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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi participates in videoconferences of 36th ASEAN Summit and ASEAN Leaders' Special Session on Women's Empowerment in Digital Age



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi joins the virtual 36th ASEAN Summit yesterday morning from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

DAW Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar participated in the Opening Ceremony of the 36th ASEAN Summit, the 36th ASEAN Summit and ASEAN Leaders' Special Session on Women's Empowerment in the Digital Age which were held via videoconferences yesterday at 8 am from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw.

The Opening Ceremony commenced with art performances presented by Vietnamese cultural troops. Then, Mr Nguyen

Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and ASEAN Chair of the year 2020 delivered inaugural address and opened the 36th ASEAN Summit.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attended the 36th ASEAN Summit held at 8:30 am. The Meeting was chaired by Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and attended by ASEAN Leaders and the Secretary-General of ASEAN. During the Summit, the ASEAN Leaders discussed and exchanged views on matters relating to ASEAN

Community Building efforts, ASEAN's external relations and ASEAN Centrality as well as regional and international issues.

In her intervention, the State Counsellor stated that this year's Chairmanship's theme of "Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN" is of great relevance to the needs of today and appropriate as ASEAN is faced with unprecedented challenges posed by COVID-19. She added that unsettled regional hotspot issues and emerging tensions and competition among major players are also destabilizing the regional landscape. She also

underscored the importance of fostering ASEAN unity, ASEAN centrality and its role as a primary driving force in the evolving regional architecture. She also stressed the need for ASEAN to continue fostering closer cooperation with Dialogue Partners, to strengthen its engagement with external parties and to reach out to new potential partners who can contribute positively to ASEAN unity, ASEAN solidarity and ASEAN Community building efforts.

As the outbreak of the pandemic has severely disrupted global economy and connectivity,

the State Counsellor emphasized the urgent need to strengthen collective actions to recover from the impacts of COVID-19, expedite the formulation of an effective and comprehensive plan for pandemic response and recovery, and rebuild people's confident, health, livelihood and capacity. She added that as the COVID-19 has pushed all of us towards a faster shift to digital technology and digital economy, ASEAN need to fully adapt to and harness the digital revolution and industry 4.0.

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No more case of COVID-19 in Myanmar on 26 June, total figure remains at 293

Updated at 8 pm, 26 June 2020



Recovery Update on 26 June 2020 after two consecutive tests



New Persons under Investigation from the past 24 hours to 12 noon of 26 June 2020



Ministry of Health & Sports

“People are the key”

Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation concludes visit to Russia



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation arrive back to Nay Pyi Taw from Russian Federation on 25 June evening after attending the 75th anniversary Victory Day parade of Great Patriotic War. PHOTO: OFFICE OF COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES

MYANMAR Tatmadaw delegation, led by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, returned from Russian Federation on 25 June evening after attending the 75th anniversary parade that marked the Victory Day of Great Patriotic War at the invitation of Russian Defence Minister Army General Sergey Kuzhugetovich Shoygu.

They were seen off at the Sheremetyevo International Airport in Moscow by Deputy Minister for Defence Colonel General Alexander V. Fomin, Deputy Director of the FSMTC of Russia Vladimir Drozhzhov, Myanmar Military Attaché (Army, Navy and Air) Brigadier General Kyaw Soe Moe, Myanmar Ambassador to Russian

Federation U Zaw Lin Naing and officials.

The Senior General and party landed at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport at 11 pm on 25 June, and they were welcomed back by Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice Senior General Soe Win, senior officials from the Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services (Army) the Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command, Russian Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Nikolay A. Listopadov, Russian Military Attaché Colonel Eduard Okladnikov and officials, according to the report of Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. —MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Code of Conduct signing event for political parties held in Yangon

THE Union Election Commission and the Embassy of Switzerland organized a Code of Conduct signing ceremony for political parties at Melia Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

Present at the ceremony were UEC Chairman U Hla Thein, UEC members, foreign ambassadors, officials from international organizations, the UEC office and Yangon Region sub-commission, representatives of 83 political parties, and invited guests. The UEC Chairman first delivered an address where he said in addition to the existence of election laws and

bylaws, there needs to be a code of conduct between the political parties. The Code of Conduct (CoC) for political parties and candidates was issued on 26 June 2016 with the approval of 67 political parties.

The UEC Chairman said adherence to the CoC reduced the number of conflicts during the 2015 General Elections and the by-elections in 2017 and 2018. He said they had organized 7 coordination meetings between October 2019 to June 2020 to revise the CoC for improvements.

Next, Technical Advisor Mr

Jorge Valladares, a member of the CoC Reviewing Working Committee, and Swiss Ambassador Mr Tim Enderlin explained the drafting process of the CoC. The representatives of

political parties then signed the CoC.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Union Election Commission Chairman U Hla Thein makes a speech at the Code of Conduct signing ceremony for political parties in Yangon on 26 June. PHOTO: MNA



Five government officials charged with corruption in Sagaing Region

THE Sagaing Region government handed over a report on government officials receiving bribes from illegal gold miners in the peatlands near Thapanseik Dam in Kyunhla Township, Sagaing Region, to the Anti-Corruption Commission.

After thorough investigation, the ACC found that Deputy Township Administrator U Soe Ko Ko of

Kyunhla Township solicited K300,000 from illegal gold miners, Police Major Aung Myo Oo of Kyunhla Township police station solicited K550,000 from illegal gold miners, Police Captain Than Htike of Kyunhla police station solicited K1,040,000 from illegal gold miners, Police Sub-Lieutenant Myo Lwin of the border guard forces solicited K250,000, and Police

Lieutenant Ye Lin of Kanbalu District solicited K200,000 from illegal gold miners.

The ACC has discovered that these 5 individuals have abused their positions of power and have opened cases under Section 56 of the Anti-Corruption Law in Kyunhla police state, Sagaing Region, yesterday.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

MoTC to deactivate unregistered SIM cards from 1 July

THE Directorate of Communications under the Ministry of Transport of Communications has issued a reminder on systematic re-registration of SIM with the personal information of holders not later than 30 June.

The earlier announcement has been made on state-owned newspapers and its websites and social media on 23 February that the SIM card registration can be obtained through online services of respective operators or at the sale centres. According to the

law, maximum two SIM cards have been allowed to each person, holding national identity card, citizen card, certified card, scrutiny card or passport (for foreigners).

The extra SIM cards of these persons or unsystematically registered SIM cards have been banned from outgoing call, except to Call Centres, since 30 April.

The DoC has also notified unregistered SIM cards will be totally deactivated as from 1 July. —GNLM

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi participates in videoconferences of 36th ASEAN Summit and ASEAN Leaders' Special Session on Women's ...



State Counsellor joins the virtual ASEAN Leaders' Special Session on Women's Empowerment in the Digital Age yesterday afternoon. PHOTO:MNA

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In response to remarks made by the Prime Minister of Malaysia on Humanitarian situation in Rakhine State, the State Counsellor stated that Myanmar also shares the concern with regard to the situation in Rakhine State and to the other parts of our country and our region where harmony and stability are of great need. She underscored that human rights have to be founded on good human relations, mutual respect and mutual confidence. She added that ASEAN shares these values, and together ASEAN can work towards a resolution of the problem which affects not just our country or even our whole region but the whole world. She mentioned that terrorism and

human trafficking are two of the dangers we face in Rakhine, and terrorism and human trafficking are dangerous issues threatening the whole world as well. She emphasized that ASEAN can work together to address these issues positively and in a way that would promote not just the stability and harmony within our region but across the whole world. State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi also attended ASEAN Leaders' Special Session on Women's Empowerment in the Digital Age held at 2 pm. The Special Session was chaired by Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and attended by ASEAN Leaders, Madame Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Chairwoman of the National Assem-

bly of Viet Nam, Mdm Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mdm Armida Salshiah Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Secretary General of ASEAN. In her statement, the State Counsellor highlighted the need to double efforts for full and effective implementation of the "ASEAN Declaration on the Gender-Responsive Implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and Sustainable Development Goals" which provides a clear roadmap towards inclusive and gender-equal Community. She also emphasized the importance of speeding up efforts to harness technology for women empowerment and

creating more opportunity for women to get involved in designing, executing and monitoring an ASEAN Post Pandemic Recovery Plan. Making reference to a study suggesting gender-equitable ASEAN would add 28 trillion USD by 2025, the State Counsellor concluded by stressing the importance of protecting the health and well-being of women, respecting their rights and listening and giving heed to their voices, in order for ASEAN to emerge from COVID-19 as a more gender-equal community where women's resources are enriched, accumulated and tapped for greater peace and prosperity in our region and beyond. The ASEAN Leaders' Interface with Representatives

of ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), ASEAN Leaders' Interface with Representatives of ASEAN Youth and ASEAN Leaders' Interface with Representatives of ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) were also held via videoconferences. At the ASEAN Leaders' Interface with Representatives of AIPA, the ASEAN Leaders were led by ASEAN Chair Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam while the Representatives of AIPA were led by Mdm Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Chairwoman of the National Assembly of Viet Nam and President of AIPA-41. As the Myanmar Representative of AIPA, U T Khun Myat, Speaker of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw also participated in the ASEAN Leaders' Interface with Representatives of AIPA. During the ASEAN Summit, the Leaders issued, adopted and noted (15) documents which include, among others, Chairman's Statement of the 36th ASEAN Summit, ASEAN Leaders' Vision Statement on a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN, and ASEAN Declaration on Human Resource Development for the Changing World of Work. Together with the State Counsellor, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thawng Tun and Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin were present at the ASEAN Summit and ASEAN Leaders' Special Session.—MNA

