State Counsellor discusses impact of COVID-19 on trade sector

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi held a videoconference on the impact of COVID-19 on the trade sector yesterday from the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw.

The following persons participated in the videoconference: Deputy Minister for Commerce U Aung Htoo, City Mart Managing Director Daw Win Win Tint who manages a major supply chain in domestic trade and SME entrepreneur Daw Thet Su Htay who is producing natural tamarind/plum juice, fried beans and fermented bean paste.

The State Counsellor, in her capacity as Chairperson of the National-Level Committee for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Prevention, Control and Treatment, said that the Ministry of Commerce plays crucial role in economic matters, especially this ministry manages export of products to foreign countries, Myanmar people earn their livelihood by exporting agricultural products abroad; and that this issue has been given serious consideration not only during COVID-19 crisis but also during normal times, with regular instructions being given to the Ministry of Commerce; Myanmar cannot rely only on one or two markets for its exports; more markets are required for the higher quantity of products in a wide range of varieties; only then would our country have protection and have more choices; we would be able to export our agricultural products on a larger scale and also in more varieties; if only one or two places wanted to buy one or two products, then our country would have to produce fewer varieties of crops; three or four years ago the Ministry of Commerce tried to expand markets, and we are now reaping the good results of these efforts; when China closed border trade due to the COVID-19, export volume to China has declined; however, rice and corn exports to Thailand increased and because it was possible to divert trade to Thailand this has given the country some form of relief. She added that she wanted the Deputy Minister from the Ministry of Commerce to continue by discussing these matters.

Deputy Minister U Aung Htoo discussed the impacts of trade, relations with an economic stimulus plan and matters related to post-COVID economic relief plan.

SEE PAGE-3

2 more cases of COVID-19 in Myanmar on 23 June, total figure reaches 292

Updated at 8 pm, 23 June 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Case</th>
<th>292</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Case</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Death</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recovery Update on 23 June 2020 after two consecutive tests

| Total Recovered | 204 |
| New Recovered   | 4   |
| Discharged from Hospital | 190 |

New Persons under Investigation from the past 24 hours to 12 noon of 22 June 2020

| New PUI | 34 |

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Union Minister U Thaung Tun participates in the virtual 10th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Intersessional Ministerial Meeting (RCEP ISSL MM 10)

Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun yesterday attended the 10th Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Intersessional Ministerial Meeting via videoconference.

The meeting was chaired by Mr Trần Tuấn Anh, Viet Nam’s Minister for Industry and Trade, and co-chaired by Mr Myung Hee Yoo, Korea’s Minister for Trade, Industry and Energy. Economic Ministers from 10 ASEAN Member States and ASEAN FTA Partner countries — Australia, China, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, and the ASEAN Secretary-General participated in the meeting.

The Ministers reaffirmed their commitments to sign the RCEP Agreement in 2020 as instructed by the Leaders at the 3rd RCEP Summit which was held in November 2019.

At the meeting, the RCEP Trade Negotiation Committee Chair presented the TNC Report to Ministers regarding with the signing of RCEP Agreement in 2020. The report included the progress of RCEP negotiations resulted from RCEP TNC Meetings and the remaining issues seeking for the Ministers’ guidance. The Ministers noted the report and tasked TNC for way forward to settle down all the remaining issues.

The Union Minister reaffirmed Myanmar’s commitment to sign the RCEP Agreement in 2020 and expressed his thanks to the Trade Negotiation Committee and relevant working groups for their continuous efforts to get significant progress resulted from the Virtual meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. He highlighted the importance of conclusion of the RCEP in November this year particularly as the global economy is facing severe challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He said that the signing of the RCEP would reflect the strong and resilient regional commitment to maintain the global rules-based multilateral trading system. He also encouraged all RCEP participating countries to show their utmost flexibility to resolve the outstanding issues.

The Ministers adopted the Joint Media Statement of the 10th Intersessional RCEP Ministerial Meeting.

U Than Aung Kyaw, Myanmar RCEP TNC Lead, Director-General for Foreign Economic Relations Department and other senior officials supported the Union Minister’s participation in the meeting.

2 more cases of COVID-19 in Myanmar on 23 June, total figure reaches 292

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case No</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact with positive patient</th>
<th>Overseas Travel History</th>
<th>Hospital for medical treatment</th>
<th>Lab result</th>
<th>Remark</th>
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<tr>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes ((Bangladesh))</td>
<td>District Hospital, Maungtaw</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Held under quarantine (Maungtaw Township)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>292</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Sittway Township, Rakhine State</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes ((Bangladesh))</td>
<td>People’s Hospital, Sittway</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Held under quarantine (Sittway Township)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ministry of Health and Sports
State Counsellor discusses impact of COVID-19 on trade sector

FROM PAGE 1

He talked about one-fifth of the trade sector seeking direct impact of COVID on both local and foreign trades; negative effects of carvings on production, commerce, tourism, hotels and restaurant services across the country.

However, the Ministry of Commerce could stockpile about 9,000 tonnes of rice purchased at the bottom price, and the ministry contributed 4,000 bags of rice in the government’s donation to Wuhan locals in China; could sell 120,000 rice bags to Yangon Region government for supplying to grassroots people.

The State Counsellor said that lead items of concern to the people was produce like tomatoes which did not last long, furthermore, it perishes when damaged slightly and thus would not fetch a good price; they were worried about such matters; especially in cases where the product could not be exported, it was important for the product to be consumed inside the country; internal transportation was very important; that was why the Ministry of Commerce had been instructed to give special attention to this matter and the ministry had taken necessary measures; after the COVID-19 pandemic started, there was a problem with tomatoes; that time was when the tomatoes were produced in abundance and export was very difficult; that was why the Ministry of Commerce took the lead items of concern to the people to produce value added items; the available assistance government, the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; receiving trainings processes, and showcasing expos in Thailand, China, the United States, Vietnam, Japan and Korea with the assistance of the government.

She added the benefit of COVID-19 loan to the businesses during the crisis, lay-offs at the factories due to the pandemic and preparations for post COVID-19 period; difficulties in repayment of loans and FDA application.

Regarding the discussions, the State Counsellor remarked that some products have to rely on domestic markets when export markets were not under favourable conditions; domestic communication and transport sectors are important; Myanmar experienced panic buying amid fears of COVID-19, such as purchase of unnecessary items; public anxiety then gradually declined as they realized that they did not need to worry about such commodities; she did not want the people to have such an attitude to accumulate commodities with fear; no matter what it was the government’s responsibility to take care of the problem; it would be necessary to develop a system for the distribution of an essential item which is limited supply in a fair and equitable manner; a problem such as this could be overcome only with collective strength; to talk about this subject, during the Second World War, the allied countries had to struggle a great deal; there was strict rationing for items such as sugar, butter, meat, flour, and bread; it was not done in a random manner with advantages to be considered only after consultation with health experts; the dietary requirements

return to normalcy, it had to be extremely careful all the time so that a second COVID wave would not hit the country due to undue haste; lessons should be learnt from other countries where the number of cases increased after they hurried in relaxing strict restrictions; therefore, regular steps are being taken in this matter; it must be said that the habit of buying non-essential items has declined while people are placing more priority on essential items; the fact that people are thinking more about what is an important issue and what is minor is not a bad thing; some persons working in declining markets might have some difficulties; such problem must be addressed step-by-step; domestic commodity flow, domestic trade and production of value added items must be considered for both local and foreign sectors; the government needs not worry about food if systematic management is carried out in this sector; Myanmar is an agricultural country and can produce healthy food items; the country has many opportunities and advantages; they must be used to uplift the country; while making efforts to develop the country it was necessary to always keep one eye on a crisis such as COVID-19; on the other hand they had to be considering about the post COVID period; the reason they had to be considering about the post COVID situation is because in a situation such as this, they need to consider what would be profitable for the country in the long term; in normal times, the goal should be continuous development; the country should proceed with steps needed for development by making energetic and strenuous efforts; in times like this the challenges are huge and there is much to consider; according to the saying “necessity is the mother of invention”, our innovative brains become more active; we need to be creative and innovative and figure out how to make our existing resources to be more valuable for ourselves as well as for the whole world; our country does not exist in isolation; that was why if there is a need for a particular commodity in a certain country, as a rule we should sell this commodity if we are able to sell it; we should sell it as much as possible; we should assist others who are in need; this may be considered as humanitarian assistance apart from that it is also good for our relations among the human community; she believes that in the long term good results would come out of good intentions towards good results in the end.

