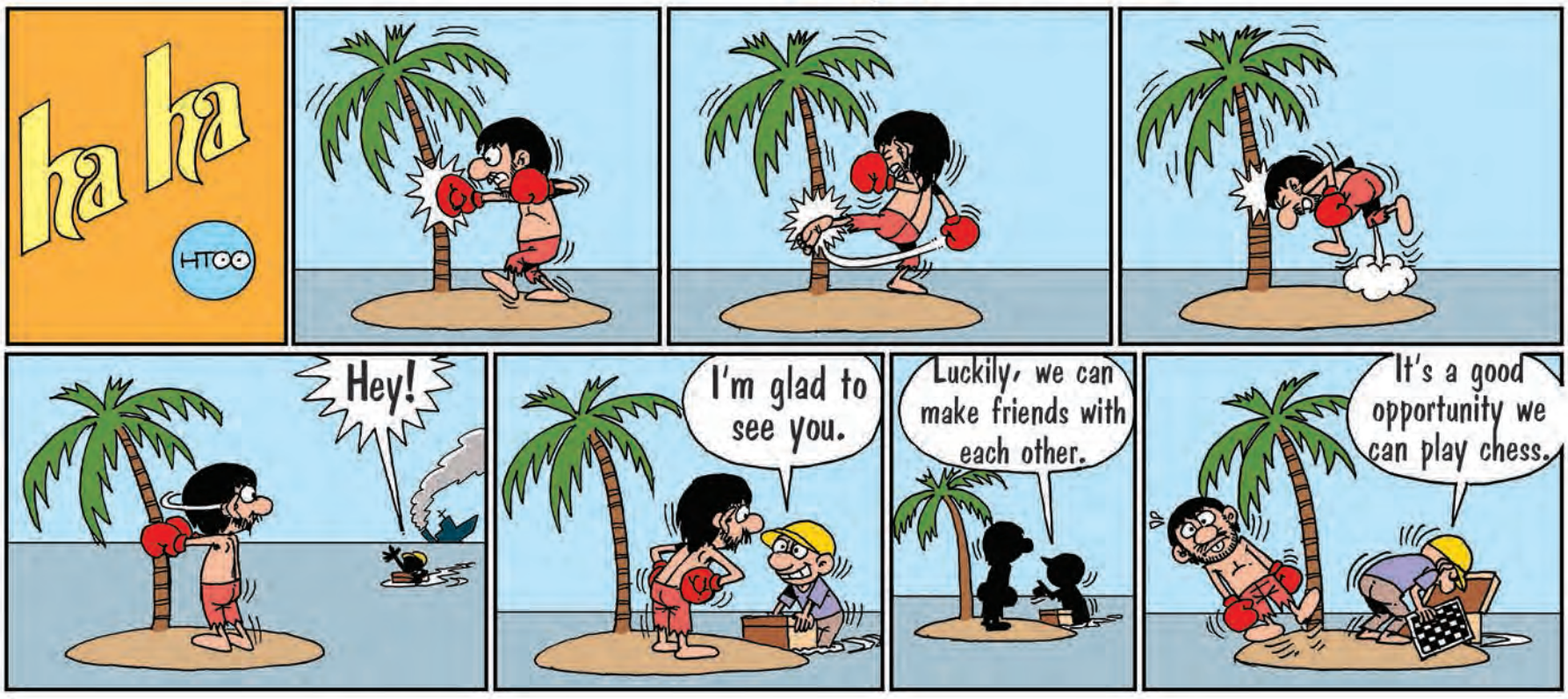
(the English translation 'expatriate group' does not fully convey the derogatory nature of the term pyi pyae) to describe the followers of former Prime Minister U Nu (25 May 1907-14 February 1995)'s failed rebellion from 1969 to 1980. Are we still in the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) era? (Incidentally around 2005 I have seen a paper written in English by Than Tun and published by the Myanmar Historical Commission where he strongly critiqued the BSPP regime. I have not seen such critiques by Than Tun written in the Burmese language).