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker attends ASEAN-AIPA Leaders' Interface

THE Speaker of the Pyidaungsu and Pyithu Hluttaws, U T Khun Myat, attended the videoconference of the ASEAN-AIPA Leaders' Interface at 3:35 pm yesterday. Viet Nam's Prime Minister Mr Nguyen Xuân Phúc, the rotating ASEAN Chairman, delivered the opening speech calling for increased participation for COVID-19 preventive measures and more investment in the region. Next, ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) rotating Chairperson and Chairwoman of the National Assembly of

Viet Nam delivered an address where she expressed worries of the effects of the global pandemic COVID-19 on ASEAN nations. She believes ASEAN will be able to overcome the pandemic and recover its socioeconomic activities. She said AIPA members recognize ASEAN's theme for 2020 as 'Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community' and called on increased cooperation in all sectors. ASEAN leaders and AIPA members then discussed for the success of ASEAN's 2025 objectives after which Pyidaungsu



Speaker of the Pyidaungsu and Pyithu Hluttaws U T Khun Myat joins videoconference of ASEAN-AIPA Leaders' Interface on 26 June. PHOTO:MNA

Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat voiced his support for the theme of the meeting, saying it reflects the current situation. He said the unity of ASEAN is important and wished for the success

of the 36th ASEAN Summit and the upcoming 41st AIPA General Assembly. The Vietnamese Prime Minister then delivered the closing speech. Also attending the meeting

were Pyidaungsu Hluttaw AIPA Joint Committee Chairman U Zaw Thein and Director-General U Kyaw Soe of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

MoALI, MoLIP, MoSCO brief on 4th-year performances

THE Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population and the Ministry of State Counsellor Office held press briefings on their 4th-year performances under the present administration yesterday.

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation

Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Hla Kyaw summarized the salient points of the ministry in the 4th-year of present administration.

He said that the ministry's works mainly target to rural areas in agricultural, livestock and fisheries to promote socio-economic lives of people in these areas.

The Deputy Minister also said agricultural sector contributes 13.9 per cent and livestock sector 7.5 per cent in the country's economy while products from these sectors are about 30 per cent the total export volume.

The ministry issued the amended version of 2012 Farm-land Law with the approval of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 14 February 2020. Under this law, the Form (7) was issued for 98 per cent of cultivation lands of 268,210 farmers.

As climate change has affected agriculture and livestock sectors, and irrigation facilities were developed in Kayin, Sagaing, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Mon, Rakhine, Yangon and Ayeyawady. A total of 89 projects from 2016-2017 to 2019-2020 protected 250,000 acres of cultivation lands from flood. The ministry developed 25 irrigation channels in Sagaing, Bago, Magway, Yangon and Ayeyawady, which also preventing 190,000 acres from flood.

Some 73 embankments were renovated in Sagaing, Bago, Magway, Yangon and Ayeyawady not

to flood 300,000 acres. Renovation of 30 embankments prevented salinity intrusion into about 100,000 acres for farms in Yangon and Ayeyawady regions.

Private mechanized farming was promoted with formation of 125 associations in 97 townships to use machines in the whole cultivation processes from ploughing to harvest.

New varieties of disaster-resistant 37 crop seeds, including paddy, were developed and laboratories for testing quality of soil, water and plants were set up in Patheingyi and Hlegu townships. Contract farming system has been practised in 200,000 acres of farms up to now.

Livestock disease-control zones were set up in Kutkai and Kawkaik border towns for cattle trade, and diseases were tested to the cattle before being exported to China, Thailand and Bangladesh.

The Vessel Monitoring System has been installed to control illegal fishing, safety of vessels and fishing vessels. Marine product exports gradually increased in the previous year, fetching \$651 million from April 2019 to 2020 to date.

Household water supply projects from April 2019 to January 2020 reached 3 million people of 617,000 households in 3,672 villages, while solar power supplies have been installed for 1.27 million people at 146,000 houses and 22,000 public buildings in 3,400 villages, and constructions of 694.2 mile rural transportation roads and 707 bridges were constructed.

The government allocated K92.61 billion under the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan for socioeconomic development of rural people. The Department of Agriculture will use the fund for paddy seed production, capital fund for villages; the Depart-



The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation briefs on 4th-year performances under present administration in Nay Pyi Taw on 26 June. **PHOTO: MNA**

ment of Fisheries will help in fish seed production and distribution; the Department of Agricultural Mechanization will distribute agricultural machinery in Nay Pyi Taw, Ayeyawady, Bago, Yangon, Mandalay, Sagaing, Magway, Taninthayi, Kachin, Kayah and Shan.

Under the employment creating programme under CERP, the Department of Rural Development will carry out infrastructural developments in 2,488 villages, the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department will help in livestock and job opportunities in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Bago, Magway, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Shan, the Department of Fisheries will conduct training courses for safety and security of fishing workers in their workplaces in Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi, Rakhine and Mon from May to December; the Department of Irrigation and Water Utilization Management will renovate irrigation facilities in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Magway, Mandalay, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin and Mon from June to September; the Department of Agricul-

tural Mechanization will provide agricultural services in Nay Pyi Taw, Ayeyawady, Bago, Yangon, Mandalay and Sagaing from May to September; the Department of Small-Scale Industries will conduct job training courses from June to September.

Deputy Minister U Hla Kyaw and officials replied to media questions about management on CERP funds, the ministry's actions on high prices of fertilizers which are being bought by the farmers from private firms and other issues in agricultural and livestock sectors.

Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

Deputy Minister U Mya Kyaw then explained the fourth-year performances of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population.

The Department of Labour issued labour registration for 1,474,711 people through employment agencies and linked 334,842 people to local jobs. The department has sent 334,304 people to work in 9 nations overseas and cooperated with local and foreign companies to hold 10 job fairs in 8 townships that linked jobs for 2,402 people.

The Minimum Wages Act, 2013 stipulates that the minimum wage can be changed at least once every two years with approval from the Union Government. The National Committee for Setting the Minimum Wage designated on 14 May 2018 that businesses with 10 or more employees must pay a minimum wage of K600 per hour, or K4,800 for 8 working hours in a day.

The Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population attended the ASEAN Labour Ministers' video-conference on

Response to The Impact of COVID-19 on Labour and Employment organized by the Ministry of Human Resources of Malaysia on 14 May 2020.

The Social Security Board has 1,495,608 insured workers and 35,060 departments in the fourth year. SSB provided 1,270,265 insured workers with medical treatment in the fourth year and has opened 173 social security clinics and hospitals and 2 mobile clinics for emergency treatments.

SSB is expanding its social security network to 21 townships in 2019-2020 financial year and received 40 per cent social security support of 520,501 workers from 2,764 businesses. SSB has issued K10,739.703 million and put in K50 billion as capital in the COVID-19 relief plan.

The Department of Factories & General Labour Laws Inspection is implementing the Myanmar Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour and the National Committee on Child Labour Elimination was formed and led by Vice President U Myint Swe. The committee has held 3 meetings and began implementing national-level action plans across the states and regions in January 2019. Kayin and Mon states and Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions are prioritized regions.

The 2019 Report on Implementation Progress on Elimination of Child Labour is being compiled for the Union Government and the draft list of hazardous businesses and workplaces for children is being compiled as well. 71 Workplace Safety and Health Committees have been formed between 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 with 1,246 committees formed so far.

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Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population hold press briefing on 4th-year performances under the present administration. **PHOTO: MNA**

MoALI, MoLIP, MoSCO brief on 4th-year performances

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Businesses are allowed to operate within the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Sports during COVID-19 and field inspections have been made to 16,510 factories, workshops and workplaces between 20 April to 23 June this year.

The Department of Labour Relations has formed 2,334 Workplace Coordinating Committees for businesses with 30 or more employees.

The Department of Immigration is assigned by the Union Government to be the focal ministry for entry visa affairs in the fourth year. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs handles the 14 types of entry visas and the Myanmar Embassies and consulate-general offices abroad give permission. The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population handles the visa on arrival and e-Visa systems.

Three international airports in Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw, an international port in Yangon, and 6 international border controls in Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Hteekee, Tamu, and Reedhorda are open while the Kyainglat-Siingaut border checkpoint on the Myanmar-Laos border has been expanded into an international border control.

Visa on arrival has been issued for 55 nations including business visa, workshop/seminar/meeting/research visa, transit visa, and crew visa and for tourists from 13 nations. There were 497,893 VOA in the fourth year, e-Visa (Tourist) for 100 countries permitted from 1 August 2014, e-Visa (Business) permitted for 55 countries from 1 July 2015, and Express e-Visa (Tourist) permitted from 1 April 2018. There were 529,778 e-Visa approvals in the fourth year.

The Myanmar Advanced Passenger Processing System (MAPPS) was first implemented in Yangon International Airport in 2018. About 489 former Myanmar citizens have applied for registering as Myanmar citizens again starting from 2012 and 306 have been approved so far. The permanent residence system was started in January 2015 and has 686 PR applications with 617 approved.

The Taung Pyo Letwe Reception Centre was opened to accept returnees to Rakhine State who returned by land and a reception centre was also opened in Nga Ku Ya to accept returnees by water routes.



Ministry of State Counsellor Office holds press briefing on 4th-year performances in Nay Pyi Taw on 26 June. **PHOTO: MNA**

Despite having signed MoU, the fact that no returnees came back from the other country caused the ministry to sign the MoU with UNDP and UNHCR on 6 June 2018 and to extend the term from 6 June 2020 to 5 June 2021 for a second time.

The Department of National Registration and Citizenship issued 2,683,200 NRC cards in the fourth year, issued 81,032 household cards for migrating households and 2,546 NRC cards. The department issued 201,581 NRC cards to students in their schools and 9,205 NRC cards to workers in Yangon Region's industrial zone. The department issued 23,345 NV Cards for citizens who require NRC and issued them to 8,880 monks, 4,117 novices and 1,686 nuns.

The Union Minister heads the e-ID Working Committee which has 24 members and is funded by an interest-free loan from the government of Australia. The ministry is working with the Australia-based company OesD to implement the e-ID system, which will be completed in 2 years.

The Department of Population conducted the 2019 Interim Census which helped to calculate the closest estimate of future populations, support the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan, and prepare for the 2023 Census.

Deputy Minister U Myint Kyaing then answered a question on what the ministry has planned to remedy the rise of unemployment during COVID-19. He said there are now over a hundred thousand Myanmar workers who have returned during COVID-19 and 5,658 factories and businesses have shut down in the country, which has led to the unemployment of over 140,000 people. This means there are currently over 240,000 people without jobs in Myanmar.

The Deputy Minister said they are registering returnees in their township labour offices and are cooperating with companies to hire them while most factories are allowed to reopen as long as they follow designated rules during COVID-19.

He said they are also linking with other ministries where projects and tasks that require additional human resource will be able to hire additional people. He said some countries are recalling Myanmar workers but there are certain restrictions and challenges to arrange flights. He said they are doing all they can to provide employment for all citizens.

Ministry of State Counsellor Office

Director-General U Zaw Htay explained the fourth-year performance of the Ministry of State Counsellor Office. He first explained the history of the ministry's formation which came into effect when the State Counsellor Law was enacted on 6 April 2016. He said there are four duties assigned to the ministry and they are the proliferation of multiparty democracy, emergence of a market economy, establishing a democratic federal union, and national peace and development.

The ministry has the Union Minister's Office, Union Peacemaking Department, and Department of Policy Affairs. The UPD implements NRPC affairs and held discussions with stakeholders to the peace process, coordinates discussions with EAOs and political parties, and formed the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre.

The State Counsellor chairs the NRPC which consists of the vice-chairs Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe, Ministry of State Counsellor's Office, and Peace Commission Chairman Dr Tin Myo Win, Lt-Generals from the

Tatmadaw and Hluttaw representatives. U Zaw Htay said careful review of the peace process will show that all stakeholders accept peace based on the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), from which the Peace Architecture is drawn.

He said they are negotiating with both the signatories and non-signatories to the NCA and are preparing for the Fourth Session of the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong. Although political dialogue could not be started, 72 papers were submitted.

Part I of the Union Accord was signed at the Second Session the UPC which contains 37 points and 14 more points were obtained in the Third Session. NRPC held discussions with NCA Secretary EAOs in Yangon from 23 to 25 June and there were some agreements as well as timelines ascertained from them. Both sides agreed on holding the Fourth Session in the second week of August.

U Zaw Htay then said the 4th anniversary of the NCA was held at Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw on 28 October 2019. The State Counsellor's speech on that day contained policy guidelines, especially three processes for moving forward with the peace process.

The first process was explaining how Part III of the Union Accord will be formulated. It will contain three parts that have a framework agreements on implementing the NCA and steps to establishing federalism.

The second process is discussing with non-signatories and bringing them under the umbrella of the NCA. The third process is benefiting from Development for Peace, especially development that was inaccessible due to armed conflicts in EAOs regions which are now underway after

the Union Government extended official assistance.

U Zaw Htay said there are 3 steps to the coordination process. The first step is detailed political discussion that will produce agreements to be based on. The second step is technical negotiation and the third step is detailed implementation, especially going step by step in amending the 2008 Constitution. He said there are some progresses in negotiating for State Constitutions wanted by the ethnic nationals.

The third part of Part III of the Union Accord will contain basic federal principles. It contains the 5 guidelines mentioned in the State Counsellor's speech at the NCA's 4th anniversary. The guidelines are establishing a democratic federal system, power sharing, resource sharing and tax sharing, equity among the State and regional federal units, for states/regions constitutions to not oppose the Union Constitution, for power sharing to be based on the people and incorporate democracy. EAOs unanimously agrees to all 5 guidelines.

U Zaw Htay said the UPDJC takes care of the political side of the NCA and the JMC takes care of the military side. He said trust between the Tatmadaw and EAOs have decreased and this has resulted in JMC-U meetings halted for 1 year and 10 months. He said although they have reached the UPC-21st Century Panglong, the Tatmadaw and EAOs' unsuccessful negotiations on military affairs have had effects on the ground level and on political dialogue.

U Zaw Htay said that after numerous steps and discussions, the JMC-U meetings have been agreed to resume on 7 and 8 July with discussions on the political side to convene on 2, 3 and 4 July. He said NCA signatories will hold meetings from 2 to 4 July and meet again in the third week of July, JICM meetings will be held in the first week of August in Nay Pyi Taw in conjunction with UPDJC and UPDJC Secretariat meetings. Due to the spread of COVID-19 and the fact that most EAO members are stuck in Thailand, the JICM and UPC meetings are held close to each other and the number of participants have been reduced by one-third. The press conference on the Union Government's 4th year performance successfully concluded yesterday after convening from 8 to 26 June.—MNA (Translated by Aung Khin, Zaw Htet Oo)

Narcotics burnt in major cities to mark international drug control day

A haul of seized narcotics and precursor chemicals was torched in Yangon, Mandalay, Taunggyi and Lashio to mark the 33rd International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking yesterday.

A total of 14 kinds of illegal drugs including over 146 kilo opium, 291 kilo heroin, 193 million stimulant tablets, 501 kilo ice (a form of the potent stimulant drug methamphetamine), and 2,202 kilo caffeine, totally worth about K608.948 billion (US\$420 million), seized by the Tatmadaw-led combined teams of Myanmar Police Force, in Lwalkhan area in Kutkai Township of northern Shan State in early 2020 were burnt in Lashio Township. The drug burning ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen SoeHtut, in his capacity as the Chairman of Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC), Commander of Northeastern Command Major General Aung Zaw Aye, and Shan State Minister for Development Affairs U Sai Soun Hseng.

Yangon Region government observed the drug burning ceremony at the truck terminal in Hlinethaya Township (west). Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein attended the ceremony where 26 kinds of narcotic drugs and 2 kinds of related chemicals, including over 46 kilo opium, 23 kilo heroin, 47 million stimulant tablets, 2,982 kilo ice, 3,042 kilo opium agent and 515 kilo Ketamine, totally worth about K208.87 billion (\$144 million), which were seized Yangon Region, Ayeyawady Region, Rakh-



Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Soe Htut, in his capacity as the Chairman of Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control (CCDAC) attends narcotics burning ceremony in Lashio, northern Shan State, on 26 June. PHOTO: MNA

ine State and lower Myanmar. Mandalay Region Chief Minister Dr Zaw Myint Maung-witnessed the burning ceremony of confiscated illegal drugs held at the Shwe Man Taung sportsground in Aungmyethazan Township. A total of 26 kinds of narcotic drugs and 17 related chemicals, including 539 kilo opium, 262 kilo heroin, 16 million stimulant tablets, 20 kilo ice and 35 kilo Ketamine, totally worth about K59.13 billion (\$40 million), which seized in Mandalay Region, Sagaing Region, Kachin State and upper and central regions of Myanmar.

About K337.385 billion (\$232

million) worth of 19 kinds of illegal drugs and 30 related chemicals, including 2,401 kilo opium, 515 kilo heroin, 51 million stimulant tablets, 7,627 kilo ice and 870 kilo Ketamine, seized in Shan and Kayah states were burnt at the Awayyar hot balloon releasing ground in Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State. Shan State Chief Minister Dr Lin Htut and Commander of Eastern Command Major General Lin Aung attended the burning ceremony.

On 23 June, 47 kinds of precursor chemicals, worth about K3.379 billion (\$2.3 million) and 50 kinds of items used in drug

production, used in Lwalkhan area of Kutkai Township, were destroyed.

Authorities burnt 113 kinds of narcotic drugs and chemicals, including 3,134 kilo opium, 1,092 kilo heroin, 308 million stimulants, 11,131 kilo ice, 809 kilo marijuana, 1,428 kilo Ketamine, totally worth about K1,217.712 billion (\$839 million), and 50 kinds of related items, were torched in Yangon, Mandalay, Taunggyi, Lashio and Kutkai townships this year.

Last year, Yangon, Mandalay and Taunggyi cities observed narcotic burning ceremonies to destroy 59 kinds

of narcotics and chemicals, including 1,065 kilo opium, 824 kilo heroin, 108 million stimulant tablets, 4,276 kilo ice, 193 kilo marijuana and 2,483 kilo Ketamine, totally K451.746 billion (\$301 million).

The total value of these materials destroyed this year was increased by K765.966 billion (\$538 billion), compared to that of previous year.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has reported that the amount of destroyed narcotics in 2020 was triple that of previous year.—MNA ■

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Illegal drugs were burnt in Taunggyi on 26 June. PHOTO: MNA



Seized narcotics are torched in Mandalay on 26 June. PHOTO: MNA

2nd relief flight from Japan brings back 179 Myanmar nationals

THE second relief flight from Japan landed at Yangon International Airport yesterday evening.

The All Nippon Airway's repatriation airplane left the Narita International Airport, carrying 179 Myanmar nationals who were stranded in Japan due to suspensions of international flights amid COVID-19.

As they arrived in Yangon, officials from the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports, and the Yangon Region government helped for their 21-days quarantine period in line with the regulations of immigration and medical checks.

As per the directives of National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and in coordination with other relevant ministries in Myanmar and the Myanmar embassies in respective countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs arranged relief flights and chartered planes to bring back Myanmar people from foreign countries.

A total of 5,505 people have been repatriated to Myanmar to date as the government is taking preventive measures against COVID-19—MNA ■

(Translated by Aung Khin)



All Nippon Airway brings back 179 Myanmar nationals home from Japan on 26 June. PHOTO: MNA

The Statement of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) on the prevention of cyber bullying in deference to the dignity of women

Statement No. (7/2020)

1. These days news of sex abuse against several female government servants in connection with the prospects for promotion is widespread on internet pages. Based on such news, there have been writings and cartoon expressions on the facebook, which is a social media network that affect women's dignity.
2. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all human beings are equal in dignity and rights. Article 12 also states that no one shall be subject to attack on his or her honour and reputation. As Article 2 (d) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, to which Myanmar is State Party, provides for refraining from engaging in any act (or) practice of discrimination against women, any behaviour, utterances and expressions aimed at harming the dignity of women must be avoided under all circumstances.
3. For these reasons, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission emphatically urges each and every citizen, in act of respect for inherent human rights and human dignity, to refrain from engaging in writings and illustrations that affect women's dignity and also not to share any similar writings and illustrations of others on the social media network.

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission

555 migrant workers return from Thailand via Myawady border on 26 June



Myanmar migrant workers return home via No 2 Friendship Border Bridge in Myawady Town on 26 June. PHOTO: HTEIN LIN AUNG (IPRD)

A total of 555 Myanmar migrant workers returned home on 26 June through No 2 Friendship Border Bridge in Myawady Town

in Kayin State, bordering with Thailand.

All of them came back home in their own arrangements with the permission of Myanmar embassy in the Kingdom.

Kayin State Hluttaw MP U Thant Zin Aung and local officials helped the returnees with medical tests and other supplies.

The number of migrant workers who returned home from abroad through this border has been 34,945 until now.

The latest group of returnees included 322 males and 233 females from different regions and states.—Htein Lin Aung (IPRD) ■

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Cleaning equipment , chemicals donated to Women and Children Hospital

FOR the prevention of COVID-19 pandemic, the necessary requirements of cleaning equipment and chemicals were donated to the South Okkalapa Women and Children Hospital on 26 June.

Members of Rotary Club of Yangon, Daw Sandi Lwin, Daw Ohmar Tun and Dr. Than Win attended the donation ceremony as the representatives of donors.

Dr Win Maw Oo, Director of South Okkalapa Women and Children Hospital and the responsible doctors accepted the donation items.

Dr Win Maw Oo also gave appreciation speech to Rotary Club of Yangon and other donors for the donation of the necessary cleaning equipment and chemical.

Then, Dr Win Maw Oo gave the donation certificates to the donors. Rotary Club of Yangon organized this charitable donation of cleaning equipment and chemicals, equivalent of Myanmar Kyat 15,500,000/-.

—GNLM ■



Cleaning equipment donated to South Okkalapa Women and Children Hospital on 26 June. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Correction

Please read the heading of the table “Approved Amount of Foreign Investment by Top Ten Countries/Regions” on page 7 of 19 June 2020 issue of the Global New Light of Myanmar. Ed

Correction

Please read “During the State Visit of the President of the People’s Republic of China to Myanmar, the Chinese government pledged to provide Yuan 4 billion in three years as development assistance to Myanmar” in 4th and 5th Columns on page 5 of the Global New Light of Myanmar on 25 June. Ed

Curbing drug menace is everybody's concern

OVER US\$839 million worth of seized narcotic drugs were destroyed yesterday to mark the annual International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

The amount of this year's seizure increased by almost three times of its value compared to last year. It reflects the Union Government's commitment to continuing unrelenting and decisive anti-drug efforts.

To ensure that the current momentum of tasks does not slow down, all stakeholders are earnestly urged to join with the Union Government in its efforts in the fight against narcotic drugs.

In fact, if we do not collaborate and successfully combat the drug problem today, our country will face a severe and drastic situation in the coming decade. Why? Drug use among the youth is rising. Statistics indicate that drug users make up 75 per cent of the youth population in Magway.

This situation has rung an alarm bell to authorities in other regions and states. If we cannot eradicate the drug problem in our country, our efforts for the development of youth, their health and education, will be in vain.

The new drug control policy considers drug use a health issue rather than a criminal one as putting drug users behind bars has socioeconomic implications for their families.

It does not encourage drug use but alert drug users to receive treatment and their families must cooperate and help them get treatment.

The new drug policy comes after a spike in drug seizures from 2008 to 2018, and the law amending the 1993 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic

Substances Law was also enacted in February, 2018.

The 1993 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law considered drug use a crime and prescribed an eight-year sentence for it. But, the drug problem in Myanmar continued to worsen.

As the Union Government is tirelessly combating drug abuse and disseminating news on the matter to the public regularly, all concerned officials must increase the pace of handling drug abuse cases by considering it a national-level duty.

When it comes to fighting narcotic drugs, officials must adhere to existing laws, bylaws, regulations and police ethics when handling drug issues and confiscating evidence and ensure swift management in line with court orders.

To seize drugs further and to arrest drugs dealers, people are earnestly urged to inform the Ministry of Home Affairs, region and state governments and to inform huge cases of drug trafficking and other suspicious cases directly to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department of the Office of the President via the following contact numbers:

Contacts:

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



Going to the “Wet Market”

By Lokethar

The municipal markets of the future may have to adopt the design of the muper markets, with the ground floors reserved for “Wet Items” such as fish, prawns, poultry, meat, etc. and with piped water for each stall and good drainage for waste water and effluences disposal.

Besides what is more than obvious is the unhygienic conditions in which the articles are displayed and sold. It seems the sellers have to pay some money to don't know who, for the “place” they display and sell their wares on. The dirty water on the street splashed by passing carts/cyclists/ pedestrians (no cars can enter) on to the wares are a health risk. But

people seem not to be bothered by it. I suppose our people need more “Civics” and “Hygiene” lessons for their own good.

Perhaps four storied buildings with better ventilation and natural lighting with “Lifts” installed, should be built in place of the present run down four storied market buildings. It will be a boon to the market going public including the elderly and the disabled. The municipal markets of the future may have to adopt the design of the muper markets, with the ground floors reserved for “Wet Items” such as fish, prawns, poultry, meat, etc. and with piped water for each stall and good drainage for waste water and effluences disposal. Second floors could

be devoted to Rice, Pulses and Beans, Onions, Garlic, Chillies, Potatoes etc. as well as Spices and Condiments required for the kitchen. The Third Floor may be devoted to tinned provisions and packed/ canned goods including kitchen accessories. The fourth floor could be reserved for food stalls selling eatables, beverages and snacks. Perhaps the professional designer could suggest a better floor plan. Most important feature would be that the whole market is to be open for business from early morning to late evening. Another requirement is that no “street market” should be allowed in its vicinity.

With Charity to all and Malice to none.

EXPLORING THE 'NEW NORMAL'

With caution, people's lives, businesses in Asia-Pacific countries heading back to normal

HOW to balance COVID-19 restrictions and socio-economic sustainability is a tricky thing for the world.

When the summer comes, Asia-Pacific countries, with a flattened curve of infected cases or no case at all, are gradually loosening the grip to give their severely affected businesses and people a chance to relax and revive, yet with precautions.

“PRODUCTION WAS IMPACTED”

“Honey is a seasonal output. We were in lockdown just when it was usually the busiest season. Therefore, the production was impacted. Market demand also fell dramatically as the world went into quarantine mode,” said John Qin, a New Zealand honey factory owner.

Qin, a Chinese New Zealander who owns a honey factory in Auckland for more than 20 years and exports high-quality honey products to China, the United States, and all the way to Europe — except for this year — as his business was hit badly by the COVID-19 pandemic, both in market demand and production.

“Our business may not earn much profit this year. But I guess it will be still slightly above break-even,” he said.

Joseph Dante, a Filipino construction worker, lost his job as another 7.3 million Filipinos did and relied on others' generosity for financial or food aid, after his country imposed a lockdown in Luzon island in mid-March to stem the spread of COVID-19.

Thalpege Ranjith Premadasa, an administrative manager of Tri-Zen Residential Development Project in Colombo, along with his fellow workers, had to go back home and waited for further notice, when the Sri Lankan government started imposing a national curfew on March 20, closing down construction and suspending projects.

“DEMAND PICKS UP”

As New Zealand's new COVID-19 cases have become scarce in recent days, it moved to COVID-19 Alert Level 1 at 11:59 pm local time (1159 GMT) on June 8, with life and economy back to normal except continuing border controls.

With the ease of restrictions, Qin sees light at the end of the tunnel, as the honey production and demand have just picked up recently.

“During the post COVID-19 recovery, when consumers pay more attention to how to keep fit and enhance immunity, our products will see a surge in the market



Photo taken with a mobile phone shows workers brought back to work by a tailored bus service at a construction site in Colombo, Sri Lanka, June 13, 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA

need,” he explained.

“I feel positive to the future business forecast. That's why I'm investing in online marketing,” he added.

On May 11, the Sri Lankan government decided to allow Colombo to gradually restore economic activities. Ranjith immediately returned to the company and decided to send out buses to Trincomalee, Kandy, Batticaloa

and other places to pick up workers back to the capital city.

By now, more than 50 workers have been taken back to work in Colombo by the tailored bus service. For Ranjith, seeing the big smiles on the workers' faces makes him most happy.

On June 1, the Philippine government decided to ease the quarantine restrictions in Metro Manila and several provinces in

the country in a bid to gradually restart the economy.

Dante heaved a sigh of relief after hearing the news, saying that he can finally make a living again. He picked up his ordinary scissors and combs and headed out to look for clients on the streets. Barbering, which used to be only a part-time job, has now become Dante's main source of income.

“Someday, I'd like to set up

my own barbershop,” 44-year-old Dante said in mask and gloves, yet with a smile.

“I FEEL PRETTY SAFE”

In a barbershop in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, local resident, who identified himself as “Mr Tee,” had his hair cut for the first time in three months.

“I felt cool and refreshed,” he said.

Mr Tee said he did not feel much worried. “They have done the disinfection, had my temperature taken and put the disposable protective cloth on me, so I feel pretty safe.”

The barber, Raj, said more than 30 customers had come as of noon on June 10. “We have closed for a long time, so many people come today.”

Both customers and their hairstylists need to get used to the strict measures set by the Malaysian government to prevent further spread of the virus.

Barbers and beauticians are required to wear face masks, face shields, and gloves. Customers are required to have their temperatures checked, contacts recorded, and to put on face masks too. Many barber's and beauty salons only provide haircut service for the moment.

SOURCE: Xinhua



COVID-19:

ယခုအချိန်မှာ ကလေးများအား ကလေးအလုပ်သမားဖြစ်စေခြင်းမှ ပိတ်ကန့်ကြပါမူ။



Myanmar Daily Weather Report
(Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 26th June, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is moderate to strong over the Andaman Sea and South Bay and weak elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 27th June, 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway Regions and Kayah State, fairly widespread in Naypyitaw, Upper Sagaing Region, Shan and Rakhine States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Upper Sagaing, Yangon and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon – Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (30-35)m.p.h. Sea will be slight to moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (6-9) feet in Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon – Taninthayi Coasts and about (4-6) feet Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Weak to moderate monsoon.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27th June, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27th June, 2020: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27th June, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Naypyitaw and Yangon Region, fairly widespread in Mandalay Region.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting the submission of poetries, opinions, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their work to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, in person, or by email to 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 sent to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.).— Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar

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Permits to be issued to fish, prawn farms after collecting fine



Restrictions on fish and prawn farmers will be relaxed to grant permits after collecting fines.

PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

THE fish and prawn farms will be issued with the legal permits after collecting a fine of

K20,000-K30,000 per acre, according to an announcement of the Central Body of Farmland

Management Team on 19 June. A total of 380,000 acres of fish and prawn farms will be granted

the official permit. At present, only 120,000 acres out of 500,000 acres of fish and prawn farms are issued with LaNa-39 forms by which the land can be used for purposes other than livestock breeding. With giving priority to rice production in Myanmar, the farmlands have difficulty getting the grant for other purposes such as fish and prawn breeding.

Although the breeding entrepreneurs had tried to get the official permit for the land to be able to use for livestock breeding in the previous government period, they were rejected for various reasons. They requested the same again in the incumbent government period hoping that the restrictions will be relaxed with the paying of the fine.

The government's amended land policy in aquatic livestock sector can increase annual aquatic export worth \$700 million to \$1 billion.—Aye Maung
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Myanmar approaches target with US\$4.4 bln FDIs in Q3 this FY

By Nyein Nyein

"WITH US\$4.4 billion foreign investment in nine months of this fiscal year (FY), Myanmar is likely to meet foreign investment target in this FY," said DICA Director-General U Thant Sin Lwin.

Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) set a target to attract USD5.8 billion in this FY. To meet the set target, \$1.4 billion is still needed.

"Foreign investments worth only \$4.1 billion flowed into the country last year. Now, FDI flow into Myanmar totalled \$4.4 billion in nine months of this FY.

Our FDI target is \$5.8 bil-

lion. We only need \$1.4 billion to meet our target. We need to make sure our guideline such as less economic impact by the coronavirus pandemic, encouragement through coronavirus economic relief plan (CERP), giving priority to creating job opportunities and paying attention by the government over the recovery of the economic impact by the pandemic. By combining these four sectors, we expected \$1.4 billion FDI will flow into the country," he stated.

In the pandemic period, some existing investment businesses have increased their capital amount of investment. The new investments are also

entering the country. The remaining new investments will be continued to be given green light in the next three months, according to DICA.

Moreover, foreign investment has increased this year than last year, making the largest investment in the electricity sector, he added.

"The increasing investment in Myanmar this year than last year is mainly depending upon the government policy. The government gives priority to electricity sector this year. This year, 25 per cent of total investment flowed into the electricity sector.

As the electricity sector develops, the investment in elec-

tricity has also increased," he stressed.

At present, MIC is giving the green light to FIDs which have no impact upon the environmental conservation in the worldwide infectious disease period. Moreover, MIC granted permission to the factories which have submitted proposals to manufacture masks, according to DICA.

Currently, a total of four factories are manufacturing masks and hospital equipment in Myanmar. Among them, three factories are owned by the Chinese citizens while Myanmar citizen owns one, according to DICA.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

DHT allows reopening of 52 hotels, guesthouses in Sagaing region

OUT of 57 hotels and guesthouses suspended because of the outbreak of coronavirus, 52 hotels and guesthouses are resuming their services in line with the guidance of the Ministry of Health and Sports in Sagaing region as of 26 June, said U Aung Thura Oo, the head of the Directorate of the Hotels and Tourism (DHT) in Sagaing region.

"The Ministry of Hotels and

Tourism has granted licences to 57 hotels and guesthouses in Sagaing region as of the end of June. Now, about 52 hotels and guesthouses could be reopened in Sagaing region after having the inspection taken," he said.

These 52 hotels and guesthouses are located in Sagaing, Monywa, Shwebo, Kalay, Katha, Homalin, Kani, Indaw and Bamauk townships.

"The hotels and guesthouses

are being operated following the rules and regulations set by the Ministry of Health and Sports. The resumption of operation of the hotels and guesthouses will enable the hotel staff to get their jobs back," he added.

The tourism sector in Sagaing region has significantly declined because of coronavirus pandemic, he pointed out.

"In 2020, more than 23,000

travellers visited Sagaing region in February, over 17,000 travellers in March, 769 travellers in April and 412 travellers in May. With the declining number of travellers, the income of the businesses of the restaurants, drivers and other tourism-related industries has declined, too," he stressed.—Myo Win Tun (Monywa)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

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Texas halts reopening as US virus cases soar

AUSTIN — Texas on Thursday halted steps to reopen its economy after a sharp rise in coronavirus cases, as the United States hits some of its highest infection rates since the start of the pandemic. Twenty-nine states are now experiencing new surges, with more than 37,667 new cases recorded Thursday, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) — a level approaching a new record — with 692 new deaths reported.

In a likely sign of the situation's seriousness, Vice President Mike Pence announced that the White House coronavirus task force would give a press conference Friday at the Department of Health and Human Services, the first of its kind in almost two months. Texas was among the most aggressive states in reopening in early June after months of lockdown, its leadership confident it had escaped the worst of



Governor Greg Abbott, an ally of US President Donald Trump, was aggressive in reopening Texas but has now called a pause after a spike in coronavirus cases in his state. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

the pandemic that has claimed almost 122,000 lives in the US, by far the highest number in the world. “The State of Texas will pause any further phases to open Texas as the state responds to the recent increase in positive COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations,” Governor Greg Abbott’s

office announced in a statement. “The last thing we want to do as a state is go backwards and close down businesses. This temporary pause will help our state corral the spread,” Abbott said, asking residents to wear masks and respect social distancing guidelines.— AFP ■

Norway starts digging up first Viking ship in a century

OSLO — Norway began work on Friday to excavate the first Viking ship to be unearthed in the country in more than a century, with experts hoping it will shed light on the era of the Nordic seafarers.

Ground-penetrating radar detected the ancient vessel, buried about 50cm below ground in a mound covering a burial site, in 2018 in the south east near the Swedish border.

Initial observations suggested the remains were in very bad shape, forcing the authorities to launch excavations quickly before the ship was completely degraded.

Only three well-preserved Viking ships have been found in Norway, the last excavation dating back to 1904. All three are now on display

in a museum near Oslo.

“With so few ships discovered, a new Viking ship will have a great impact on understanding the ships themselves, but also provide valuable information to understand the historical era as a whole,” said archaeologist Knut Paasche of the Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research.

Viking warriors and merchants who sailed the seas between the eighth and eleventh centuries often buried kings and dignitaries with ships hoisted ashore.

“The Gjellestad ship is a discovery of outstanding national and international importance,” said Culture Minister Sveinung Rotevatn.

The excavation is expected to last five months. — AFP ■



Duda's anti-gay rhetoric has sparked protests. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

US, EU keep close eye as Poland votes in key election

WARSAW — The future of Poland’s right-wing government hangs in the balance as Poles prepare to vote on Sunday in a tight election that had to be delayed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Ahead of the vote, President Andrzej Duda this week visited Washington where he received words of encouragement from US President Donald Trump who said he was doing a “terrific job”.

Trump sees Duda, backed by the governing Law and Justice (PiS) party, as an important European ally and Duda’s visit to the White House was the first by a foreign leader since the pandemic began.

But Poland’s EU partners have pilloried the government’s reforms, particularly of the judicial system, saying they are eroding democracy just three decades after Poland shed communism.

The latest opinion polls indicate that Duda will easily come first on Sunday but fall short of the 50 per cent majority required to win outright. He would then face a run-off in the second round on July 12 against liberal rival Rafal Trzaskowski, the mayor of Warsaw, that is too close to call.

Anti-gay rhetoric

Duda has promised to defend the governing party’s raft of popular social benefits, including a child allowance and extra pension payments — a key factor behind the populists winning a second term in October’s parliamentary election.— AFP ■

Sun-seekers spark emergency incident at UK beach

BOURNEMOUTH — An English seaside resort declared a major incident Thursday after thousands of people flocked to the beach on the hottest day of the year so far, despite the threat of coronavirus.

Temperatures rose to a record 33.3 degrees Celsius (91.94 degrees Fahrenheit) at Heathrow Airport in west London, the Met Office said, a day after highs of 32.6 C saw huge crowds flock to the coast.

But the local authorities in Bournemouth said they were “appalled” at the scenes on its beaches, as the sunny weather saw an influx of thousands of

people.

Their arrival resulted in gridlock on the roads, widespread illegal parking, piles of rubbish as well as anti-social behaviour including drunken fights, they said.

Visiting the beach is permitted after a nationwide coronavirus lockdown was eased, but people are still being urged to avoid large crowds, and pubs and restaurants do not open until July 4.

Council leader Vikki Slade said Bournemouth, on the southern English coast, was not ready to receive so many visitors and urged people to stay away.

“The irresponsible behaviour and actions of so many people is just shocking and our services are stretched to the absolute hilt trying to keep everyone safe,” she said.

Declaring a major incident allows the council to deploy additional resources, including police.

Other beaches across Britain were also busy, including Southend-on-Sea, where Magda Bewick was among those soaking up the rays.

“It’s lovely, obviously to have a little sunbathe, and the kids are happy, in and out of the sea,” she told AFP. — AFP ■



The arrival of thousands of people resulted in gridlock on the roads, widespread illegal parking and overnight camping as well as anti-social behaviour. **PHOTO: AFP**

JR Central's plan to start maglev train service in 2027 uncertain



Supplied photo shows a video grab of Shin Kaneko (R), president of Central Japan Railway Co., in a meeting with Shizuoka Gov. Heita Kawakatsu at Shizuoka prefectural government office. **PHOTO: KYODO**

SHIZUOKA—Central Japan Railway Co.'s plan to open a high-speed maglev train line between Tokyo and Nagoya in 2027 was thrown into doubt Friday, as Shizuoka Gov. Heita Kawakatsu did not approve the start of preparatory construction work. During the first meeting with the governor of the central Japan prefecture, Shin Kaneko, president of the train operator also known as JR Central, sought Kawakatsu's consent to launch the work.

But the governor, who met

the press after the meeting said, "It can't be approved."

JR Central's failure to overcome local opposition due to environmental concerns is likely to make it even more difficult for the company to achieve its target year for operation of the Linear Chuo Shinkansen service, with a top speed of 500 kilometres per hour. During the meeting at the Shizuoka prefectural government office, Kawakatsu said that while he is not opposed to the project itself, "We have to consider how

to strike a balance between the Linear and the environment."

"It's regrettable that I was not able to obtain confirmation," Kaneko told reporters following the meeting, which the prefectural government, in a rare move, streamed live on its website.

JR Central wants to start preparatory construction work for a section of the line in the prefecture, but the work has been delayed by local concern over the project's impact on the flow of a river.—Kyodo ■

High street to PPE: Bangladesh garment makers turn virus gloom into boom

SAVAR – Bangladesh—Facing ruin as orders from Western brands collapsed in the coronavirus pandemic, many Bangladeshi garment factories have been given a lifeline with orders to make protective masks, gloves and gowns for export.

Nonetheless, hundreds of thousands of workers who used to work in export-oriented apparel factories in the South Asian country remain jobless despite the new orders and some recovery in Western markets.

At factories in the industrial town of Savar just north of Dhaka, thousands of workers are now working eight-hour shifts, six days a week, making personal protective equipment (PPE).

On the factory floor, sewing machines operated by hundreds of workers whirled loudly beside huge stacks of white and light-blue gowns.

"We saw the opportunity in February and immediately we switched to PPE manufacturing," said Syed Naved Husain, chief executive of Beximco, a major supplier to the owners of brands like Zara, Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger.

Beximco last month exported 6.5 million medical gowns to US brand Hanes and it expects to export some \$250 million worth of protective gear this year.—AFP ■



Bangladesh over the past two decades became the world's second-largest ready-made garment exporter after China. **PHOTO: AFP**

Bain wins bid to buy ailing Australian airline Virgin

SYDNEY—Administrators for Virgin Australia said Friday they had accepted a bid from US private equity giant Bain Capital to buy the pandemic-felled airline.

Officials at Deloitte said they had reached a deal with the Boston-based fund that "will result in the sale and recapitalization of Virgin Australia Holdings and its subsidiary businesses".

The deal is subject to regulatory approvals and is due to be completed by August.

The Richard Branson-backed airline has struggled for years against larger carrier Qantas, which would have enjoyed a virtual monopoly if Virgin went out of business.

The terms of the deal were not spelled out in full, but Bain had committed to "the retention of thousands of jobs".—AFP ■

UK supermarket Tesco says sales jump in virus lockdown

LONDON—British supermarket giant Tesco announced Friday that its first-quarter sales jumped eight per cent, boosted by rocketing online purchases as people switched to grocery deliveries during the nationwide coronavirus lockdown.

Total sales excluding petrol surged to £13.4 billion (\$16.6 billion, 14.8 billion euros) during the company's first quarter -- the 13 weeks to end-May -- compared with a year earlier.

Britain's biggest retailer said

in a trading update that customers shopped less often but purchased more goods. The bumper performance came after the government imposed a lockdown on March 23 in a bid to halt the COVID-19 outbreak. Restrictions

began to be eased this month.

Online sales soared by a staggering 48.5 per cent in the reporting period as the company ramped up its delivery capability to cope with booming demand from customers staying at home.

The online business saw sales zoom by more than 90 per cent in May alone, the company added. "Through a very challenging period for everyone, Tesco colleagues have gone above and beyond, and I'm extremely proud of what they've achieved," said Chief Executive Dave Lewis.

The results marked the final update fronted by Lewis, who is leaving for personal reasons and will be replaced by Walgreens Boots Alliance executive Ken Murphy in September. "We doubled our online capacity to help support our most vulnerable customers and transformed our stores with extensive social distancing measures so that everyone who was able to shop in store could do so safely," Lewis noted.—AFP ■



Online sales soared by 48.5 per cent in the company's first quarter. **PHOTO: AFP**

Paris-Orly airport reopens after 3-month virus closure

PARIS—Paris’s Orly airport reopened on Friday for the first time in nearly three months after air travel collapsed during the coronavirus pandemic, but flights will be a fraction of the usual rate.

A plane operated by low-cost carrier Transavia took off for the Portuguese port city of Porto, the first commercial flight since the airport south of Paris came to a halt on March 31.

Two firetrucks on either side of the plane shot a festive arc “water salute” over the stationary aircraft, with the passengers inside waiting to taxi to the runway.

Airlines including Transavia, Air France, easyJet, Vueling and Air Caraibes account for most of the traffic at Orly, flying to the Caribbean, Reunion Island, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Iceland and Croatia, among others.

On Friday, officials expect around 8,000 passengers, less than 10 percent of the daily pre-virus average of around 90,000.

They will be on more than 70 flights compared to the normal run of 600 a day.—AFP ■



An operator disinfects self-service check-in kiosks at Orly 3 terminal's departure hall on the day Paris-Orly airport reopened. PHOTO: AFP

ASEAN committed to reduce post-pandemic impacts, recover economy

HANOI—ASEAN leaders on Friday committed themselves to seek comprehensive ways to ease the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic and get the sputtering Southeast Asian economy back on a growth path.

The leaders of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations discussed the issues facing the region at a summit held virtually due to the pandemic, with Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc serving as a host. The leaders in a joint statement pledged to strengthen mechanisms to create a region “capable of dealing with the current global challenges” and “reduce the impacts of COVID-19 through comprehensive recovery plans,” Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi told reporters in Jakarta.

They also agreed that besides consensus and consultation, integrated, strengthened coordina-



Leaders of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations “attend” their annual summit held virtually at Indonesia’s Merdeka (Freedom) Presidential Palace due to the novel coronavirus pandemic. (Photo courtesy of Indonesia’s Presidential Secretariat). PHOTO: KYODO

tion is the key to effectively responding to the crisis, according to Retno. The statement was not immediately made public after the meeting. During the summit, the leaders of at least four countries – Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand – proposed creating travel bubbles, or corridors among member states, to help revive the regional economy, according to officials who briefed reporters and other sources.

Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha, in his remarks, “called on ASEAN to start considering shared paths in easing measures that have become obstacles to travel in order to help restore businesses and people-to-people connectivity,” according to his spokeswoman.

While echoing Thailand’s view, Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin bin Yassin stressed that the proposed travel bubbles should apply only to “green” ASEAN member states, which apparently refers to countries that have largely tamed the spread of the virus.

—Kyodo ■

Mexico cuts interest rate for 9th consecutive time amid pandemic

MEXICO CITY—The Central Bank of Mexico (Banxico) on Thursday cut the benchmark interest rate for the ninth consecutive time in a bid to boost the economy and cushion the “significant impact” of the COVID-19 pandemic.

All five members of the bank’s governing board unanimously voted to lower the interbank interest rate by 50 basis points to 5 per cent, the lowest level since November 2016.

“The challenges the pandemic poses to monetary policy include both its significant impact on economic activity and a financial shock,” the bank said in a statement.

The balance of risks to growth “remains significantly inclined downwards,” while the outlook for inflation remains uncertain, Banxico said.—Xinhua ■

Notice for change of distributor

We, Ningxia Taiyicin Biotech Co., Ltd, would like to change the Distributor of the following product, which registered under Pesticide Registration Board, Myanmar, from **Friends Helper Co., Ltd** to **Kesai Eagrow (Myanmar) Co., Ltd**. If any objection or enquiry, please contact to Co-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, West Gyogone, Insein township, Yangon from here to next two weeks.

No	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Type	Registration Number
1	Emazing 5.7 WDG	Emamectin Benzoate 5.7% WDG	Provisional	P2019-4668

Address: **Kesai Eagrow (Myanmar) Co., Ltd**. No (T-A8), Room (401), Min Dana Street, (3) Quarter, Shwe Kabar Condo, Mayangone Township Yangon. Ph: 09891497268



Embassy of India, Yangon Tender Notice

Sealed tenders are invited for supply and installation of CCTV cameras at India House at 35, Thantaman Road, Dagon Township, Yangon. Details of tender is available in the Embassy’s website <https://embassyofindiayangon.gov.in/> Tender - Tender (Embassy’s) and CPP Portal. The last date for bid submission is 15 July, 2020.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V BBC EVEREST

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BBC EVEREST VOY. NO. (1046055)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **28-6-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AIPT-3** 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.
Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES (S’PORE) PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE M.V PAGONA

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V PAGONA VOY. NO. (01/20)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-6-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **SPW-7** 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.
Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S UNI SPRING LOGISTICS HOLDINGS PTE LTD

Caves in stone age across Shan State

By Maung Tha (Archaeology)

THE eastern plateaus emerged as Shan mountain ranges 600-700 million years ago. Most of natural caves were home to Stone Age human. Among them, Padalin Cave was the most significant in Ywangan Township.

To know comprehensive evidences of the Stone Age in Myanmar, the Department of Archaeology and National Museum started exploration of natural caves in Shan State in 2012.

One-sided finished stone weapons, conch shells, pieces of charcoal and bones found at Montawa and Tin-ein stone caves on Shan plateau are evidences of Stone Age human. Moreover, the conditional Myanmar's Political History mentioned that a flock of many Stone Age humans resided at Tin-ein Cave in Taunggyi Township.

Padalin Cave

Padalin Cave is located 10 miles west of Ywangan, southern Shan State. It was found by geologist U Khin Maung Kyaw in 1960. A team led by Director U Aung Thaw of Archaeology Department excavated the site on 9 January 1969 to examine the cave.

Two Padalin limestone caves, at an altitude of 1,050 feet, take positions on the hillside with 50-70 feet in height turn to the southward.

No 2 Padalin Cave is more than 800 feet long with stalagmites and stalactites. No evidence for residences of Stone Age human was found.

No 1 Padalin Cave is 200 yards from No 2 cave. Twelve pictures—two palms, one sun, one fish and eight animals—illustrated by stone age humans with the use of red ochre can be seen on the 10-12 feet high wall. These pictures are similar to mural paintings of Stone Age in southern France and northern Spain.

More than 1,600 ancient



Padalin Cave.

objects such as stone weapons, pieces of charcoal, animal bones and pots were excavated from No 1 cave. The radio carbon test showed the result that the pieces of bone found from the cave were 12,000 years old. A pile of ash in the centre of the cave indicated early men continuously residing in the cave. Pieces of charcoal and pots and conch shells were between 11,000 years and 6,700 years old. As such, experts made a conclusion that Stone Age culture in Padalin Cave might be between 12,000 and 4,000 years.

Not only choppers in Palaeolithic era but also a rough adze installed with a tang was found in the cave. It can be known that human beings had resided in the cave from Palae-

olithic to Neolithic eras.

Montawa Cave

Montawa Cave in southwest ward of Taunggyi takes a position on the western shoulder of the mountain range stretching from the south to the north. The mouth of No 1 cave facing the west is 27 feet wide and 30 feet high with 4,934 feet in length. Water streaming in the cave flows out from the drain of main cave.

Entrance to No 1 cave is 50 feet high from the ground. Montawa cave with plentiful of water sources was possible for residence of Stone Age humans.

In 1938-39, experts from Harvard University of the United States of America excavated Montawa Cave, finding



Picture of the Sun on the wall Padalin Cave.

pieces of manual and mechanized pots, one-sided smooth stone weapon, pieces of charcoal and bines.

No 2 cave, 100 metres north of No 1 cave, turns to the westward. The mouth of cave is nine feet wide and 14.75 feet high with 73.8 feet in length. The hillside in front of the cave is enough for walking.

No. 2 cave with good ventilation does not have wetness in interior. An underground creek is flowing near No 1 cave, supporting the water source to the Stone Age humans. The Department of Archaeology found one rough stone weapon and some pieces of pot in excavation at No 2 cave.

Buddho Zinaw Cave

Buddho Zinaw Cave formed with two natural caves is located on Thikhaung mountain range, west of Inkhaung Village, Kalaw Township, southern Shan State.

No 1 Buddho Zinaw Cave is 12 feet wide and 50 feet long. Its mouth turns to the southeast ward. A team led by Dr Tin Thein of Geology Department from Taunggyi University found human tooth and bones of animals in the cave. They also found bones and teeth fossils of animal from the front of cave. A pile of bone fossils of animal pointed out the cave might be suitable for humans.

The front of No 1 cave was excavated and pieces of animal skulls, bones and teeth and

stone weapons found. A hand axe used in Stone Age was also found. As the stone used in making the axe was available around Pindaya, Stone Age humans who resided at Buddho Zinaw Cave might come from Padalin Cave, according to the remarks of experts from Department of Archaeology.

No 2 cave is 1,187 feet south of No 1 cave, facing the north, 158 feet higher than No 1 cave. The mouth of the cave is 9.5 feet wide and 19.5 feet high with 28.5 feet in length. A 23 feet wide plain is located in front of the cave.

Buddho Zinaw Rock

The 23-foot rock is located north of Buddho Zinaw Cave, turning to the east. Buddhoji-no Sayadaw found teeth and bones of animals from the east of a 400 square feet plain in front of the rock.

Bones and teeth of buffaloes, cows and deer, a jaw with teeth of carnivorous animal and pieces of pots were found in excavating the rock.

Papant Cave

No 1 cave of Papant Cave, north of Papant Village in Hopong Township, southern Shan State, is 42 feet wide, 365 feet long and 18 feet high. Pebbles are found in the west of cave wall. It is assumed that these pebbles were made for stone weapons by Stone Age humans. Excavation did not show any evidence of human residences.

No 2 cave near No 1 cave turns to the northward. The entrance to the cave is lower than the ground, so water flows into the cave.

No 3 cave, east of No 2, faces northwest ward. Its area is similar to No 1 cave with proper lighting.

No 4 cave, north of No 2, takes a position on the hillside. Its entrance is 50 feet high from the ground, facing southeast ward. No 2, 3 and 4 caves were suitable for residence of humans.

Hsuzaungganaing Cave

One of two caves from Hsuzaungganaing Cave, near quarry of south of KyaukyeOhkwe Village in Nyaungshwe Township is just an area for a family and another cave, 26 feet long, 30 feet wide and 26 feet high. The mouth of cave is about 20 feet wide, turning to southwest ward. Hsuzaungganaing Cave is located between



Montawa Cave.

Htet-ein Cave and Montawa Cave.

No 1 cave is 60 feet high from the ground. A stream flows 65 feet south of the cave. The Department of Archaeology excavated the cave in 2012 to search evidence of early men for residences.

Results of excavation showed bones, teeth, pieces of pots and stone weapons, beads and conch shells in addition to bones of dogs and cows as well as rats. As experts reviewed that as these animals were tamed by humans, No 1 cave might be residences of Stone Age humans.

No 2 cave, 700 feet west of

No 1, is 7.5 feet long and 14 feet wide. No evidence of residence for humans was found there.

Pawlapat Cave, Kyauktaing Cave, Taungbohtaung Cave, Htet-ein Cave and KyaukyeOh Cave are located in Nyaungshwe Township of southern Shan State. Although some natural caves are wide similar to Htamsam Cave in Hopong Township and Peikchinmyaung Cave in PyinOoLwin Township, evidences of Stone Age human residences cannot be found there because concrete roads have been paved in the caves.

Whatever it maybe, natural caves where early men

resided show partially social lifestyle of Stone Age in Myanmar.

(Translated by
Than Tun Aung)

Reference:

Year-wise reports of Department of Archaeology and National Museum Conditional Myanmar's Political History (Volume I)
THE NEOLITHIC CULTURE OF THE PDAHILIN CAVES (U AUNG THAW)

Ivanisevic positive for coronavirus, days after Djokovic event

ZAGREB — Croatia's former Wimbledon champion Goran Ivanisevic said Friday he has tested positive for coronavirus just days after attending an exhibition tournament organized by world number one Novak Djokovic, whom he coaches.

"Unfortunately ... I have just found out that I tested positive to Covid-19," Ivanisevic said on Instagram. "I feel good and I don't have any symptoms," the 48-year-old Croat said and asked everyone who has been in close contact with him to take good care of themselves and their loved ones. "I will continue to self-isolate," said Ivanisevic, adding that he had tested negative twice in the past 10 days.

Ivanisevic is part of world number one Djokovic's coaching team and was the director of the now-abandoned Adria Tour which led to several top players becoming infected with coronavirus.

Djokovic, Grigor Dimitrov, Borna Coric and Viktor Troicki all tested positive after taking part in the second leg of the event held in Zadar, on Croatia's Adriatic coast, last Sunday.

Players had embraced across the net, played basketball and even danced in a nightclub the week in the first leg played in Belgrade.



Goran Ivanisevic was the director of Novak Djokovic's Adria Tour event that has led to a rash of coronavirus infections. **PHOTO: GLYN KIRK AFP/FILE**

Djokovic was widely criticised for hosting the charity tournament. On Tuesday he issued an unstinting apology for the now-cancelled Adria Tour, where social distancing was minimal and matches were played in front of thousands of fans. The 33-year-old Serbian has said he is "so deeply sorry" that the tournament "caused harm".

His wife Jelena has also tested positive after the couple travelled back from Croatia to Belgrade to be tested.

Ivanisevic strongly defended Djokovic after the tournament. "Everyone is so smart now and many attack Novak, it is rather popular," he told local media this week. The Croat argued Djokovic "tried to make something big, something with a charitable character after we were all locked up for three months". — AFP ■

'It's for you', tearful Klopp tells Liverpool fans

LIVERPOOL — Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp was overcome with emotion as he dedicated the club's first league title in 30 years to the fans on Thursday.

Klopp wiped away tears of joy during a television interview minutes after Chelsea's 2-1 win against Manchester City sealed the Premier League crown for Liverpool.

"It's such a big moment, I am completely overwhelmed," Klopp told Sky Sports.

"Tonight it is for you out there," added Klopp.

"It's incredible. I hope you stay at home, or go in front of your

house if you want, but not more. We do it together in this moment and it is a joy to do it for you."

Thousands ignored Klopp's plea to respect social distancing rules amid the coronavirus as they partied the night away in the streets around Anfield.

But the German promised Liverpool will hold a celebratory parade through the city when it is safe to do so. "We will create pictures in the future with the parade whenever it will be for all our supporters," added Klopp. "We will be together and enjoy this in a proper manner."

The long-awaited title was

clinched without Liverpool kicking a ball as City's defeat meant Klopp's men have an unassailable 23-point lead at the top of the Premier League with seven games to play.

A first league title in three decades caps a meteoric rise for the Reds back to the top of the English game after Klopp arrived in 2015 with the club struggling just to break into the top four.

But the former Borussia Dortmund coach remains hungry for more silverware in the coming years with most of his squad still in their prime. —AFP ■



Fans gather at Anfield after Liverpool won the Premier League. **PHOTO: (AFP PHOTO/OLI SCARFF)**

Solskjaer congratulates Liverpool on Premier League triumph, looks to FA Cup for success

LONDON — Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer on Friday (June 26) congratulated bitter rivals Liverpool on their long-awaited Premier League triumph but said watching other sides lifting the trophy "hurt".

The Reds were crowned English champions for the first time in 30 years without kicking a ball on Thursday, when Chelsea beat 10-man Manchester City 2-1 at Stamford Bridge.

Liverpool's 19th top-flight title triumph, which sparked wild celebrations around their Anfield home ground, left them one behind United's record haul. It was their first title in the Premier League era.

"First of all, any team that wins the championship and a Premier League deserves it and they deserve credit," United boss Solskjaer, who won six league titles as a player at Old Trafford, told reporters.

"It's a hard league to win, so well done to Jurgen (Klopp) and his players. "For me, every time you see anyone else lift the trophy it hurts. I reckon that's the feeling everyone associated with Man United - all players, staff and supporters. Of course we want to get back to winning ways and that's our challenge."

The Norwegian is hoping that FA Cup glory can be a springboard for further success, with United heading to Norwich

on Saturday in the quarter-finals.

United are fifth in the Premier League, still in the race for a Champions League spot, and are well-placed to reach the last eight of the Europa League. —AFP ■



Manchester United's Norwegian manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer. **PHOTO: AFP**

A tournament of firsts: 2023 women's World Cup will break new ground

SYDNEY — Australia and New Zealand were selected as joint hosts of the 2023 women's World Cup in the early hours of Friday morning. AFP Sport takes a closer look at what the event will look like:

More teams, money, fans

The 2023 World Cup will be groundbreaking in more ways than one way. It will be the first with 32 teams, up from the 24 nations who competed at last year's finals in France, won by the United States. That means more matches and more revenue to be ploughed back into women's football.

The sports-mad host na-

tions are expecting 1.5 million spectators, which would be another record, while prize money is set to be most ever offered, reflecting the growth of the game.

It will be the first women's World Cup co-hosted by cooperating nations and the first to take place in the southern hemisphere.

Why Australia and New Zealand?

After controversy over the awarding of the 2022 men's World Cup to Qatar, the votes of FIFA council members were made public, with 22 of the 35 going to the joint bid ahead of Colombia. —AFP ■