The country has many opportunities and advantages; they must be used to uplift the country; while making efforts to develop the country it was necessary to always keep one eye on a crisis such as COVID-19.

The country is not a rich nation that has limited resources; especially, traditional products are largely popular among the people, and these sectors need more support; for example, the FDA issue; the norms of FDA could be adjusted if the SMEs have problems with it; problems might be concerned with complexity and delay in FDA processes, as well as the norms; the former can be facilitated, while the latter is not possible to relax the norms; relaxing the norms for trade in COVID-19 will not be good for both present and future terms because the existing situations must be maintained in the role of the country, social status and quality of products; some matters related to FDA is concerned with long-term economic development; if the standards of local FDA failed to meet international norms, the country’s export sector will decline and it will not be useful for the country; the norms of FDA aimed for the wellfare of people, health and safety; however, complicated procedures must be handled; the
**State Counsellor discusses impact of COVID-19 on trade sector**

FROM PAGE-3 processes so as to meet the situations of Myanmar although it is not possible to reduce the level of norms; loan programmes for traditional businesses should be easy; the impacts of loan programmes are also monitored, and the loans should be settled to give out to others who need capitals in their businesses for supporting development of the country; some daily-waged workers have some difficulties and loan plans will be considered for them through fair policies; their income is a driving force the survival of country’s economy; the Ministry of Commerce is taking care steps in this issue; the government will support online business; rules and principles should also meet the needs in post COVID-19 period; although all the sectors cannot be supported simultaneously; the government’s preparations are quite similar to these; new policies should turn out good results; the extent of good results are always called for success; for example loans should be used appropriately not only for individuals but also for the benefit of whole country; both retail and wholesale business are not neglected; good managements are required for this sector. Relations between producers and distributors are seemed to be strong; discussions on the issues of SMEs, loans, technologies and loans are almost similar; some procedures of FDA might be complicated; land plots and property ownership would be considered; quality of products must be developed into international norms in terms of technology and health; because natural healthy products are expensive despite using high technology as in foreign countries; organic products are expensive in developed countries; these products become popular among people of rich countries although prices are high; however prices are as important as healthy qualities in Myanmar; healthy products will have low demand in the local market; the government has noted to support in using high-tech for production of goods at reasonable prices while it is needed to understand good quality items will have higher prices; development of the country is necessary for high demand of these products; the government will reconsider loan programmes; the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry will strictly scrutinize on its tasks to be able to keep reserve items for emergency cases; expenditures must be systematic; some persons did not take loans as they worry about repayment; it is a responsible attitude of them with great impression, while the loans would not be settled under unfavourable situations; it is a negligence on responsibility in the business; the one-year loan term would be reconsidered; the loans should also be given to persons with certain property for guarantee and to those who need the loan; the government will also consider how the borrow could repay the loan.

It has been realized that cooperation is required for development; the government and businesspersons are not oppositions; the one-managements are required for this sector. Although the one-managements are required for this sector, there are many ways to support the business firms; economic development is important for national development, therefore, it is needed to have mutual support between these two sectors. Deputy Minister U Aung Htoo explained his experiences in SMEs development; the needs of alternative ways to support SME sector. He also advised to promote online advertisement and e-commerce; contradictions of rules and regulations between SMEs and FDA to certify the products.

In her concluding remark, the State Counsellor said the yesterday’s discussion focused on production, distribution, the role of Ministry of Commerce and the national affairs; however, all the stakeholders in respective sectors are for the well-being of people and consumers; collaborative efforts of these people could not only over the COVID crisis and also experience better development in the post of this crisis.

**Ceasefire work group meets for framework negotiation**

**Representatives of gove-**

ment and NCA S EAOs held the fourth negotiation at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre at Shweyi Road in Yangon yesterday.

The meeting was attended by Vice-Chairman of NRPC and Attorney-General of the Union U Tun Tun Oo, Lt-Gen Var Pyae of the Ministry of Defence (Army), Lt-Gen Min Naung and Lt-Gen Tin Maung Win, Pyithu Hluttaw MP U Pyone Cho (a) U Htay Win Aung, members of the Peace Commission Advisory Board U Hla Maung Shwe, U Moe Zaw Oo and Director-General of the State Counsellor Office U Zaw Htay.

The NCA S EAOs were represented by Sao Sai Ngin, Coordination of NCA Implementation framework negotiation committee U Myo Win, members of negotiation team U Hla Htay, Saw Mya Yar Zin Lin, Dr Salai Lian Hmoon Sakhong, Salai Htarlar Yaw, Saw Sein Win, Pado Saw Tar Do Hmu, Pado Saw L Kho Sae, Rya Salmon, Saw Kyaw Nyunt, Nai Aung Ma Ngoy, Dr Sai So and Khun Myint Tun, and other representatives on videoconference. Attorney-General of the Union U Tun Tun Oo made an opening remark, saying three negotiation meeting and one informal meeting where participants discussed implementation of NCA included in the Part 3 of Union Accord, step-by-step implementation beyond 2020 and the basic principles. He added the 4th edition of Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panglong, UPDJC meeting, and JICM meeting will be discussed through friendly manners.

U Hla Maung Shwe, the member of Peace Commission Advisory Group, said the meeting focused on NCA framework, basic principles of NCA; separation meetings of EAOs representatives and government officials will be held on 24 June, and both sides will meet again on 25 June afternoon. U Myo Win, the coordinator of NCA implementation, said they discussed holding political dialogues before the peace conference and recommendations from both sides.

—Ye Gaung Nyunt

(Translated by Aung Khin)

**Precursor chemicals destroyed to welcome World Drug Day**

**ANTI-NARCOTICS police destroyed seized precursor chemicals worth nearly K3,379 million (US$2.3 million) at the field near the Asia World Hall gate in Kutkai Town, northern Shan State, yesterday.**

The seized chemicals were destroyed to welcome International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking that falls on 26 June.

The destruction ceremony, which was held in accordance with COVID-19 guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports, was attended by Chairman of the Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC) and Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Soe Htut, Commander of Eastern Command Maj-Gen Aung Zaw Aye and officials, northern Shan State’s Deputy Administrator U Kyaw Thu Zaw and department heads, Kutkai Tactical Operation Commander and Tatmadaw personnel, Muse District’s head of police force and police, anti-narcotics police and locals.

Deputy Administrator U Kyaw Thu Zaw made an opening remark, and district head of police force explained the purpose of destroying the chemicals.

—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)
Information received of Phoe Kyne Nyo (a) Min Naing Oo who lives in Pyinu Village, Hteikyu Township, Sagaing Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.

On 14 June 2020, police searched the house of Phoe Kyne Nyo (a) Min Naing Oo, 34, of U Tun Shin, who lives in Pyinu Village, Hteikyu Township and arrested him together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Htigyaing) MaYa(pa)67/2020 under Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of Khin Maung Myint who lives in Pyinu Village, Phaukphyin Township, Sagaing Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.

On 14 June 2020, police searched the farm hut of Khin Maung Myint, 35, of U Tun Khan, who lives in Pyinu Village, Phaukphyin Township and arrested him and his wife Ma Aye Aye Win (a) Ai Hmway, 27, daughter of U Poe Hman together with heroin.

A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Kamarwet) MaYa(pa)109/2020 under Section 19(a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of Than Kyaw Htay and Eeipon who live in Pegon Village, Inwa Township, Sagaing Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.

On 15 June 2020, police searched the house of Than Kyaw Htay (a) Aungyel, 40, of U Ba Thein, who lives in Pegon Village, Inwa Township and arrested him together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Mawla) MaYa(pa)28/2020 under Section 19(a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Similarly, police searched the house of Eeipon (a) Kyaw Myint, 39, of U Tun Myint, who lives in Pegon Village, Inwa Township on 19 June 2020 and arrested him and two others – Maung Oo (a) Myint, 40, of Nga Maung, who lives in Thayarwon Village, Mohsin Township, Kachin State and Kyaw Ko Ko, 36, of U Maung Win, who lives in Nyaing Thaya Village – together with stimulant tablets.

A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Mawla) MaYa(pa)34/2020 under Section 19(a), 20(a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of Phoe Chao who lives in Hlaing Village, Kalewa Township, Sagaing Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.