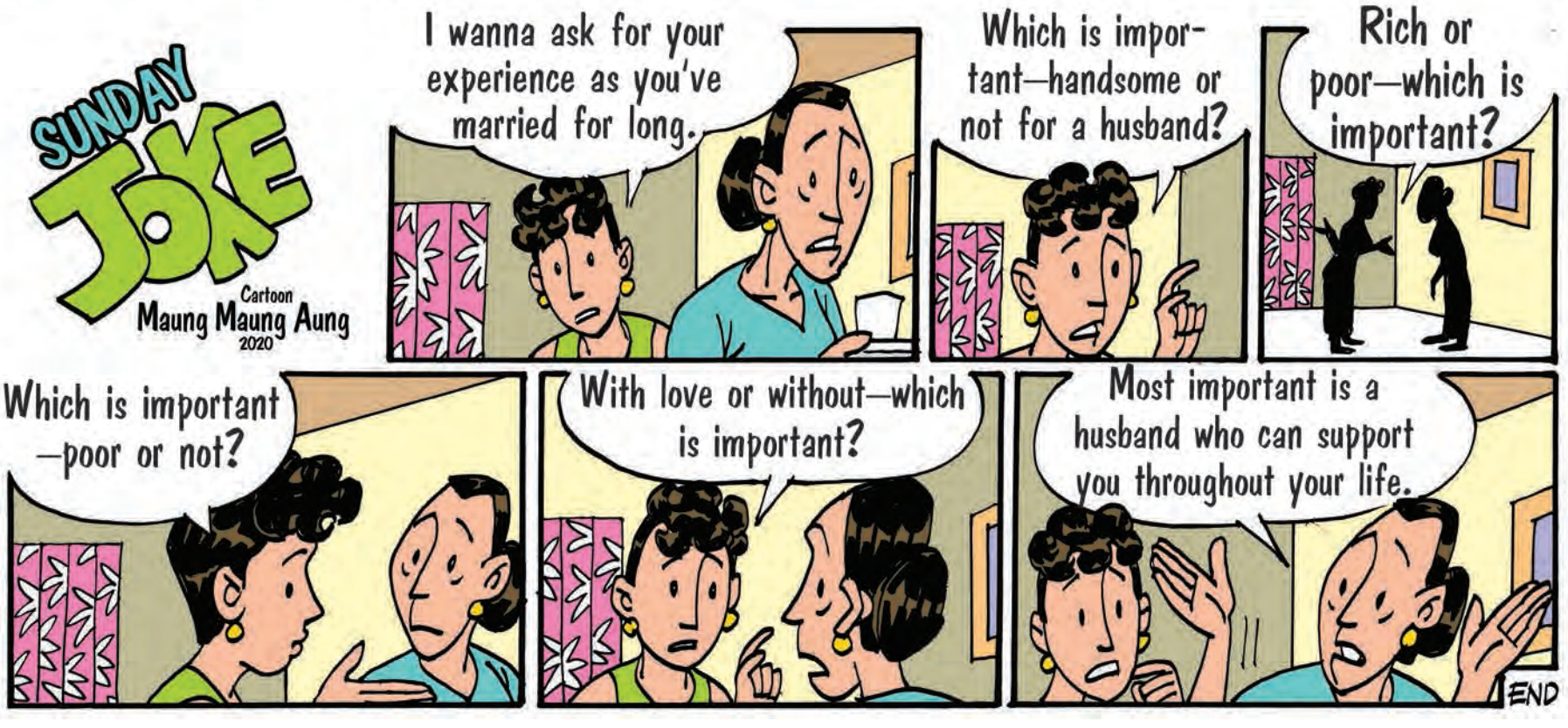
This writer did mention to two current full-time and adjunct Professors of History about these anomalies if not distortions in middle school, high school history texts. Independently, both informed me that the middle and high school history texts are in the process of being revised.

Even when the new texts are produced may we really see substantive and necessary changes in terminology and orientation regarding contemporary Burmese history? Would any of Dr Than Tun's 'revised' and measured analyses say of the Pagan (Bagan) era be incorporated in the 'revised' history texts ?

PHOTO: KYAW ZAYA, PHOE KHWAR

SUNDAY COMICS





Hibernation

By Maung Nyein Lu

(I)

FROST is falling thicker. So, I must find another den fast. The warm hibernaculum in that cave is so packed with over a hundred of coiling, slimy narrow fellows, having no room for me. This bulky, spineless body swells with a fatty rodent inside, and the surface of the ground is rather slick. No choice. I have to do sidewinding lumberingly, throwing my head forward as my huge, unwieldy body follows, then throwing my head forward again. At some places, some wide scales on my belly grip the ground while the other scales push my long, sluggish body forward. Must find another den quick. Yet my movement is slow, as slow and cumbersome as a poor, preggy woman climbing up a hill.

The big, fat rat, my fav prey, is now giving me troubles. My sniffing forked tongue kept my keen senses alert, directing me to the dilapidated shed over there, and I found its hideout, and got the timid creature right away, with the first strike of head shot.

More frost is coming down. My mind slides fast, but my body twists and slithers rather slowly.

Frost fall signals a warning to the Serpentes like us, the time for so-called hibernation. But to tell you the truth, we don't actually hibernate, but we're just going through brumation period, that is, we become less active, sluggish and apathetic, and our metabolism extremely slows down.

This slimy, heavy body slithering over the thick frost, I've at last found a den, an old cave with a very narrow opening. More frost falls. I mustn't hesitate a second at the entrance. Must go inside as fast as I can.

Here, inside, it's safe. No frost, no wind. But the wet floor of the cave is icy cold, like a sheet of metal. Still feeling chill to the bone. Slowly I coil myself in a dark corner.

I regret I've got a heavy meal inside my tummy. I had no time to have it digested before the cooling started. Frost fell earlier than expected. Indeed, having a heavy meal before the frost falls is no good for me. I'm now seized with fear my metabolism wouldn't be able to digest it anymore. Besides, a sudden cold snap has caught me. I must turn myself a dead, cold stone, and wait till a little warmth comes back to my icy veins.

(II)

My yellow skin is rough and bristly, as if prickly thorns studded all over, displaying a diamond shaped pattern. (Some fellows have banded patterns, some blotched, but others have no identifying pattern at all.) And my tail rattles, when agitated. Some narrow fellows have shades of brown, gray and black to tones of rust, olive, cream or light pink. Cool, isn't it? Yet scary enough.

How we narrow fellows hate the cold weather! Ya know, Nature doesn't favour us: our scaly skin isn't endowed with a coat of fur or thick hair to keep ourselves warm. Of course, the human skin is not that thick like the buffalo hide (Excuse me for this simile. Sorry.). But humans are damned clever, you know. A display of superintelligence? More intelligent means more cunning? They kill the rest of our animal kingdom, for example, they kill goats, and wear goat skin, put on beautiful coats of fur, make a fire and cuddle themselves by the fireplace. How nice!

By now, I can imagine—ya know, we ectothermic vertebrates also have the power of imagination—those humans must have cowered back indoors, warming their shivering hands by the fireside. Now they have confined themselves tight, like in times of pandemic. Homo sapiens in hibernation! Ha ... Ha ... And me, here, all alone, a coiling bundle. Same plight, huh? It's time humans seriously reflected over their wretched plight, ya know. They have doggedly followed the seductive illusions of Greed the Demon, and destroyed the beauty and harmony of Nature. That's too bad. Ironically, it's only when the lockdown (God forbid it!) comes to our mother earth that, once again, the sky is blue and the rivers are pure.

Of course, is there anyone who doesn't love to be out on nice sunny days after a long cold? We narrow fellows also enjoy cuddling ourselves in the warmth of the yellow sun of March or April, heads popping out. Imagine of a gorgeous rattlesnake like me, sunbathing on the fine sand, wearing sunglasses, like those half-naked, tanned bodies, sprawling on a sunny beach.