On 16 June 2020, police searched the house of Phoe Chao, 44, son of U Aye Maung, who lives in Hlaing Village, Kalewa Township and arrested him and his son Chan Min Thu (a) Chan Thu, 19, together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Masein) MaYa(pa)2/2020 under Section 16(c) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of Se Moi Than who lives in Moezor Ward, Sagaing Township, Sagaing Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.

In China Ward, Sagaing Township, police searched a motorcycle driven by Se Moi Than, 35, of U Tun Than, who lives in Moezor Ward Sagaing Township and arrested him together with heroin on 18 June 2020.

A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Saqing) MaYa(pa)17/2020 under Section 19(a) and 20(a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of Kyet Mar who lives in Namthala Village, Wuntho Township, Sagaing Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.

On 19 June 2020, police searched the house of Kyet Mar (a) Thar San, 46, of U Ye Maung, who lives in Namthala Village, Wuntho Township and arrested him together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets.

A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Wuntho) MaYa(pa)67/2020 under Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of some people using, distributing and selling illegal drugs in Aungthukha Ward, Kawthoung Township, Tannabya Region.

Police have opened 12 cases and arrested 22 men and four women together with stimulant tablets, stimulant tablet crystal powder and speciosa powder in the previous weeks.

Acting on a tip-off, police arrested Shwe Htet Naing, 19, of U Kyon Naing, who lives in Aungthukha Ward of Kawthoung Township, together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets, at the Thanbyuzayat junction, Aungthukha Ward, on 14 June 2020. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Kawthoung) MaYa(pa)16/2020 under Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of Zeya Nan who lives in Dapinswe Ward, Pyay Township, Bago Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.

At mile post 107/3, Yangon-Mandalay highway in Penwegon Township, police searched a motorcycle driven by Zeya Nan (a) Phyo Theik, 22, of U Htet Huation, who lives in Dapinswe Ward, Pyay Township and arrested them together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets on 17 June 2020.

A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Pyay) MaYa(pa)14/2020 under Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of Daw Khin Htike who lives in Tharla Village, Pyay Township, Bago Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.

On 19 June 2020, police searched the house of Daw Khin Htike, 58, daughter of U Gyi Sate, who lives in Tharla Village, Pyay Township and arrested her together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets. Acne has been opened against her with NaMaSa (Pyay) MaYa(pa)35/2020 under Section 16(c) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of Myo Min Tun who lives in Kyet Hlaing Village, Thazi Township, Mandalay Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.

On 19 June 2020, police searched the house of Myo Min Tun (a) Ko Min, 41, of U Than Aung, who lives in Kyet Hlaing Village, Thazi Township and arrested him together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets.

A case has been opened against him with NaMaSa (Ywaung) MaYa(pa)6/2020 under Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of some people using, distributing and selling illegal drugs on the Ab- sh-Khalaedaing village road in Mawdon Township, Mon State.

Police have opened 12 cases and arrested 21 men together with stimulant tablets in the previous weeks.

Acting on a tip-off, police searched a motor cycle on the road of Absh-Khalaedaing Village near Absh Village, Mawdon Township on 16 June. It was driven by Chit Soe, 23, of U Oo Pyar, and Ko Ko Naing, 19, of U Ko Myint, who lives in Kyaukgyi Village, Thazi Township, and arrested them together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Kamarwet) MaYa(pa)37/2020 under Section 19(a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of Ma Lae Lae Win (a) Ma Zar Lay, daughter of U Mya Oo, who lives in No 2 Ward, Hline Township, together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets and marijuana near Ywamagway bus stop, No 2 Ward, Hline Township.

A case has been opened against her with NaMaSa (Padaukchaung) MaYa(pa)56/2020 under Section 16(c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of Daw Thay Thay Ma who lives in Hmasuet Ward, Dala Township, Mandalay Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.

On 14 June 2020, police searched the house of Daw Thay Thay Ma (a) Nwe Nye Yi, 43, daughter of U Hla Yi, who lives in Hmasuet Ward, Dala Township and arrested her and Phyo Ko Ko (a) Ko Phyo, 22, of U Nan Shwe, who lives in the same ward, together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Dala) MaYa(pa)21/2020 under Section 19(a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of Aphwargyi who lives in No 2 Ward, North Okkalapa Township, Yangon Region, using, distributing and selling illegal drugs.

On 20 June 2020, police searched the house of Aphwargyi (a) Daw Yin Hau, 62, daughter of U Khin Maung Ow, who lives in No 2 Ward, North Okkalapa Township and arrested him together with ‘WY’ stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against her with NaMaSa (Northokkalapa) MaYa(pa)41/2020 under Section 19(a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Information received of some people using, distributing and selling illegal drugs in No 5 Ward, Lashio Township, northern Shan State.

Police have opened 13 cases and arrested 16 men together with stimulant tablets in the previous weeks.

A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Lashio) MaYa(pa)20/2020 under Section 19(a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
COVID-19 committee honours volunteers, CSOs in Shan, Kayah states

Secretary of the COVID-19 Central Committee Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye was accompanied by Shan State government’s Bamar Ethnic Affairs Minister, Deputy Director-General of State Public Health and Medical Services Department, Deputy Director-General of Social Welfare Department, and officials from the General Administration Department at the certificates presentation ceremonies in Shan State.

At the Phaya Phyu Dhamma Garden’s quarantine centre, the Union Minister handed over certificates of honour for volunteers and CSOs to the Shan State’s Bamar Ethnic Affairs Minister, and presented badges, face masks, and hand sanitizers to the representatives of volunteers and CSOs.

He also expressed thanks to the volunteers and CSOs, and discussed compilation of volunteer handbook, conducting online training for the volunteers who are working at the quarantine centres, providing necessary assistance, and presenting certificates of honours.

A total of K7.35 million, K30,000 per person, for 156 pregnant women, 74 children under 5-year-old, and 15 elderly persons was handed over to the camp’s in-charge.

At the Loikaw Education College’s quarantine centre in Kayah State, the Union Minister gave certificates of honour for volunteers and CSOs to the Kayah State Chief Minister U L Phaung Sho, and presented badges, face masks, and hand sanitizers to the representatives of volunteers and CSOs.

He also provided a total of K728,000, K10,000 per one, for 12 pregnant women, eight children under five-year-old, and four elderly persons, to the camp’s in-charge.

The ministry gave 2, 860 volunteers and 254 CSOs in Shan State and 75 volunteers and 15 CSOs in Kayah State certificates of honour yesterday.

The committee will continue presentation of certificates of honour to the volunteers and CSOs in other regions and states with the approvals from the region and states’ volunteer steering committees.

The committee held yesterday’s handover ceremonies in Shan and Kayah states in accordance with the health guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports.

THE National-Level Central Committee for Prevention, Control and Treatment on COVID-19 presented certificates of honours, badges, face masks and hand sanitizers to the volunteers and civil society organizations (CSOs) that are fighting against COVID-19 pandemic in Shan and Kayah states yesterday.

Photographs:
PHOTO: MNA

COVID-19 Call Centre opens daily 9 am to 5 pm

THE Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Containment and Emergency Response Committee has opened the COVID-19 Call Centre at the Department of Medical Research in Yangon daily from 9 am to 5 pm.

In efforts to speed up the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 disease, the call centre was established by the four communications operators and the Blue Ocean Company in coordination with Medical Research Department and Post and Telecommunications Department.

The call centre is managed by 43 staff from the Medical Research Department and 17 volunteers doctors from the Myanmar Medical Association are working at the call centre.

Secretary of the COVID-19 Call Centre Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye was accompanied by Shan State government’s Bamar Ethnic Affairs Minister, Deputy Director-General of State Public Health and Medical Services Department, Deputy Director-General of Social Welfare Department, and officials from the General Administration Department at the certificates presentation ceremonies in Shan State.

The call centre, which was previously open from 8 am to 8 pm, has now changed from 9 am to 5 pm.

— MNA (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Tatmadaw True News Information Team holds press briefing

THE Tatmadaw True News Information Team held a press briefing at the Defence Services Museum in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Brigadier General Zaw Min Tun, the Secretary of True News Information Team, explained preparations for erecting Marble Buddha Image in Dekkhi-nathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw by using marble block from Sakyin hill in Madaya Township of Mandalay Region, the visit of Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation led by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to the Russian Federation to attend the military parade of 75th anniversary of Great Patriotic War (1941-1945), repatriation of Myanmar citizens from Nepal and India, implementation of procedures in return of lands and transfer in line with the existing laws, sending medical supplies of COVID-19 by Chin State government and private well-wishers for the locals, civil service officials and internally displaced persons in Paletwa Township, security measures of Tatmadaw members in upgrading Matu-pi-Sami-Paletwa motorway, according to the report from the Office of Commander in Chief of Defence Services.

— MNA (Translated by Aung Khin)

Myanmar citizens from foreign countries brought back home by relief flight

A total of 129 Myanmar nationals — 92 from the Republic of Korea and 37 from Belgium, Norway, Switzerland and the United States — were repatriated yesterday. Myanmar Airways International (MAI)’s relief flight had carried the Myanmar citizens from Incheon International Airport in South Korea, and arrived at the Yangon International Airport at 8 pm.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports, and the Yangon Region government provided the returnees proper medical examination and arranged 21-day quarantine for them. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is working in line with the guidelines set by the National Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 and cooperating with relevant ministries, Myanmar embassies abroad to repatriate Myanmar citizens stranded in other countries due to COVID-19.

Until now a total of 4,893 Myanmar citizens have been brought back home.

— MNA (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)
Agro exports up $466 mln as of 12 June

Myanmar agro products are primarily exported to China, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka. However, the export market remains uncertain due to unsteady global demand.

Myanmar faces slower access to market information, which sometimes poses obstacles in the market. Moreover, the country has poor logistics and warehouse infrastructure, which leads to degrading of the quality of fruits, said an official from the Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetables Produce, Exporters’ and Importers’ Association (MFVP).

According to the Myanmar Rice Federation, quality control and food safety are key to the promotion of exports. Therefore, improved agricultural practices need to be developed.

Additionally, the country requires specific export plans for each agro product, as they are currently exported to external markets based on supply and demand.

Contract farming systems, the involvement of regional and state agriculture departments, exporters, traders, and some grower groups, are required in order to meet production targets, said an official from the Agriculture Department. The Commerce Ministry is working to help farmers deal with challenges such as high input costs, procurement of pedigree seeds, high cultivation costs, and erratic weather conditions.

— Ko Htet
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

High demand drives black bean price up to above K1 mln in Yangon market

THE prices of black bean (which is called urad in India) jumped above K1 million per tonne on account of the growing demand in recent days, said traders from Bayintnaung market.

The price climbed up in the weekend of 19 June, showing an increase of K26,000 per tonne compared with the previous week. The traders guessed that the price of black bean would rise in September. However, the price rose last week unexpectedly.

On 21 June, the black beans fetched K31,800 per 20-viss (one viss equals to 1.6 kg) in Yangon market, whereas it was priced around K26,800 per 20-viss on 18 June, the market data showed.

During the post-Thitsanu period in April, the black bean was priced K965,000 to K1 million per tonne. Thereafter, it dropped to K900,000 to K950,000 per tonne in the third week of May.

The traders are closely observing the market with the changes in India’s policy on bean importation. Now, the growers have already sold out the beans and they are in the hands of traders. Earlier, India set to import 400,000 tonnes of black bean for the next fiscal year by March 2021. It changed policy and narrowed the import deadline to three month period, according to its recent notice.

“The changes of policy reflect on the unguaranteed market for the domestic growers. The sudden change in policy burdens the growers, raising confusion,” said an official of Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association. The country has around 250,000 tonnes of black bean stocks. It is unlikely to export the entire quota of 400,000 tonnes to India, he continued.

The supply chain of Myanmar’s beans — the growers and traders are facing hardship due to short period of rapid change.

“The country lays down policy for its national interest. India’s move is possible to protect their farmers as India’s beans will be harvested in September. This is why they shrink the deadline to August-end 2020. If the yield is not good in September they will surely make an extension for the import period. If not for poor yield, the import period will end as scheduled,” he added. Myanmar is the top producing country of black bean that India demands. Besides Myanmar, other beans such as pigeon peas, green grams and yellow peas, are also grown in Australia and Africa, the association stated. — Ko Khant
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Natural gas exports to Thailand down by $400 mln in current fiscal

MYANMAF’S exports of natural gas over the past eight months of the current financial year amounted to US$1.8 billion, a decrease of about $400 million compared with the corresponding period of 2018-2019 FY, according to the Commerce Ministry.

In the year ago period, the country exported natural gas worth about $1.4 billion.

The drop in the value of exports is linked to the collapse of the global oil and natural gas prices, according to an expert.

Natural gas is included in the list of major export items of Myanmar. Over 20 per cent of the country’s total export earnings come from the sale of natural gas.

There are 53 onshore blocks and 51 offshore blocks, totalling 104 blocks. A total of 25 onshore blocks and 31 offshore blocks are operating under foreign investment. Natural gas extraction is being made at the Yadana, the Yadana, the Shwe, and the Zawtika offshore blocks as well as onshore drilling blocks.

Yearly extraction is elevated to cubic feet in 670.36 billion from 600 billion this year, according to the fourth-year performances stated by the Ministry of Electricity and Energy.

The Shwe natural gas field, located offshore from Rakhine State, was discovered in 2014. Natural gas extracted from the field is exported to China.

The Yadana natural gas project is being carried out by the TOTAL Company, with its pipeline supplying natural gas to Thailand. Natural gas is also extracted in Yadagan, located offshore from Taninthayi and discovered in 1992. The Zawtika Project in the Gulf of Mottama mainly supplies natural gas to neighbouring Thailand.

Production at Yadana and Yadagan is declining, and those projects will be halted in the coming years. Myanmar’s exports of natural gas in the previous financial year totaled $3.86 billion, as per Commerce Ministry data.

— Ko Htet
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)
Enforcing safety, rule of law in jade mining is essential

Jade mining in Phakant, Kachin State, has been part of the life of migrant workers searching for lesser quality jade stones discarded by large mining companies for more than two decades. When miners began using heavy machinery to extract jade from mines in 2008, migrant workers across the country flocked to the area to scavenge for small jade stones from discarded soil. While migrant workers have been working illegally risking their lives, in spite of the presence of job opportunities in the mining sector, lethal landslides strike regularly. Over 100 scavengers have been lost in a landslide in November, 2015, and over 50 employees from a mining company died in a landslide in April, 2019. The preventable disasters strike the jade land killing migrant workers regularly. Not only deadly landslides, the drug use and general lowness pervades Hpakant destroying countless lives. The tragedies have highlighted the role of responsibility for safety laws with the jade mining industry.

That’s a task force of experts. The task force of experts that was formed by the Union Government on 4 October, 2018, and tasked with 14 goals. Six sub-working groups were formed under the task force on the same day. Out of 14 decisions made at the previous meetings focusing safety and the rule of law in the jade land. 12 have been implemented and the remaining need to take action.

As part of efforts for ensuring the safety of jade miners, the sub-working groups are carrying out investigations, socio-economy of families of shining jade miners, national dialogue, political parties, NGOs, associations, and public institutions that can work together.

The works on safety and the rule of law in Phakant will take speed when the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation adopts a by-law for the new gem stone law.

Environmental destruction and deadly accidents in Hpakant are preventable, the new gemstone law and its rule by law along cannot address all problems in our mining sector.

The works on safety and the rule of law in Phakant will take speed when the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation adopts a by-law for the new gem stone law. Environmental destruction and deadly accidents in Hpakant are preventable, the new gemstone law and its rule by law along cannot address all problems in our mining sector. The participation of migrant workers, local people, and businessmen is critical to maintaining peace and the rule of law in the area.

Every person has the right to go to work with the expectation that they will return home safe to their families when the working day is done.

Global trade set to shrink 18.5 per cent in Q2: WTO

Record $5.4 trillion in merchandise trade in 2019

Global trade is expected to drop around 13.3 per cent year-on-year in the second quarter of this year in a huge coronavirus-driven plunge which nonetheless could have been much worse, the World Trade Organization said Tuesday.

The WTO said that in the first quarter, the volume of merchandise trade shrank by three per cent compared to the same three months in 2019.

Initial estimates for the second quarter, when the virus and associated lockdown measures affected a large share of the global population, indicate a year-on-year drop of around 15-16 percent,” the global trade body said in a statement.

However, it said the expected plunge was better than the WTO’s worst-case scenario for the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on global trade — and that the world economy may have bottomed out in the second quarter of the year.

The fall in trade we are now seeing is historically large — in fact, it would be the steepest on record. But there is an important silver lining here: it could have been much worse,” said outgoing WTO director-general Roberto Azevedo.

This is genuinely positive news but we cannot afford to be complacent.”

Outlook ‘highly uncertain’

In its annual trade forecast issued in April, the WTO forecast that volumes would contract by 12 per cent and 22 per cent at worst in 2020.

As things currently stand, trade would only need to grow by 2.3 per cent per quarter for the remainder of the year to meet the optimistic projection. However, looking ahead to 2021, adverse developments, including a second wave of COVID-19 outbreaks, weaker than expected economic growth, or widespread recourse to trade restrictions, could see trade expansion fall short of earlier projections.

The WTO said the outlook for the global economy over the next two years remained ‘highly uncertain’.

Azevedo said policy decisions had softened the ongoing blow and would help determine the pace of economic recovery from the crisis.

“For output and trade to rebound strongly in 2021, fiscal, monetary, and trade policies will all need to keep pulling in the same direction,” said the Brazilian career diplomat, who is leaving his post a year early at the end of August.

Trade may have ‘bottomed out’

Looking at the pandemic and its impact on trade, the WTO said that measures to suppress the spread of the virus, such as physical distancing and restrictions on travel and transport that were in full effect in March, April and May now were increasingly being relaxed.

Those developments are reflected in a variety of economic indicators which, taken together, suggest trade may have possibly started to grow in the second quarter of 2020,” it said.

It said commercial flights, which carry much international

The WTO said the outlook for the global economy over the next two years remained ‘highly uncertain’.

FOCUS: AP

The outlook for the global economy

The three Olympic Games in Tokyo, Paris and Los Angeles, will be special in various ways.

The world is searching for global solidarity and hope. The Olympic Games, the Olympic athletes – voices that can act as reliable messengers for this information.

As COVID-19 changes our daily routines and lives – how we interact with others, how we move and exercise – we need to focus on our mental and physical health and that of others. Help those who need extra help. By working together, Olympic Day and every day, we can help things aim to be healthy together.

SOURCE: WHO

U Thuraun Thant Zin concurrently accredited as Ambassador of Myanmar to the Slovak Republic

Olympic athletes will help deliver important public health messages, information, motivate people to adopt or continue behaviors that will cover the epidemic and provide valuable information that promotes physical and mental health.

During this time the partnership with Olympians around the world performing various exercises to stay healthy came to a close today.

A WHO survey showed that many people who had a severe case of COVID-19 were already living with or at risk of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). The results emphasize the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle, including being physically active, taking a healthy diet, not smoking and avoiding alcohol.

“We are pleased to partner with the International Olympic Committee to spread important health messages that will save lives. Olympians will help us advocate for a healthy population that is less vulnerable to the threat posed by COVID-19, so as to promote the health of the world we need right now,”

Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, added. “During this time of unprecedented challenges and change – from the COVID-19 pandemic to the ongoing struggle for racial and social justice, the climate crisis – there has never been a greater need for global solidarity and for everyone to take action. The Olympic Movement and its athletes have always done the best in humanity and the United Nations is pleased to work with the International Olympic Committee and the World Health Organization to unite people everywhere and help #HEALTHYTogether.”

Global participation will act locally through the voices of Olympic athletes – voices that symbolize perseverance, dedication and endurance – all individuals need to have qualities during this public health challenge.

WHO will work with athletes to help deliver messages tailored to people going through various stages of the epidemic through digital platforms.

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SOURCE: WHO

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**LOCAL NEWS**

**Bagan-NyaungU prepare to reopen hotels, guesthouses**

Mandalay Region government has permitted twenty hotels and one guesthouse to reopen after meeting the prescribed requirements set by the Ministry of Health and Sports. These hotels and guesthouses in Bagan-NyaungU suspended their operations when viral infection broke out, said Deputy Director U Win Aung of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism (Bagan office).

“The owners of hotels and guesthouses officially submitted a proposal to our department to resume their businesses. In this case, our department is cooperating with the district health department to issue instructions to the hotels and guesthouses to check whether they conform with the rules adopted by the Ministry of Health and Sports. Then, we made a list of the hotels and guesthouses that follow the rules and submitted the list to the related General Administration Department and the regional government. When we received a reply from the regional government, we give the green light to the hotels and the guesthouses to reopen. As of today, we have permitted 20 hotels and one guesthouse to reopen. Currently, four hotels and four guesthouses have sought permission to reopen,” he added.

Bagan-NyaungU region has been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and always packed with the local and foreign travellers. The businesses in Bagan-NyaungU region are arranging to provide better service after they have permitted to run their businesses. —Kyaw Min Oo (Yenangyaung) 

(Translated by Hay Mar)

**Myanmar’s first underwater aquarium to complete in December**

The construction of Myanmar’s first aquarium including an underwater world will be completed in December, according to Mottama Development Group. The glass walls were installed in the aquarium building in May and the lakeside plaza will be built at the end of August. The remaining tasks of the project such as the installation of electricity, decoration inside the building, archipelago works etc. are being done to complete the whole construction project within the prescribed period. The new aquarium project is being developed on five acres of land located on the old aquarium space in Kandawgyi lake.

Myanmar’s first aquarium will showcase both local freshwater and saltwater fish species from southern and northern parts of Myanmar. There will also be over 30 exhibitions including an underwater section, training areas related to the fisheries industry as well as fish stalls and shops of fisheries products and related items. The new aquarium is being constructed to meet the international standard. The development of the aquarium is not only for upgrading of the building but also for the creation of fish survival system, modernizing the technology in mechanical and aspects and the safety of those who are working and staying underwater.

Yangon Ecological Aquarium is being developed by the Yangon regional government starting from 2016.

Myanmar Investment Commission gave the green light to the development of the aquarium to meet international standard with an initial investment totaling US$ 30 million. After building the international standard aquarium, the aquarium will attract more investment, said the Yangon Region government. The land was rented under for 40 years with the permission of the Fisheries Department. —Aye Maung

(Translated by Hay Mar)

**Fewer passengers take highway buses to Myeik**

ALTHOUGH Myeik passenger bus lines suspended to control spreading of coronavirus disease, Taninthayi Region is resuming their operation starting from 5 June on Myeik-Yangon route from Myeik highway terminal, there are a few passengers on board the buses, according to Myeik Township Private Transport Supervision Committee.

“The travellers need to bring the ward administrator’s recommendation letter and health certificates along with the tickets. And the passengers need to use two-seat space. So, the bus line tickets are selling for K35,500, an increase of K10,000 for Myeik-Yangon route. The regional authorities have ordered the bus lines to carry only 50 per cent of passengers,” said an official from Myeik Township Private Transport Supervision Committee.

During the coronavirus prevention period, the bus drivers and conductors followed the instructions of the authorities, carrying only half of accommodation capacity, keeping the social distancing rule and following all other instructions given by the Ministry of Health and Sports.

“Before pandemic, nearly 500 travellers from across the country reached Myeik highway terminal. Since the resumption of the highway buses beginning from 5 June, only 100 passengers or so reached the highway terminal from 2016. The number of passengers declined to nearly 1,600 for 10 days of June, from 9,000 in February,” the committee official said.

“The number of passengers declined because of COVID-19 and rising of the bus fares. We have no job and we are difficult to travel,” said a traveller from Yangon.

With Myeik passenger bus lines resuming under Taninthayi region government rules, passenger bus lines cannot carry more than the prescribed number in this period, and if they fail to abide by this rule, the passengers can report to Taninthayi Region government. At present, a total of 65 bus lines are operating in the Myeik terminal with 40 bus lines operating in the region while 25 bus lines operating outside of the region. —Myint Oo (Myeik)
Pompeo compares ex-security advisor John Bolton to Edward Snowden

WASHINGTON—John Bolton’s explosive tell-all account of his time as National Security Advisor is comparable to Edward Snowden’s disclosure of state-backed mass surveillance of US citizens, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Monday.

Pompeo’s comments come the night before the release of Bolton’s book “The Room Where It Happened,” which contains many damning allegations against President Donald Trump.

“Frankly, the information he has released puts criminal liability squarely on him,” the top US diplomat told Fox News.

“We all saw what’s happened when people leak classified information like Edward Snowden. What John Bolton did here is not dissimilar to that,” Pompeo said.

Edward Snowden is a former US intelligence contractor who revealed in 2013 that US agents from the National Security Agency (NSA) were carrying out widespread surveillance on citizens. Snowden has been living in exile in Russia since his revelation.

He has been charged in the US with espionage and theft of state secrets and faces up to 30 years in prison. “This kind of information getting out, it presents real risk and real harm to the United States of America,” Pompeo added.—AFP

Palestinians protest Trump plan that includes Israel’s annexation of parts of West Bank

JERICHO—Thousands of Palestinians on Monday demonstrated against US President Donald Trump’s plan for the Middle East that includes Israel’s annexation of parts of the occupied West Bank.

The protest in Jericho, in the south of the Jordan Valley, came in response to a call by Fatah, the party of Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, agency reporters said. It was the largest rally of its kind since Trump in January unveiled his controversial plan for Israeli-Palestinian peace, which gives Israel a green light to annex West Bank settlements and the Jordan Valley.

The Palestinians have rejected the plan and have been trying to rally international support against it. “If Israel annexes there won’t be any land left for a Palestinian state,” said protester Mohammed Ishloon, 47, who came to the demonstration from the Aqabat Jaber refugee camp outside Jericho.—AFP

Looming election rout ups stakes for France’s president

PARIS—Emmanuel Macron’s party is staring at defeat in municipal elections Sunday, dealing a blow to the French president’s bid to chart a fresh course for his party following the announce his loss in the vote while the president’s personal popularity has slipped again.

Despite its name, efforts by the Move (LREM) party remain in Socialist or right-wing hands, forcing the centrists into conflicting alliances to obtain at least some local seats.

Their goal is to have 10,000 municipal councillors—a fraction of some 550,000 nationwide.

“The LREM still hasn’t taken root locally, and is struggling to prove that it’s a viable force,” said Jean Garrigues, a political historian at the University of Orleans. French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe, whose popularity has soared on his perceived steady hand during the COVID-19 outbreak, faces a close fight to regain his mayor’s seat in the port of Le Havre.

An Ifop poll released Sunday saw Philippe’s approval ratings rise to 50 per cent while Macron’s dropped further to 38 per cent.

It may be no coincidence that Philippe has refused to become a card-carrying LREM member, after leaving the right-wing Republicans to become head of government.—AFP

US Congressman Krishnamoorthi urges Trump to reverse order suspending H-1B, other work visas

WASHINGTON—US Congressmember Raja Krishnamoorthi on Monday expressed dissatisfaction over the new restrictions on work visas, including H-1B visas used widely in the tech industry, and urged President Donald Trump to roll back the order to ensure a broader economy and more jobs that could combat the next phase of the pandemic and make way for economic recovery.

“I’m deeply disappointed by President Trump’s misguided order to suspend these key work visa programmes. I urge him to reverse this decision to help ensure our health care system and broader economy are ready to combat the next phase of this pandemic and to create the jobs we need for our economic recovery,” Krishnamoorthi said in a statement following the announcement of new restrictions on work visas by the administration.

“The H-1B programme, in particular, plays a crucial role in addressing our dangerous shortage of health care professionals while also providing other key sectors of our economy with talent from around the world to not only fill jobs but create new ones. Suspend­ing this programme will only weaken our economy and our health care workforce at a time when they need to strengthen both is as clear as ever,” the Congressman added.

The White House, earlier in the day, announced that the restrictions were put in place to ensure American workers take first priority as the nation starts recovering from the economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic.—ANI
Microsoft ends game streaming, teams up with Facebook

SAN FRANCISCO—Microsoft said Monday it was throwing in the towel on its livestream gaming platform, Mixer, and teaming up with Facebook to better compete with rivals like Amazon-owned Twitch.

Microsoft Mixer will be shuttered on July 22, the tech giant said in a statement. "It became clear that the time needed to grow our own livestreaming community to scale was out of measure with the vision and experiences that Microsoft and Xbox want to deliver for gamers now, so we’ve decided to close the operations side of Mixer and help the community transition to a new platform," the Mixer team said.

The gamers will be encouraged to transition to Facebook Gaming, which has some 700 million people on its platform, the Mixer team said.

"We will work to transition the Mixer community over the next few weeks. Starting on July 22, all Mixer sites and apps will redirect users to Facebook Gaming," said Phil Spencer, head of Xbox, the gaming division of Microsoft.

Microsoft announced it was buying the livestream service Beam in August 2016 to bolster its efforts to boost its ranks of people who play and watch games online.—AFP ■

Japan department store sales drop 66% in May, pace of fall moderates

TOKYO—Japan’s department sales in May dropped 65.6 per cent from a year earlier as the novel coronavirus pandemic continued to take a toll, but the pace of decline moderated following the previous month’s record plunge, an industry body said Tuesday.

The latest data from the Japan Chain Stores Association reflected the government's lifting of a nationwide state of emergency in stages during May and compared with April’s record drop of 72.8 per cent.

While the outcome in May represented the second biggest percentage fall since comparable data became available in 1963, the association said recent sales suggest the recovery trend is continuing, with sales in the first 17 days of June at 41 large outlets down 27 per cent from the same period a year earlier: May sales at 203 outlets run by 73 operators totaled 131.54 billion yen ($1.4 billion) on a same-store basis, marking the eighth straight month of decline, the body said.

Duty-free sales dropped 97.5 per cent on a same-store basis to about 770 million yen with Japan’s cross-border travel restrictions still in place.—Kyodo ■

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CBA facing huge fines in latest Australian banking scandal

SYDNEY—Australia’s Commonwealth Bank faces hefty fines for alleged misconduct in the sale of pension products, regulators said Tuesday; the latest in a flurry of scandals to rock the country’s finance industry. The Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) on Tuesday accused Commonwealth Bank (CBA) of receiving Aus$22 million ($15 million) in prohibited payments from a subsidiary, Colonial First State Investments, to promote its retirement fund to customers.

The corporate regulator said CBA, the country’s largest lender, sold the product to 390,000 customers via bank tellers and online over the six years to June 30, 2019.

The maximum fine for each breach of the law is Aus$1 million (US$900,000), and ASIC said it was pursuing financial penalties against both CBA and Colonial.

It did not reveal how many breaches it was alleging. ASIC deputy chair Daniel Crennan said the case arose from a referral from a major inquiry into the banking industry — which last year exposed rampant malpractice across the highly profitable sector.

The Royal Commission found banks had charged fees to dead people and to others for no services at all, used aggressive sales tactics and provided poor advice that led to significant financial upheaval for clients. ASIC alleged Colonial’s payments to CBA amounted to “conflicted remuneration”, which is banned, as they could have influenced the product recommendations or financial advice CBA gave to customers.—AFP ■

Commonwealth Bank stands accused of receiving Aus$22 million ($15 million) in prohibited payments from a subsidiary. PHOTO: AFP ■

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Europe 2020 auto sales to plunge record 25%: industry group

PARIS — Auto sales in Europe this year will tumble a record 25 per cent due to the coronavirus pandemic which has left manufacturers facing a “major economic crisis”, a top industry group said Tuesday.

The European Automobile Manufacturers’ Association (ACEA) also urged the European Union and member state governments to help the industry recover and safeguard jobs.

EU car sales will “tumble by more than three million from 12.8 million units in 2019 to some 9.6 million units this year”, ACEA said in a statement.

So far this year, the auto market has shrank 41.5 per cent due to the impact of coronavirus lockdowns but ACEA said the situation should improve somewhat as restrictions are eased.

“In terms of per cent change, the bleak outlook represents the sharpest drop ever witnessed by Europe’s automobile sector,” it said.

“ACEA maintains hope that this dramatic scenario can be mitigated through fast and strong measures by the EU and national governments,” group head Eric-Mark Huitema said in the statement.

“Given the unprecedented collapse in sales to date, purchase incentives and scrappage schemes are urgently required right across the EU to create much-needed demand for new cars.”