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In fact, hibernation is sorta solitary confinement, isn't it? I remember a story of a young man narrated by my mother when I was a wee little reptile.

"Son," said my serpent Mom, "humans are so terrible. Keep that in mind. Once upon a time, there was a young man who was thrown into prison for no reason. Poor guy! With no fair trial, he was sentenced to his fourteen-summers solitary confinement in a small square cell! See, it's sorta much long, long period of hibernation. That young fellow began to rack his brains about how he could survive. Anyhow, he must have some company in his lonely cell."

Sounds interesting. My little glassy eyes sparkled, my tail rattling, agitated.

"Then," said my serpent Mom, "he noticed some crawling little creatures on the floor and on the wall. Little ants moving their front and back legs of one side and the middle leg of the other side together during one step. Wonderful! He, then, made friends with these tiny creatures, and happened to talk to them, like some people talk to their puppies and pussies, ya know."

Wow! A smart guy!

"Well," my serpent Mom continued, "he also had two male and female spiders with him. He thought to himself, You must have a name. And he gave them names. He called the spider couple John and Mary, who, without much ado, finally got wedded. The young prisoner played the role of pastor, and said to the spider bridegroom, "John, repeat after me. I, John, take thee, Mary be my wedded wife . . . to have and to hold ... from this day forward ... for better or worse ... blah, blah, blah... Ha ... ha... What a wonderful world! So, that was the way he had survived those miserable years of solitude till he was set free on a new year day, thanks to the amnesty law."

"I see," I replied, nodding my little serpent head.

"Son," she said, "stay away from humans. Give a loud shake of your tail, and scare them away. Strike only if you're forced to. We Serpentes are not civilized like Homo Sapiens, but we are not hostile. We just go our own way, ya know."

Yes, what my serpent Mom said was right. I must shun those two-legged creatures. As such a creature comes my way, my forked tongue restlessly senses the approaching Walking Danger. Of course, many creatures in the animal kingdom have to protect their own territory. It is humans, adopting such a predator's diabolical attitude, who always encroach, cut down the forests and set the forests aflame. Where on earth could we find space for our little hideouts? Nevermore.

D'you know the awesome example of Robin Redbreasts? Of course, the poor chicks of these little birdies are what we narrow fellows like to devour. The little mother birds, as well as the father birds, are a bit smaller than a man's fist, but I salute them for their courage, for strictly safeguarding their own nests, their territory. As another bird is about to encroach his territory, the little robin puffs up his little, mighty scarlet chest, his head arched backwards, with wings outstretched. (Ya know, just like a male peacock spreading out his tail feathers and eyespots out on display to impress a female.) So, the undaunted, little robin scares away any intruder, big or small, until the last-ditch fight comes. He gets into a fight_ only as the last resort.

How about the most intelligent creatures of the animal kingdom? They encroach, they rob things for some lame excuses, obsessed with greed. Yes, Greed has swallowed their heart and soul, and turned them into demons in disguise. Of course, they might boast about their mottos and ethics like "Man has his own boundary line; so does the Ogre". But ya know, humans seldom practise what they preach. No wonder, there follow the endless wars of the civilized worlds!

(III)

Frost doesn't cease. Sort of air frost. Like a wreath of white roses, it builds up, bit by bit, around the narrow opening of the cave I've now tucked myself in.

I feel something wrong in my tummy. That big, dead rat, like a hard ball of solid metal inside, now gives me troubles! My muscles can't crush its bones any more. I'm breathing hard. The cold is cutting my veins. My frozen metabolism has slowed down too much. My vision blurs. Do I see a white pall flying in the air? Or is it a sheet of frost before my eyes?

Now I regret. The food inside my body should have been digested before this frost disaster struck. It's too late.

Is it the irony of Life? I kill and eat my prey, and now my dead prey is the call of Death.