PARIS  —  Auto sales in Europe 2020 auto sales to plunge record 25%: industry group

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation

No.(2) Mining Enterprise

Tender Closing Date & Time – 23 July 2020

Sr No. Materials Classifies Description Weight (MT) F.O.B

1. Tin Concentrate 101.350 Dawei

2. Tin & Wolfram Concentrate 104.169 Dawei

3. Tin & Wolfram mixed Concentrate 104.374 Myeik

4. Tin & Wolfram mixed Concentrate 104.377 Mylek

5. Tin & Wolfram mixed Concentrate 104.377 Loikaw

6. Tin & Wolfram mixed Concentrate 91.44 Loikaw

7. Tin & Wolfram mixed Concentrate 91.444 Loikaw

8. Tin & Wolfram mixed (Low Grade) 23.125 Loikaw

9. Tin & Wolfram mixed (Low Grade) 5.600 Lashio

10. Tin & Wolfram mixed (Low Grade) 16.147 Pyinmay

11. Tin (Low Grade) 1.944 Yangon

12. Tin (Low Grade) 1.280 Mylek

Mr. OSAKA — Rohto Pharmaceutical Co. said Tuesday it will begin a clinical trial in August using stem cells for a potential treatment for patients severely ill with COVID-19.

The Osaka-based drugmaker said it will be the first time in Japan that domestic stem cells have been used for such a clinical test.

“ACEA maintains hope that this dramatic scenario can be mitigated through fast and strong measures by the EU and national governments,” group head Eric-Mark Huitema said in the statement.

To confirm the effectiveness and safety of this therapeutic approach, it will administer mesenchymal stem cells derived from adipose tissue from a donor to patients with severe cases of COVID-19, the respiratory disease caused by the novel coronavirus.

The trial is expected to run through December but if everything goes well it could end sooner, Rohto said, adding it will apply for the launch of the test to the health ministry in late June.

Under the plan, six COVID-19 patients who need to be on mechanical ventilators will receive an intravenous injection of the cells once a week for a total of four times. It is hoped that the injections will restore their lung tissues.

“It has been reported abroad that lives were saved by the administration of stem cells,” Yushioka Sawa, a professor at Osaka University’s Graduate School of Medicine, who is cooperating in the trial, told a press conference.

“We can assume it would be effective against pneumonia.” — Kyodo

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation

No.(2) Mining Enterprise

Invitation for Opening Tender

1. No. (2) Mining Enterprise, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation invites to submit the tender quotation for the following materials.

Sr No. Materials Classifies Description Weight (MT) F.O.B. Tender Closing Date/Time

1. Tin Concentrate 101.350 Dawei 22.7.2020 (12:00) pm

2. Tin & Wolfram Concentrate 104.169 Dawei

3. Tin & Wolfram mixed Concentrate 104.374 Myeik

4. Tin & Wolfram mixed Concentrate 104.377 Mylek

5. Tin & Wolfram mixed Concentrate 91.444 Loikaw

6. Tin & Wolfram mixed Concentrate (55%) 91.444 Loikaw

7. Tin & Wolfram mixed Concentrate (55%) 91.444 Loikaw

8. Tin & Wolfram mixed (Low Grade) 23.125 Loikaw

9. Tin & Wolfram mixed (Low Grade) 5.600 Lashio

10. Tin & Wolfram mixed (Low Grade) 16.147 Pyinmay

11. Tin (Low Grade) 1.944 Yangon

12. Tin (Low Grade) 1.280 Mylek

2. No.(2) Mining Enterprise would provide necessary documents to interested companies and contact to No.(2) Mining Enterprise, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Conservation, Office Building No.(10), Nay Pyi Taw, Ph:+95-0967-3409391, E-mail: metrowc@monre.gov.mm, within office hours.

Tender Committee

No.(2) Mining Enterprise
The author had a quick casual glance at three shops close at hand while he was in Mandalay Region on business purpose. A company shop wrote an advertisement in harge language saying that the customers can use its products for posterity offering the customers a right and fair price if they are bought. In the same way, nearby another shop described an advertisement saying that the customers can enjoy taste and satisfaction worthier than money they paid. Only when good quality products are chosen and bought, can hygiene and freshness be acquired. The shop selling phones and accessories was named ‘Yone Phu’ and in Myanmar language it means feeling that you don’t believe something or somebody.

Legal consumers’ rights capable of being claimed

We are demanding a variety of rights such as human rights, gender equality, and so on, but it is very rare to find those who are demanding for hygienic foodstuffs free from chemical dyes, clean clothing and cosmetics, and safe and secure cement and steel. Most of the consumers forget to demand consumer rights individually and the consumers have the rights to claim, lodge complaints, remedy and settle the problem. With the use of illegal chemical dyes and durable chemical substances, some businessmen are dealing with foodstuffs, medicines, electrical and telecom appliances, personal goods and industrial materials and they pay attention only to profit regardless of accountabili-ty and responsibility with regard to the services such as education, insurance, transport, hotel and catering, beauty parlor, and health which have most impacts on the consumers. For that reason, it is necessary to control these consumer issues. According to the guidelines of consumer protection bodies formed globally, the Department of Consumer Affairs was constituted under the Ministry of Commerce in Myanmar and wide-ranging measures to provide consumer protection are being launched across the country.

The Consumer Affairs Department (CAD) is launching preventive measures for enabling more than 51 million consumers to have easy access to safe and quality goods and services and possess a longer life. It is also giving help to the businessmen in providing goods and services in line with the international norms. For the sake of the interest of the people, the laws are amended and directives are issued if necessary in accordance with globally prac-ticable rules and regulations. In this way, frequent meetings in cooperation with consumers, entrepreneurs, governmental departments, and relevant organizations were held and the solutions were sought in line with the regulations.

Harmonious law meant for competition

The work of consumer protection is to keep a balance of competition between the consumer and the entrepreneurs. On the other hand the consumers should have access to safe and quality goods and services. The consumer protection measure forces the entrepreneurs to manufacture safe and quality goods and provide services together with responsibility and accountability. In doing so, the commodities and services can be expanded not only to the local market but also to overseas one. In case of consumer issue, remedial action can be carried out between the consumers and the entrepreneurs ignoring bias.

The consumers, the human resources of our country, need to be harmony with the entrepre-neurs who are trying to improve the country. As regards, the officers and the staff of Department of Consumer Affairs, the intellectuals and intelligentsia from home and abroad made efforts in designing for ensuring the emergence of the consumer protection law to meet the norms of the international one. Previously, the consumer protection law was enacted in 2014. But the consumer protection law is capable of guaranteeing that the entrepreneurs can achieve success not only in penetrating into local market but also into foreign one could be enacted with Py-dawngu Bhattraw Law No 9 on 15 March in 2019. Moreover, the by-law of the consumer protection is in a draft form and soon it will be able to protect the consumers more than they were in the past and the new consumer protection law is going to give much help to the entrepreneurs. According to the newly-enacted consumer protection law (2019), apart from the rights, duties and demand of the consumers, it clearly states the obligations the entrepreneurs will follow.

Rights, duties and demands of the consumers

The consumers enable to use safety of the goods or services and to choose the goods or services and obtain the promised value, terms and conditions and warranty. Moreover, they have the right to completely and correctly obtain the information relating to the condition and warranty of the goods and services. They can claim to hear and settle on dispute related to the goods or services they used and enable to obtain consumer protection and correct settlement. The consumers must avoid false accusation intended to detriment on entrepreneurs and similarly they must avoid the saying, writing and acting in order to detriment on relevant entrepreneurs by means of media or by other mean while relevant persons is settling the consumer dispute.

Prohibition of entrepreneurs

The entrepreneur shall not carry out the production, trade of the followings: (a) goods that are not in conformity with the information or condition stated on the label, warrantee, distinctive, efficacy, net weight, net volume, total amount, quality, grade, position, mode, style of the relevant goods; (b) goods that are not in conformity with the statement contained in the ingredients of label or advertisement and sale promotion; (c) goods without name, size, net weight, volume, composition, instruction, manufactured date and batch number, expiry date, side effect, poisonous materials, name and address of manufacturer or distribution company, name of distribu-tion, trademark, information and preparation; (d) goods without stating in Myanmar language or jointly in Myanmar and other language, the information or instruction related to use commencing from the date stipulated by the Central Committee; (e) goods mentioned improperly in respect of place of yield or place of production; (f) goods that are not in conformity with the recommendation of acknowledged department or organization of domestic and abroad; or the prescribed standard; (g) goods that are stated the guarantees of health and nutrition without reference of scientific research finding by the respective organization; (h) goods that are not in...
KBZPay launches shopper loan: Myanmar’s first digital loan service that builds a credit score for customers

KBZPay, the leading mobile wallet in Myanmar, has launched the KBZPay Shopper Loan, the first digital loan service to deploy an automated decision engine that uses machine learning techniques to determine the credit worthiness of customers. The KBZPay Shopper Loan offers KBZPay customers who are salaried employees a fast and convenient way to obtain loans of up to MMK5 million to purchase electronic products such as mobile phones and home appliances from any of KBZPay’s merchant partners nationwide.

The loan application process is managed within the KBZPay mobile app, making it paperless and fully mobile. Customers are not required to provide collateral, guarantors or application fees and the loan application process takes less than 24 hours to approve. The day after receiving approval on their loan, customers can make a purchase using the loan funds in their KBZPay mobile wallet, and can make loan repayments in flexible monthly instalments over 12, 18 or 24 months.

The KBZPay Shopper Loan is the first in a series of mobile app-based loan products that will leverage KBZ Bank’s automated decision engine. These loan products are designed to provide KBZPay customers with wider access to financial products and services and allow them to seek immediate and formal financing backed by the security and strength of KBZ Bank, the country’s largest private bank, instead of relying on informal lending channels or trying to save up for months.

Furthermore, customers need not have to visit a bank branch or handle cash as they can use their KBZPay mobile wallet to make payments for product purchases, as well as loan repayments.

Mr Chong Ho, Head of KBZPay and Unsecured Consumer Lending for KBZ Bank, says, “The KBZPay Shopper Loan, and other loan products that will soon be launched under KBZPay, reflects KBZ Bank’s commitment to address the financial challenges of people in the country, especially the working population. Through our investment in mobile technology and KBZPay, our customers can now enjoy a loan service that is paperless and which helps them to build a credit score for the future. Following loan approval, a shopper can simply head to our merchant partner and walk away with the purchase without worrying about making an initial payment or needing cash in hand.”

KBZPay Shopper Loan’s automated decision engine

The new KBZPay Shopper Loan is Myanmar’s first digital loan service to deploy an automated decision engine that uses machine learning techniques to determine the credit worthiness of the customer. The twin powers of big data and advanced analytical techniques, coupled with high computing power, enable instantaneous calculation of a credit score and credit limit for each individual customer.

This process leverages machine learning techniques to automatically determine each customer’s loan terms, minimising the risk of personal judgement and human error. KBZPay Shopper Loan customers who borrow responsibly and repay their loans on time will receive good credit scores which will in turn lead to positive benefits in the future.

Application and Terms of KBZPay Shopper Loan

The KBZPay Shopper Loan is now available to Level 1 KBZ Pay customers in Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw who are salaried employees drawing monthly income of at least MMK150,000. The loan product will be introduced in other cities and areas of the country in the coming months.

To find out more and to make a loan application, customers can tap on the “KBZPay Shopper Loan” menu item on the home screen of the KBZPay app. After clicking on ‘Apply Now’, the applicant can select the loan amount and duration of monthly repayments. The customer will then see an estimation of their loan amount, the interest applied and the total repayment totals, before they proceed with the loan application. The final approved loan limit may differ from the amount shown in the loan calculator.

To proceed with the loan application, which only takes less than 15 minutes, the applicant will need to provide the following:

* Ward recommendation (Should not be older than 1 month)
* Electricity Bill
* Pay Slip or Salary Recommendation from HR for the past three months

After the loan application is completed, applicants will be required to watch a video about responsible borrowing and best practices for managing loan repayments.

Loan repayments over the 24-hour loan verification period, applicants will receive an in-app notification to confirm if the loan application is successful. Successful applicants will receive a QR code that will be scanned by the KBZPay merchant partner to complete the payment for the item purchased.

The loan can only be used for purchases at KBZPay’s Shopper Loan partner merchants, the majority of which offer mobile phones, electrical devices and home appliances. Loan recipients will not be able to cash-out the loan amount or transfer it to someone.

Loan recipients will need to make their loan repayments on the selected day of the month using funds in their KBZPay mobile wallet. All loan repayments will be reflected in the ‘History’ tab. The KBZPay Shopper Loan merchant partners include leading retailers of electronic goods with branches across the country such as Technoland, Win Mobile World and Snoppy Mobile. Outside of Yangon, customers can also obtain a KBZPay Shopper Loan to purchase scooters.

KBZ Bank encourages its customers to borrow responsibly and to prioritise borrowing for only what is needed. Some tips on how to borrow responsibly:

* Set a budget for the item to be purchased and do not look to borrow over the budget amount.
* Allocate a portion of your monthly income to manage loan repayments.
* Make loan repayments before each monthly deadline to avoid incurring any penalties.
* Review your current loan balance regularly.
* Avoid obtaining several loans during a period of time.

GNLM
**AFC discusses K League’s resuming plan via videoconference**

THE video meeting on the resuming plan of K League, the football league that early began amid the coronavirus pandemic, was held yesterday.

AFC’s General Secretary Dato’ Windsor John has led the videoconference, which was attended by AFC member-countries football federations’ general secretaries, leagues CEOs, and officials.

AFC’s General Secretary made an opening remark, saying that it is also expected to resume the respective countries’ leagues soon.

Depending on each country’s situation, resuming the leagues can be early or later, however, football in this era is very important for all, he added.

The meeting discussed the member-countries resuming plans and draft plans that can be adopted by other countries if they are suitable for them.

An official from K League, the soccer league that early began amid coronavirus pandemic, detailed the resuming plan.

Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) general secretary and Myanmar National League-MNL CEO also participated in the meeting.

K League is South Korea’s professional association football league including the first division K League 1 and the second division K League 2.

According to MNL, if the government allows, MPT Myanmar National League will resume on 16 July 2020 in the closed stadium in Yangon following the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports. — Kyaw Khin

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**‘Ticks the boxes’ - Australia, N Zealand favourites to host 2023 women’s World Cup**

SYDNEY — A decade ago Australia spent millions of taxpayer dollars on a disastrous quest to host the 2022 men’s World Cup, but its football boss is quietly confident that crushing defeat will not be repeated this week.

Australia and New Zealand’s joint bid to host the 2023 women’s World Cup, using the slogan “As One”, is up against Colombia, with the decision due on 25 June after the field was whittled down to five.

Both countries have experience in hosting major events and their bid was regarded as the frontrunner after scoring strongly in FIFA’s evaluation report.

“Or just our genuine engagement with women’s sport and women’s issues... and Australia and New Zealand are great places to visit too, so as a package we hope it’s a compelling proposition.” — AFP

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**Middlesbrough turn to Warnock in relegation fight**

LONDON — Championship strugglers Middlesbrough sacked manager Jonathan Woodgate and hired the experienced Neil Warnock on Tuesday as they battle to avoid relegation to the third tier of English football.

The widely travelled Warnock, 71, whose lengthy managerial career has included spells at Sheffield United, Crystal Palace, QPR and Leeds, has been out of the game since he left Cardiff in November.

Middlesbrough parted company with former England international Woodgate following their 3-0 defeat to Swansea at the weekend — their first game since the Championship resumed following the coronavirus shutdown.

It left them one place above the bottom three but only above Hull on goal difference.

“MFC can confirm that head coach Jonathan Woodgate has been relieved of his duties with immediate effect,” a club statement said.

Jonathan was relieved of his role on Tuesday morning and will be replaced by the experienced Neil Warnock.”

Former Leeds and Real Madrid defender Woodgate, 40, was appointed last year but oversaw just nine wins in 38 league games.

Warnock has eight matches remaining to try to keep Middlesbrough from relegation to the third tier of English football.

His first game is against fellow strugglers Stoke City on Saturday. — AFP

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**McTominay signs new deal at Man Utd**

LONDON — Manchester United midfielded midfielder Scott McTominay has signed a new deal that will keep him at the club until 2025, with the option of a further year, the club announced on Tuesday (23 Jun).

The 23-year-old academy graduate made his debut in 2017 and has made 75 appearances for the side, scoring six goals.

“Whilst I understand that we all have so many other things to think about at the moment, I’m so happy to sign this contract and play a part in the future ahead for this team,” the Scotland international said.

“All I have ever known is United and I hope that my passion for the club shows every time I go onto the pitch. I’ll continue to give everything for this club whenever I pull on the shirt.”

McTominay has made 28 appearances in all competitions this season, despite missing two months due to a knee injury, and has been one of manager Ole Gunnar Solskjær’s standout players. “Scott has done tremendously well since I joined and has been a vital part of our midfield,” the United boss said. — AFP