I know my last breath is coming_

A musical piece? The vibrations of a chanting? My heart misses a beat. I have no external ears, but the inner ears inside my head, attached to my jaw bones, can receive the vibrations of the sounds. Where does it come from? A Buddhist monk's solemn words, wafting through the sharp, frosty air! How blissful! How lucky to listen to the golden words at this very moment!

"... Buddham saranam Gacchami"

A pause. Unaware, I repeat after the words, in a hissing sound: "Buddham saranam Gacchami." The silent cave echoes my faint utterance, the very first utterance ever chanted in my life!

"Dhammam saranam Gacchami"

A pause. Unaware, I repeat: *"Dhammam saranam Gacchami."*

"Sangham saranam Gacchami"

Unaware, I repeat: *"Sangham saranam Gacchami."* The whole cave vibrates with my chanting. How I feel liberated! How peaceful! I praise the life of humans! What a blessed life would it be for a human to have a golden chance like this to listen to the Golden Words!

Then a strong blast of wind blows. I can't hear anything. After a long pause, I hear the vibrating words of the Dhamma once again. I take heed to what I hear.

"... To make our mind suitable for meditation, one of the things we need to do is to reflect on death. Life is very short, very soon we'll be gone, considering our age here. For some, very soon, life will be over. If we have awareness and clarity before we die, we can reflect on what we have done in life....

A heavy frost interrupts, and the voice is blurred. I listen attentively. Now I hear the Golden Words once again.

"... I wanted to die mindfully. I wanted to die meditating. That was the only thing that gave me some peace of mind, something I could rely on, all the other things were not around me anymore...

Now I think I must seize this moment, my last moment, to heed the Golden Words.

"Shallow breath in, and out..." I am now taking a shallow breath in, and out.

"... Thoughts coming, going. Let your thoughts come and go... Be aware of your thoughts now coming, now going, be aware of your Vedanā or sensations rising, rising, now disappearing_"

Yes, I'm aware of the cold now rising, rising. And I'm aware of the pain rising. Pain rising, pain rising ...

"Shallow breath again, in and out..."

Yes, I take a shallow breath in, and out from moment to moment. How long have I been doing this mindful practice? A flash of a mental picture of the world in cheerful sunshine. I'm aware of the thought coming in, and going out. I'm aware of the cold now going, going. Pain rising now, pain going ... This body is our vehicle for awakening...

"Be mindful. Shallow breath in, and out..."

Now I see dazzling rays shining through the darkness. Yes, I'm aware of dazzling rays. In my mind's eye, the blue flame of a yellow candle is now snuffed out. Like a thin wisp of white smoke, my life now leaves this spineless burden. I can see my lifeless body down there from above. My old skin of Life is shed, and I'm now drifting, floating into a new life ...

FROM PAGE-S-3

After the dinner, Nyi Maung washed all of the dishes, which he said it is his duty. Though I tried to help him, Nyi Maung and his parents didn't allow me to do so as I'm a guest.

He took me to the beautiful places in his village. Though it is a village. It is like a sub-township. There are a high school, a station hospital, and a police station in the big village. Nyi Maung said his village would be a town soon.

I saw their family's love and happiness. When we went back to Maubin, I asked Nyi Maung what is the main cause of their family's happiness. He smiled and replied, "it is unconditional love." He said this word in English. If I confess, I never heard this word before.

I later found this word in a book. Unconditional love is to love without conditions. With the appearance of Nyi Maung's family in my mind's eyes, I silently said "Life is love. It is unconditional love."

As we are emotional beings, we have to experience loves in various forms. "Love" can make our lives both happy and tragic.

Because of a tragic love, we shouldn't give up on our lives.

Also, don't forget to pursue an unconditional love.

May your life be filled with unconditional love and happiness.

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, or by email to **dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com** with the following information: **(1)** Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), **(2)** Own name and (if different) your penname, **(3)** Your level of education, **(4)** Name of your School/College/University, **(5)** A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, **(6)** A color photo of the submitter, **(7)** Copy of your NRC card, **(8)** Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.).— **Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar**