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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VII, No. 75, 11th Waxing of First Waso 1382 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Tuesday, 30 June 2020



I hope we will be able to push back the second COVID wave if we can take effective measures to prevent the spread of the disease during the next one or two months: State Counsellor

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said that she hoped Myanmar would be able to push back the second COVID wave if effective measures could be taken to prevent the spread of the disease during the next one or two months on her Facebook page yesterday. This was what she wrote:

To prevent the spread of the COVID disease we have to review the situation every two weeks and make a decision on whether to keep into effect certain rules, whether certain rules need to be relaxed or if some rules need to be strengthened. During this month, we have been able to relax the “stay at home” arrangements in all townships.

Prohibition of mass gatherings of people is still in effect. If we can take effective measures to prevent the spread of the disease, I hope we would be able to push back the second COVID wave during the next one

People can change if they are confronted with the needs of new situations. Some things never change. What will never change is the fact that when the time is ripe, there needs to be changed.

or two months. As there are lots of people who have become infected with COVID disease without showing any symptoms of infection, we need to be extra careful. It is very important to wear masks in places like markets where there is close contact with others for long periods of time. Don't forget to wash your hands frequently. Don't be careless.

I have heard that online sales and purchases have become more frequent during the stay-at-home period. This shows that people can change if they are confronted with the needs of new situations. Some things never change. What will never change is the fact that when the time is ripe, there needs to be changed. May the people of Myanmar have the ability and energy to change when the time is ripe for change!

(Translated by Kyaw Myaing)

UEC announces 2020 General Election constituencies

1. The Union Election Commission issued announcements, dated on 29 June, for constituencies in the 2020 General Election, with announcement number 111/2020 for Pyithu Hluttaw, 112/2020 for Amyotha Hluttaw, 113/2020 for Region/State Hluttaw, and 114/2020 for ethnic minority constituencies of Region/State Hluttaw.
2. As per these announcements, there are 330 constituencies for Pyithu Hluttaw, 168 constituencies for Amyotha Hluttaw, 644 constituencies for Region/State Hluttaw and 29 constituencies for ethnic minority in Region/State Hluttaw.
3. The detailed lists of constituencies and areas for respective Hluttaws have been posted on the UEC's website www.uec.gov.mm and its Facebook page.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

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Myanmar nationals arrive back home by relief flights



Myanmar returnees from Hong Kong and Macau are seen at Yangon International Airport on 29 June. **PHOTO: MNA**



Myanmar nationals returned from Republic of Korea queuing for immigration process at Yangon International Airport on 29 June. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Myanmar National Airlines landed at Yangon International Airport at 3:20 pm with 121 nationals who were stranded in Hong Kong and Macau due to suspensions of flights to Myanmar amid the outbreak of COVID-19.

Moreover, the Korean Airlines took off from Incheon Airport with 180 Myanmar nationals—171 from Korea, 8 from Indonesia and 1 from the United States, and it landed in Yangon at 8 pm.

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 6,128 people have been repatriated to Myanmar to date as the government is taking preventive measures against COVID-19—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

MoSWRR provides relief supplies for prevention measures against COVID-19 in Kachin, Rakhine states



An official is providing relief aid of COVID-19 at an IDP camp on 29 June. **PHOTO: MNA**

MINISTRY of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is carrying out COVID-19 prevention, control and response measures at the IDP camps in cooperation with relevant departments and

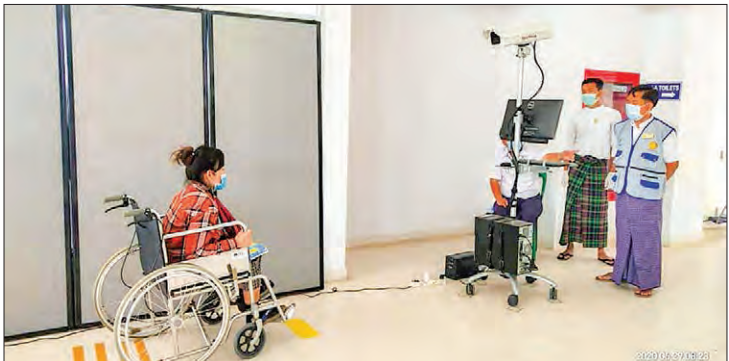
organizations in the country. The ministry carried out preventive measures against COVID-19 at IDP camps in Kachin and Rakhine states.

Officials from the ministry provided 10 hand wash basins, 2 vinyl, 4 thermometer, 1,668 surgical masks, 2 memory sticks with sound files of COVID-19 guidance, 2 hand speakers, 8,724 cloth masks, 1,668 sanitizer bottles, 20 lime sacks and 6,414 cakes of soaps to three IDP's camps in Waingmaw Township, Kachin State yesterday. Similarly, officials of the Ministry provided 35,028 bars of soap to three IDP's camps in Sittway, Rakhine State on 28 June. — MNA

(Translated by YHT)



608 Myanmar nationals come back home via Myawady border bridge on 29 June



Health workers are conducting medical tests to a returnee from Thailand at Myawady border Town on 29 June. **PHOTO: HTEIN LIN AUNG (IPRD)**

A total of 608 Myanmar nationals returned home from Thailand through No. 2 border bridge in Myawady Town, Kayin State, on 29 June.

Among them, 551 persons arrived back in their own programmes with the approval of Myanmar Embassy in Thailand, and 57 persons were handed over by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security of Thailand after they were accommodated as the trafficked victims. Kayin State Hluttaw MP U Thant Zin Aung, Myawady District Administrative Office U Tay Zar 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 36,553 until now. The latest group of returnees included 380 males and 228 females from different regions and states. —Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)

COVID-19 Call Centre opens daily

IN efforts to speed up the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 disease, the call centre (phone number 2019) is established by four communications operators and the Blue Ocean Company with the coordination of the Medical Research Department of the Health and Sports Ministry and Post and Telecommunications Department from 9 am to 5 pm daily at the Medical Research Department in Yangon.

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

“People are the key”

Myanmar parliamentary representatives join 3rd AIPACODD Meeting

THE ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) held the 3rd annual meeting of its Advisor Council on Dangerous Drugs, the 3rd AIPACODD Meeting, through videoconference yesterday.

Myanmar parliamentary representatives, led by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw AIPA Joint Committee Chairman U Zaw Thein, joined the meeting where 1st Vice President of the National Assembly of Viet Nam Mdm Tong Thi Phong, and Secretary General the AIPA Ms Nguyen Tuong Van delivered opening remarks.

The representatives of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters also discussed narcotic controlled measures during COVID-19 pandemic and impacts, progress and challenges of the region in this issue, and

cross-border drug trafficking and abuses.

The Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs shared their experiences on medical treatments for drug addiction and measures against narcotics.

The members of AIPA also discussed their challenges, progresses and experiences in fighting against illegal drugs.

The meeting also approved the draft document of ‘Turning Words into Actions towards a Drug-free ASEAN Community’ which suggests building capacity and technical assistance for effective handling illegal drug problems locally, internationally and globally amid COVID-19, detailed measures in this issue, cooperation in fighting against cross-border actions, collaboration in sharing knowledge and enhancement of cooperation in the region and with other



The 3rd AIPACODD Meeting discusses narcotic controlled measures during COVID-19 pandemic and impacts on 29 June. **PHOTO: MNA**

countries.

AIPA Joint Committee members of Myanmar Amyotha

Hluttaw representative Daw Shwe Shwe Sein Lat, Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Nai

Htoo Aung and Assistant Director Dr Pyae Sone Win.—MNA ■

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Circular road in Kawthoung, Taninthayi Region, is under renovation with railings and new pavement. **PHOTO: KYAW SOE (KAWTHOUNG)**

Renovation carried out along circular road of Cape Bayint Naung in Kawthoung

CIRCULAR road of Cape Bayint Naung in Kawthoung Township is under renovation with railings and new pavement.

The Kawthoung Township Development Committee has completed 90 per cent of the project as a move to beautify the town, bordering with Thailand and having the bronze statue of ancient Myanmar King Bayint Naung.

The southernmost town of Myanmar has become a boom area for tourism business due

to nearby islands in Andaman Sea, and its circular road is a recreation site for both locals and visitors.

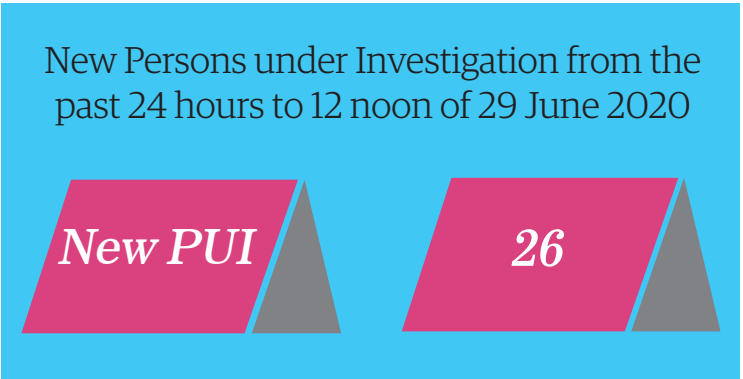
The 1,885-ft circular road is being upgraded with railings and three to nine feet pavement along the route as other renovation works are carried out with 2019-2020FY budget of Taninthayi Region government and K144.85 million of General Revenue Fund.

—Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung) ■

(Translated by Aung Khin)

No new case of COVID-19 in Myanmar on 29 June, total figure remains at 299

Updated at 8 pm, 29 June 2020



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subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.comPrinted and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.gnlmdaily@gmail.com
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80 Myanmar nationals enter Chinshwehaw border town in returning home



Local authorities are helping returnees from China at Chinshwehaw border town with medical tests and providing foods and supplies to them. **PHOTO: ZIN ZIN (IPRD)**

LOCAL authorities in Chinshwehaw border town of northern Shan State received 80 Myanmar returnees from China on 28 and 29 June.

Among 39 males and 41 females, 25 persons were from Mandalay, 1 from Sagaing, 4 from Bago, 10 from Magway, 4 from Ayeyawady, 32 from Shan



and 4 from Rakhine.

They will go back to respective areas through Lashio.

A total of 12,234 persons have returned Myanmar from

China through Chinshwehaw border crossing from 30 April to now.—Zin Zin (IPRD-Chinshwehaw)

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Dollar exchange rate dips to K1,386 on low demand despite CBM's purchase

THE US dollar has been sliding against the Kyat in the local currency market, with the exchange rate touching a low of K1,386 per dollar 29 June, money exchangers said.

The Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) purchased over 30 million dollars from private banks in June to govern the market.

The CBM's effort seems to keep the exchange rate at above K1,400 when US dollar dip in the global market, a market observer pointed out.

The domestic forex market witnessed the maximum rate of K1,410 this month. Despite the

CBM's dollar purchase, the dollar is currently pegged at below K1,400 in the domestic market.

At present, the global forex market sees the weak sentiment amid the coronavirus outbreak, with the US dollar index of around 97.

At present, exports of rice, corns and pulses are increasing, whereas the local forex market is facing low demand. The weakening dollar might harm export income and the stability of internal forex market, a market observer said.

On 26 June, the CBM had set the reference exchange rate (weighted average market rate)



US dollar exchange rate in Myanmar continues to drop. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

at K1,387 per dollar.

In October last year, the dollar exchange rate had hit a high of K1,600. Thereafter, the dollar

has been falling in the local currency market. — Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

24 domestic, foreign insurers invest K67 bln, \$152 mln in Myanmar

TWENTY-FOUR domestic and foreign insurance companies have invested K67.317 billion and US\$152.117 million in Myanmar as of 18 June in the current fiscal year, as per data released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

"Those businesses have been issued licences by the Financial Regulatory Department under the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry. The companies are not running the businesses under the policy, rule, and

law of the Myanmar Investment Commission. However, they are investment enterprises," said an official of the DICA.

Earlier, 11 local life insurance companies and eight local general insurance companies were undertaking the tasks of insurance matters. At present, foreign life insurance companies and the local and foreign joint ventures are providing life insurance, and general insurance companies are also granted work licences.

Additionally, Pilot project

on crop insurance scheme is ongoing in Pyay and Shwebo townships. New scheme on the farmers' life insurance has been realized, and so, the foreign insurance companies are permitted to do business in the country. The Financial Regulatory Department is handling the insurance tasks, as per the statement of the fourth-year performances of the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry.

In the current fiscal, insurance businesses permitted by the Financial Regulatory De-

partment under the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry have pulled in investments of K67.3 billion and \$152.117 million. Under the Myanmar Investment Law, foreign direct investment of over \$4.3 billion has flowed into the country. Under the Special Economic Zone Law, FDI of \$93.057 million has been pumped into SEZs. The total FDI reached \$4.4 billion as of 18 June in the current FY, according to data from the DICA.—Htet Myat

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Global gold price reaches a decade high

By Nyein Nyein

THE global gold has crossed over US\$1,000 per ounce since 2019 and registered a decade high of over \$1,770 per ounce, said Chairman U Myo Myint of Yangon Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA).

Following the global hikes, the domestic gold price should have raised up to above K1.3 million per tical (0.578 ounces, or 0.016 kilograms). Yet, pure gold currently fetches about K1.219 million per tical, he continued.

In early September last year, the price of pure gold reached an all-time record of above K1,300,000 per tical in the domestic market, while the price of gold was pegged at just US\$1,550 per ounce in the global market.

“The domestic gold price should have reached K1.3 million along with a rise in the global gold market. Myanmar people like to wear gold accessories. It is a kind of investment for local people. Some cash out gold during an emergency. When some purchased gold at K1.2 or 1.3 million,



Gold jewellery on display at a shop in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

they cannot sell them according to global gold prices. We can see consumer loss in this,” he added.

Despite the upticks in the global gold market, the domestic market cannot raise the price as the foreign demand halted, coupled with Kyat gaining against

the US dollar, he said.

Meanwhile, the global gold price currently crosses US\$1,772 per ounce. A dollar exchange rate stands at around K1,387, as per market data.

Additionally, the domestic gold market sees more sellers

than buyers, YGEA stated.

“At present, selling exceeded buying as people need to cash out gold to make the gold businesses back to new normal. Some gold shops witness the selling of around 6 visses per day,” YGEA chair continued.

There are over 10,000 gold shops in Yangon Region. Earlier, about 50 visses were daily traded, according to the YGEA.

According to gold traders, during the past four months, the local gold price moved in the range of, K1,214,100 on 5 February and K1,234,200 on 28 February. In March, it reached the lowest level of K1,148,000 (31 March) and the highest level of K1,218,600 (4 March). In April, the coronavirus risks shut down the gold market, and the market was reopened on 18 May, with the minimum rate of K1,214,100 (27 May) and the maximum rate of K1,236,000 (18 May), according to gold traders.

With global gold prices on the uptick, the domestic price hit fresh highs last year, reaching K1,000,000 per tical between 17 January and 21 February, crossing K1,100,000 (22 June to 7 August), climbing to 1,200,000 (7 August-4 September), and then reaching an all-time record high of K1,300,000 on 5 September 2019.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Hyundai sells its cars in promotion prices to Myanmar customers



Hyundai Motor Myanmar promotes four kinds of its vehicles with special sales from 9 June to end of July. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

HYUNDAI Motor Myanmar has recently introduced a sales promotion for Myanmar customers. ‘Hyundai Gold Promotion’, they named it, includes four kinds of vehicle models — Tucson, Creta, Accent, and Grandi10, according to the company.

Myanmar customers can buy those SKD (semi knocked-down) cars with promotion gifts up to a maximum amount of K5 million. The promotion period has started from 9 June until

end-July. The company has also arranged an online registration system for the customers to purchase their cars.

The company has showrooms in Yangon, Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw, Monywa, Magway and Mawlamyine. A monthly instalment system can be used through UAB, AYA and CB banks for the Hyundai SKD cars. Buyers can get Yangon licence, according to Hyundai Motor Myanmar. —GNLM

SEZs rake in \$93.057 mln investments as of 18 June

FOREIGN investments of US\$93.057 million have flowed into the Special Economic Zones (SEZs), under the Special Economic Zone Law, as of 18 June in the 2019-2020 financial year since October 2019, according to the figures released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

Since its establishment, 117 enterprises from 18 countries and four local businesses have ploughed in over \$1.95 billion as of May-end, 2020 in the zones, the investment source indicated.

While the manufacturing sector has absorbed the largest share of foreign investments, FDI has also flowed into the trading, other services, transportation and logistics, real estate, and hotel sectors.

Japan has topped the list of foreign investors so far, accounting for 34.7 per cent of the overall investment, followed by Singapore and Thailand. FDI has also flowed into the SEZs from the Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, the UK, Australia, the UAE, Malaysia, Austria, China

(Taipei), Panama, China, Brunei, Viet Nam, France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.

Myanmar is currently implementing three Special Economic Zones — Thilawa, Kyaukpadaung, and Dawei. Out of the three, Thilawa is leading to better infrastructure and successful businesses.

At present, more than 80 businesses are operating in the Thilawa SEZ. The SEZ has employed more than 12,000 permanent workers, including permanent and construction workers, according to the management committee.

More than 60 per cent of businesses in Thilawa is domestic-oriented manufacturing enterprises, while 40 per cent are export-oriented manufacturers, according to a press statement issued by the company in June 2019.

A company exporting at least 75 per cent of the production in value is registered as a Free Zone investor is exempt from paying corporate tax for seven years from the time it

starts commercial operations. Companies such as logistics, which support export-oriented manufacturing, can also be listed as free zone companies. Domestic-oriented manufacturing companies are regarded as promotion zone companies, and they are eligible for a five-year holiday on corporate tax.

There are other tax incentives for the free zone and promotion zone investors on the importation of capital goods, raw materials and merchandise, and consigned goods and vehicles. Further details about the tax system are available on <http://www.myanmarthilawa.gov.mm>.

Myanmar has already attracted foreign direct investment of more than \$4.4 billion between 1 October and 18 June in the 2019-2020 financial year, including the expansion of capital by existing enterprises and investments in the SEZs, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA). — Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

EU, Britain intensify talks on post-Brexit future

BRUSSELS (Belgium) — The EU and Britain launched Monday an intense five weeks of negotiations on a deal to define their post-Brexit relations, with London keen to wrap things up quickly.

The new round of talks in Brussels was the first held face-to-face since the coronavirus shutdown combined with the two sides' entrenched positions to stall progress.

Hopes are that the intensification of the discussions will make it possible to deliver results after previous sessions, of mainly videolink talks, achieved little.

But tempers have flared in recent days and Prime Minister Boris Johnson insisted on Saturday that Britain was quite ready to accept the consequences of no deal if common ground cannot be found.

The meetings will alternate weekly between Brussels and London throughout July and at the end of August, with London hoping for a deal as soon as possible.

The EU "remains calm and united in its principles and val-

ues," the EU's chief negotiator Michel Barnier said in a tweet.

"We will make the most of our intensified talks over the coming weeks and months," he said.

The teams learned on Sunday that Barnier's UK counterpart David Frost will be promoted to become Johnson's national security adviser. Some commentators immediately suggested this could break the British side's focus, but a UK spokesman insisted Frost's new title does not mean he will be distracted from the ongoing discussions.

"David will remain chief negotiator for the EU talks until agreement is reached or until the talks end," the official said.

"This will remain his first priority. As we have made clear we do not anyway wish these talks to run on into the autumn."

UK ready to accept no deal

German Chancellor Angela Merkel -- whose government takes over the presidency of the EU next week -- has also sharpened her public stance, questioning whether London actually



EU's Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier gives a press conference after a Brexit negotiations meeting, at the EU Commission, in Brussels on 5 June 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

wants a deal.

"Of course it would be in the interest of Great Britain and all member states of the European Union to achieve an orderly withdrawal," Merkel told the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* daily.

"But that presupposes that both sides want this," she added.

Britain left the EU on January 30 and a post-Brexit transition period in which it still benefits from de facto EU membership will come to an end on December 31. Without a new agreement, the two sides would see ties reduced to minimum standards set by the World Trade Organization with

high tariffs and serious disruptions to business.

At the minimum, London wants to agree on the bare bones of a trade deal this summer -- at least politically, if not legally -- in order to offer businesses clarity well before the end of the year. —AFP ■

Heavy rainstorm leaves 12 dead, 10 missing in China's Sichuan

CHENGDU, June 29 (Xinhua) — Twelve people died and 10 others were missing as of 4 pm Sunday after a heavy rainstorm hit Mianning County in southwest China's Sichuan Province, local authorities said late Sunday.

The rainstorm that battered Mianning from Friday to Sat-

urday triggered floods in Yihai Township, where 10 people were killed and seven others remain missing, according to the county government.

In Gaoyang sub-district, two vehicles plunged into a river after flooding damaged the highway, killing two people and

leaving three others missing.

Torrential rains affected more than 9,880 people in Yihai and Gaoyang, cutting off local roads and damaging houses and crops. A total of 7,705 people were evacuated.

Rescue and relief efforts are underway.—Xinhua ■



Rescuers work in Yihai Town of Mianning County, southwest China's Sichuan Province, June 28, 2020. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Fire in Egypt hospital kills 7 coronavirus patients

CAIRO (Egypt) — A fire at a hospital in Egypt's coastal city of Alexandria on Monday killed seven coronavirus patients, security and medical sources said.

Seven other people were injured in the blaze, believed to be caused by a malfunctioning air conditioner in an area designated for isolating COVID-19 patients, the sources said.

Firefighters stopped it spreading to other hospital buildings, and ambulances were dis-

patched to transfer patients to other medical facilities, the state-run newspaper *Akhbar al-Youm* reported.

The victims died of suffocation and hospital staff were among those injured, according to local media. Egypt's prosecutor-general said in a statement that it has launched an investigation into the incident focusing on the technical specifications of the private hospital's intensive care unit.—AFP ■

14 missing after Philippines sea collision

MANILA (Philippines) — Philippine rescuers were searching Monday for 14 people missing after a local fishing boat collided with a cargo ship, authorities said.

The boats crashed early Sunday in waters southwest of Manila, capsizing the Philippine fishing vessel *Liberty 5* off the coast of Occidental Mindoro province. The captain of the cargo ship *Vienna Wood*, which is

registered in Hong Kong, called for help "a few hours later" and the vessel was being escorted to land by the Philippine Coast Guard, said agency spokesman Commodore Armando Balilo. It was not immediately clear if the *Liberty 5* had sunk. Philippine authorities deployed aircraft and ships in the hunt for the missing people, who included 12 Filipino crew members and two passengers.—AFP ■

Coronavirus: latest global developments



A hairdresser, wearing PPE (personal protective equipment), of a face mask or covering as a precautionary measure against spreading COVID-19, is reflected in a mirror as she cuts the hair of a customer, also wearing a face covering, in Dublin on 29 June 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

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

Half a million dead
The pandemic has killed 501,847 people worldwide since it surfaced in China late last year,

according to an AFP tally at 1100 GMT on Monday based on official sources.
More than 10.1 million people have been infected in 196 countries and territories.
The United States is the hardest hit country with 125,803

deaths. It is followed by Brazil with 57,622, Britain with 43,550, Italy 34,738 and France with 29,778 fatalities.
America's south cracks down
With a surge in new corona-

virus cases in more than half of US states, bars in Los Angeles and six other Californian counties are ordered to close again by the state governor.
Texas and Florida, which with California make up the three most populous states in the country, had already once again cracked down, ordering bars to stop serving alcohol.
Britain plans Great Depression response
British Prime Minister Boris Johnson says the coronavirus crisis needs the type of massive economic response US president Franklin D. Roosevelt mobilised to deal with the Great Depression in the 1930s.
He is speaking a day before unveiling a spending programme in a speech his office has simply dubbed "build, build, build", for a country whose GDP is expected to plunge by more than 10 percent this year, according to the International Monetary Fund.
Chinese military tries out vaccine
As the world races to find

a way to treat the coronavirus, China's military approves a vaccine for use within its ranks that has been developed by its research unit and a biotech firm, Hong Kong-listed CanSino Biologics.
More than half of 17 candidate vaccines identified by the World Health Organization (WHO) that are in clinical evaluation involve Chinese companies or institutes.
Asian stocks follow Wall Street
Asian markets follow a steep sell-off on Wall Street after a surge in coronavirus infections in several countries prompted officials to reimpose containment measures that have fanned worries about the economic recovery.
Tokyo, Sydney and Seoul all drop more than one percent, while Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai each dip 0.6 per cent. Europe's stock markets edge higher, however, as investors balance easing global lockdowns against news of surging coronavirus infections.— AFP ■

Chinese coronavirus vaccine approved for military use

BEIJING (China) — China's military has approved a coronavirus vaccine for use within its ranks that has been developed by its research unit and a biotech firm, the company said Monday.
Organisations around the world are racing to find ways to treat and prevent the deadly pathogen, which first emerged in the central Chinese city of Wuhan and has since killed over half a million people worldwide.
More than half of 17 candidate vaccines identified by the World Health Organization (WHO) that are in clinical evaluation involve Chinese companies or institutes.
Hong Kong-listed CanSino Biologics said in a filing to the stock exchange that data from clinical trials showed the Chinese military vaccine had a "good safety profile" and potential to prevent disease caused by the novel coronavirus.
CanSino said Monday that China's Central Military Commission approved the use of the vaccine on June 25, for one year.
The vaccine was jointly

developed by CanSino and the Beijing Institute of Biotechnology, part of the Academy of Military Medical Sciences.
Its use cannot be expanded without further approvals, the listing said.
It was not clear how widely it would be used within China's enormous military forces, and the ministry of defence did not reply to an AFP request for further information.
CanSino added that it cannot guarantee the vaccine -- which had its phase one and two clinical trials done in China -- will ultimately be commercialised.
Another 131 candidate vaccines listed by the WHO are in the pre-clinical phase.
None have yet been approved for commercial use against the coronavirus.
According to medical journal The Lancet there have already been more than 1,000 clinical trials on dozens of pharmaceutical treatments for the virus but no totally effective medical intervention has been found.—AFP ■

UK PM pledges 'Rooseveltian' response to virus crisis

LONDON (United Kingdom) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Monday the coronavirus crisis needed the type of massive economic response US president Franklin D. Roosevelt mobilised to deal with the Great Depression.
Johnson told The Times newspaper's new radio station that Britain was heading for "bumpy times" as it struggles through its biggest economic contraction on record.
He intends to unveil a spending programme in a speech on Tuesday his office has dubbed "build, build, build".
"I think this is the moment for a Rooseveltian approach to the UK," said Johnson. "I really think the investment will pay off."
Roosevelt launched the New Deal programme in the 1930s that created a comprehensive social care system whose legacy lives on to this day.
The first part of Johnson's initiative earmarks £1 billion (\$1.2 billion) for school repairs.
"The country has gone



Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson talks with year-ten pupil Vedant Jitesh as he visits the construction site at Ealing Fields High School in west London on 29 June 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

through a profound shock," he said.
"We really want to build back better, to do things differently, to invest in infrastructure, transport, broadband -- you name it."
Change in style
The lockdowns imposed globally to fight the new disease have forced even the most prudent governments to unveil social safety nets that will put states deep into debt for years to come.
The true scale of Britain's unemployment problem will only be revealed once the government's furlough scheme for temporarily laid off workers begins being rolled back in August.
The current spending programme has supported nine million jobs and cost the government tens of billions of pounds.— AFP ■

No pain—no gain

NEW cases of coronavirus infection in China and New Zealand highlight the risks of coronavirus resurging, and show why we must do better.

After weeks without a locally transmitted case, an outbreak linked to a food market occurred in Beijing, spreading to half of its districts and to other provinces. The capital has raised its emergency level, suspended schools and cancelled hundreds of flights.

In New Zealand, which had seen no cases for 24 days and had lifted all domestic restrictions, two new arrivals have tested positive and 320 of their contacts are being traced.

Internationally, 100,000 new cases are being confirmed daily. Even places that seem to have weathered the worst must stay alert to the risk of resurgence, the World Health Organization's chief has warned. There is no guarantee that a vaccine will end the pandemic, and even if an effective one is found it is unlikely to be delivered quickly.

While balancing public health considerations amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the Union Government has granted permission to reopen factories after inspections for complying with health guidelines, along with accepting migrant workers returning from neighbouring countries through border checkpoints. In fact, these two issues are great challenges for the county, amidst the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Stay-at-Home order has been lifted from townships at the end of this month, but an order banning the gathering of five or more people is still taking effect, in a bid to prevent the spread of coronavirus as a few cases are still found sporadically.

This reflects that we are not out of the woods yet, and people should not be negligent in protecting themselves from contracting the infection. People are urged to strictly follow all health guidelines.

Social distancing, washing hands and wearing masks are still vital to our battle against the COVID-19.

If we can effectively contain the spread of the coronavirus, we hope that a second wave of the virus, which is expected to resurge in the next one to two months, can be prevented.

The measures we are now taking prove that we can contain the virus. But, our people are advised not to forget to wear masks and wash hands, and follow all guidelines. Remember, no pain—no gain. Our actions will bring results.

■ ■ ■

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Grim 10 million mark sounds global wake-up call for stronger pandemic cooperation

ACROSS the globe, the coronavirus pandemic continues burning like an unquenchable wildfire as the World Health Organization (WHO)'s data showed on Monday that the global COVID-19 case-load surpassed 10 million.

Grim milestones have emerged one after another at an alarmingly faster pace since the deadly disease broke out. It took about one month for global infections to spike to 1 million from 100,000, yet the global tally skyrocketed to 10 million from 7 million in roughly three weeks.

That rapidly accelerating momentum is a wake-up call for a struggling world and shows that the increasingly dire situation demands fast, persistent, substantial and science-based actions from political leaders, medical professionals and ordinary citizens everywhere.

It is urgent that those countries in the epicentre step up their prevention and control measures before the pandemic reaches its peak within their own borders. In Central and South America, many countries have recorded a 25-50 per cent rise in cases in the week before last, according to the WHO.

Up north, the United States,



A staff member displays samples of the COVID-19 inactivated vaccine at Sinovac Biotech Ltd., in Beijing, capital of China, on 16 March 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA

Meanwhile, countries worldwide that have passed the peak of the outbreak should not let down their guards. Instead, they should remain vigilant against a possible resurgence of infections, and implement their exit strategies with prudence.

In fact, new infections have emerged in many countries as they reopen. In Europe, 30 countries had seen increases in new

cumulative cases over the past few weeks, and their health systems risk being brought to the brink again, according to WHO Regional Director for Europe Hans Kluge. A resurgence has also occurred in Asian-Pacific countries, like Australia and South Korea.

Those new COVID-19 clusters have reminded countries around the world that a second wave is very likely to occur if they fail to strike a delicate balance between reopening and controlling the spread of the virus.

Of course, the only way for the human race to overcome this unprecedented pandemic is to work together and help each other. No country can win this battle when others have not emerged victorious.

In this regard, one priority is to develop effective vaccines for COVID-19, and make them universally accessible. Making that happen at an early date demands all countries to pool their talents and resources. In the meantime, the leading role of the WHO should be supported. The international community should also pay close attention to the pandemic situation in less-developed countries with vulnerable public health systems, such as those in Africa, and be ready to offer assistance so as to prevent them from turning into new epicenters and sources of infections. Efforts have already been made on that front, including China's pledge to help improve Africa's health infrastructure and restructure some of its debts.

Over a hundred years ago when multilateral cooperation was more of a concept, the 1918 influenza pandemic claimed more lives than World War I did. In the following decades as the world became increasingly globalized, members of the international community have learned incrementally how to jointly address shared political, economic and health challenges for the common good.

If the human race can resist the false temptation of isolationism and selfishness, and demonstrate a spirit of solidarity this time, it will ultimately conquer this public health crisis and emerge as smarter, stronger and better prepared when the next one hits. —Xinhua ■ ■ ■

The global soybean market and Myanmar's market requirements

By Maung Maung (MOC)

MYANMAR people sometime confuse soybeans with horse grams, but they are very different. Still, some products confuse the two in their descriptions of ingredients, especially when some cooking oil mistakenly label soybean oil as horse gram oil. The truth is only soybeans can have vegetable oil extracted from their seeds while the horse gram cannot. The horse gram is actually used to make fermented bean paste in Upper Myanmar.

Soybeans can be used to make vegetable oil and has high amounts of protein and is considered a gift from nature. They can be used to



make high-valued protein products and cooking oil. Soybean oil has been researched to provide numerous health benefits to people. However, natural soybean oil needs to be stored properly or it will not last long. Asia has the highest consumption of soybean in the form of soybean milk and different varieties of dishes.

Global soybean production reached 358 million metric ton in 2019 with America producing 95 million metric ton in 2019, a reduction of 20 million metric ton compared to 2018. Brazil produced 123 million metric ton of soybean in 2019 and became a world record. They are followed by Argentina, China, India, Paraguay, Canada, Mexico and some European countries in the list of highest soybean producers.

China is the sole consumer of 60 per cent of all soybean production, consuming well above a hundred million metric ton per year yet producing only 12 million metric ton annually. This means China imports some 88 million metric ton of soybean every year and is the largest target market for America and Brazil.

Soybean products

China also uses soybean as a nutritional replacement in such products as salted and preserved soya beans, soybean sauce, soybean vegetable oil, soy milk, and soy milk powder. Even the mashed beans left from extracting soybean oil can be used to make high-value products, especially in the production of substitute meat for vegetarians.

The result is that the demand for soybeans grows in China every year and experts estimate China will need about 120 million metric

ton in 2020. This requirement was also a huge blow to China in the 2018 trade war. China retaliated to America's increased tariffs on Chinese steel by placing restrictions on imports of American soybeans in early November of 2018. However, it became difficult to pacify the domestic market and the unpreparedness of warehouses caused more damage to China.

China also imports fulfills its demand for soybean from Brazil but it has to rely on routes in the South Atlantic Ocean to deliver to China. Brazil has two main routes to transport large ton of cargo to China. The first is passing the Panama Canal to the North Pacific Ocean and the second is going around Africa and into the Indian Ocean and South Pacific Ocean.

While the Panama Canal route is a better option for China, the authority that America influences over it makes it wary. Thus, China is planning to construct a 3,000-mile railway project from the east coast of Brazil to the west coast of Peru. Both Brazil and Peru seem to accept the project but there is another issue. About 70 per cent of that project's scope passes through the Amazon Rainforest and it faces pressure from America concerning environmental issues.

Brazil, Argentina and South American countries have the potential to meet 60 per cent of China's soybean demands. The remaining 40 per cent can most likely be fulfilled by East European nations, Africa and Southeast Asian countries, according to Hunan Agricultural University.

SEE PAGE-10

Myanmar Gazette Heads of Service Organizations confirmed

The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has confirmed the following persons as Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names on the expiry of the one-year probationary period from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
1. Dr Mi Mi Khin	Rector University of Computer Studies, Meiktila Higher Education Department Ministry of Education
2. Dr Kyawt Khin	Rector Technological University, Maubin Higher Education Department Ministry of Education
3. Dr Ei Ei Hlaing	Rector University of Computer Studies, Toungoo Higher Education Department Ministry of Education
4. Dr Thinn Thu Naing	Rector University of Computer Studies, Taunggyi Higher Education Department Ministry of Education
5. Dr Khin Mar Lar Tun	Rector University of Computer Studies, Patheingyi Higher Education Department Ministry of Education
6. Dr Myo Nyunt	Rector Technological University, Monywa Higher Education Department Ministry of Education
7. Dr Soe Oo	Director-General Department of Medical Services Ministry of Health and Sports

President's Office continues announcement of illegal drug arrests, seizures action on tip-offs

THE Office of the President has issued Press Release No 25/2020 yesterday, publicly announcing the Ministry of Home Affairs' arrests and seizures in the fight against illicit drug trafficking up till 27 June.

The ministry made the arrests, acting on information, sent to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department of the Office of the President as of 27 June.

The full text of the press release will be reported in the July issue of *The Global New Light of Myanmar*. — GNLM

Blasts at Afghan market kill 23 civilians: officials

KANDAHAR (Afghanistan) – Multiple explosions tore through a busy market in southern Afghanistan on Monday, killing at least 23 civilians, officials said, blaming the Taliban for the carnage.

The latest bloodshed comes as both the Taliban and Afghan government prepare to launch peace talks aimed at ending the country’s nearly two-decade-old war.

The blasts at the bazar in the Sangin district of Helmand province also wounded 15 people, the governor’s office and army said in separate statements.

Rockets hit the market at 9:00 am local time after which a car bomb exploded, the gover-



A victim, injured in an explosion at a cattle market in Sangin district, is brought to a hospital in LashkarGah city of Helmand province on 29 June 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

nor’s office said, blaming Taliban militants for the attack.

The army also accused the Taliban of carrying out the offensive.

Two Taliban insurgents

were killed, the governor’s office added.

“Unfortunately, 23 civilians were killed and around 15 others were wounded,” the army said in its statement.

The Taliban, however, denied responsibility, pinning the blame on the Afghan army which they accused of firing the rockets.

The militants hold large areas of Helmand province, a region known for its opium production.

President Ashraf Ghani condemned the “terrorist attack”, which he said had left several children dead.

“The Afghan government once again call on the Taliban to give up violence, and heed the demand of the people to stop fighting and start talks,” Ghani said, in a statement issued by his office.

Violence dropped after the Taliban offered a rare ceasefire to mark the Eid festival on May 24, but officials say the militants have now stepped up attacks against security forces and civilians.

In recent weeks, several brutal attacks have targeted Afghan security forces, mosques, human rights workers and prosecutors.

The Taliban have denied most of these attacks, but acknowledge that the group’s fighters have been targeting security forces.—AFP ■

The global soybean market and Myanmar’s market requirements

FROM PAGE-9

Myanmar is an agricultural country bordering China and part of the Belt and Road Initiative and thus has the potential to penetrate the large soybean market and enter the global stage. This is why we need to make effective preparation for soybean production. We can divide this into cultivation, industrial processing, and quality aspects.



Cultivation

The biggest challenge to Myanmar’s soybean production is the annual decrease in available farmland. The following table from reports by the Forest Department illustrates the issue:

No.	Year	Soybean acres	Difference
1.	2013-2014	383,300	
2.	2014-2015	379,536	-3,764
3.	2015-2016	367,198	-12,338
4.	2016-2017	353,805	-13,393
5.	2017-2018	345,448	-8,357
6.	2018-2019	343,845	-1,603

Myanmar lost about 40,000 acres of farmland for soybeans in the span of 5 years. We will also need to select breeds that can produce high-quality soybeans and a lot of them as well. The varieties grown in America and Brazil contain an average 35% of oil while the average for the breeds cultivated in Myanmar varies from 12 to 30 per cent.

Hence, it is important for us to select breeds that contain high amounts of oil in their seeds. The follow-

ing table illustrates the average production per acre of soybean farms in Myanmar with the strains planted in China and Brazil.

Country	Most cultivated strain	Production per acre			
		Lowest		Highest	
		Tinn	Kilo	Tinn	Kilo
Myanmar	Yesin-3	25	816.7	30	980.04
	Yesin-4	15	490.02	20	653.36
	Yesin-5	25	816.73	30	980.04
	Yesin-6	25	816.73	30	980.04
	Yesin-8	23	751.364	28	914.704
	Yesin-11	27	882.036	30	980.04
	Yesin-14	25	816.7	30	980.04
	Shan Lone Sein	10	326.68	15	490.02
China	Henong 71	60	1960.08	80	2585.31
Brazil	Embrapa 48	82.65	2700	88.77	2900
	BRS 257	76.5	2500	82.65	2700
	BRS 282	70.4	2300	76.5	2500
Remark	1 hectare = 2.47 acres 1 tinn = 32.668 kilos				

The production rate of soybean greatly depends on environmental factors and the plants favour long nights and shorter days when they flower. The pigments of the plant undergo photoisomerization and the process is efficiently faster in night temperatures of under 21 degrees.

Industrial processing

Myanmar needs to conduct market and value chain research to develop its soybean production. The concerned organizations need to regularly survey the global soybean market and conduct continuous research. Similarly, they must also research the methods of production and preparation utilized along the soybean consumption value chain and apply it in regional production sector.

For example, the FOB price for a metric ton of raw soybean is around \$ 370 but the price of a tonne of ground soybean with the oil extracted is over \$ 350. A tonne of soybean oil fetches around \$ 820 which means if a tonne

of soybean variety that only contains 15 per cent oil had the oil extracted, it would produce a tonne of \$ 123 worth of soybean oil and a tonne of mashed beans worth \$ 298, combining to produce \$ 421 from both products.

This estimate was calculated using the lowest production rate and oil ratio data and still produced \$ 51 more than simply selling a tonne of raw soybean. The quality of the soybean and production technology can determine the profit to be made.

Soybean contain such medically beneficial organic chemical compounds like isoflavones and phospholipids that have become a daily requirement for good health. Countries such as those in Europe, China, India and Japan extensively use and produce soybean. It will greatly benefit the nation if Myanmar can acquire the foreign technology and investments to reach global soybean production standards in the future.

Quality

Myanmar’s soybean shipments are noticeably increasing with each year as it rose from just 1,700 tonnes in 2016 to over 2,000 tonnes in 2017 and then went above 7,000 tonnes in the 2018-2019 financial year with a marked increase in foreign market demand as well.

While the trade war between the two superpowers of America and China can be said to have increased Myanmar’s soybean export to meet Chinese demand, we have also exported about 3,000 tonnes to India through nautical channels as well.

Soybeans’ quality sector concerns both the export of raw soybeans and the production of high-value products. This is why Myanmar needs to select the best strains of soybean for cultivation and use Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) system as well.

We also need relevant government departments to provide technological assistance and research to protect the crops from disease before they are reaped and to prevent wastage after harvest.

The Standardization of Agro-based Products Technical Sub-committee is compiling the draft quality standards for Myanmar soybeans. The next step is to collaborate with all stakeholders to penetrate the global soybean market and implement quality and market development across Myanmar.

(Translated by Pen Dali)



DR Congo ends confinement of key Kinshasa business district

KINSHASA (DR Congo) — Authorities in DR Congo’s capital Kinshasa Monday opened up the posh business district of Gombe which had been sealed off in April to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

Access to Gombe, which houses the country’s main institutions, banks and foreign embassies as well as upscale homes, was barricaded to everyone except local residents and key workers on April 6.

Kinshasa Governor Gentiny Ngobila had then justified the move saying the district was considered to be “the epicentre” of coronavirus spread in the city. There have been 6,827 registered cases of COVID-19 in the Democratic Republic of Congo, of which more than 6,000 occurred in Kinshasa. The death toll nationwide stands at 158.

Gombe, home to 100,000 to 200,000 of Kinshasa’s 10 million people, has been dubbed “the Republic of Gombe” for its perceived status as an island of prosperity in a city rife with poverty and dysfunction.

An AFP journalist said barricades that had been erected to keep non-residents and key workers had been lifted on Monday. Kinshasa governor Ngobila on Sunday however urged the city’s residents to limit their movements and wear masks all the time in public.—AFP ■



Gombe during lockdown. The district is an island of prosperity in a city rife with poverty and dysfunction. **PHOTO: AFP**

Mercedes go black in support of anti-racism movement

PARIS (France) — Mercedes announced on Monday an all-new black liveried car for the 2020 Formula One season in support of BlackLives-Matter with their six-time world champion Lewis Hamilton a vocal supporter of the fight against racism.

F1 emerges from its coronavirus-enforced three-month hiatus in Austria this weekend to a markedly changed world, with the killing of African-American George Floyd in US police custody last month triggering outrage and a global anti-racism movement.

Hamilton, the only black driver on the F1 grid, has established a commission which hopes to steer more black youngsters into motor racing.

Mercedes in a statement noted that “in our organization, just three per cent of our workforce identify as belonging to minority ethnic groups and only 12% of our employees are women”.

“This lack of diversity shows that we need to find new approaches to attract talent from many areas of society we do not currently reach,” it added.

Whilst expressing pride at the team’s “values and culture” the statement said “the Black Lives Matter movement has shone a searching light on how much we need new measures and actions in the fight against racism and all forms of discrimination”.

“For 2020, we have chosen to race in an all-black base livery as a public pledge to improve the diversity of our team - and a clear statement that we stand against racism and all forms of discrimination.” — AFP ■

Georgia adopts constitutional amendments ahead of elections

TBILISI (Georgia) — Georgia’s parliament on Monday adopted amendments to the constitution to reform electoral laws ahead of a parliamentary vote in October.

Parliament on Monday voted 117 to three in favour of the changes that dramatically increase the number of lawmakers who will be elected under party lists. The electoral threshold needed for a party to secure representation in parliament will be fixed at one per cent, while a party will need to garner at least 40 per cent of the votes to form a government.

They claimed the current voting system favoured the ruling Georgian Dream party, which won 77 per cent of seats in the 2016 election, despite only receiving 49 per cent of the popular vote.

Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia told journalists. In June last year, the increasingly unpopular Georgian Dream’s oligarch leader Bidzina Ivanishvili announced sweeping electoral reforms in line with the opposition’s demands and in an effort to appease anti-government demonstrators.

But three month later, Ivanishvili backtracked, prompting harsh criticism from Western leaders and provoking a political crisis that saw thousands take to the streets in protest.

“After having adopted the constitutional amendments, our priority goal is to hold a democratic and transparent election,” — AFP ■

Changing Distributor For Registered Pesticides

Distribution of pesticide registered by **Sinamyang Group Pte Co., Ltd** is changing from **Htet Thiha Naing Co., ltd** to **Zabu Htate Tan Myanmar Agro Group Co., Limited**. Any objection regarding to this transfer can notify at Co-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein within two weeks.

Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number	Provisional
Sinaprop70WP	Propineb 70%WP	P2017-3916	Provisional

Original Distributor- Myanmar Agrigreen Group Co.,Ltd
NO.113, Insein Road, Hlaing Township, Yangon, Myanmar.

Invitation for Bids – Investigation, Design and Construction Supervision for LNG Terminal Works of Integrated LNG to Power Plant in Mee Lin Gyaing, the Republic of Union of Myanmar

Entrusted by Mee Lin Gyaing Electric Power Company Limited, Union Resources & Engineering Company Limited (UREC) now invites sealed bids from eligible Bidders for Investigation, Design and Construction Supervision of LNG Terminal Works as part of Integrated LNG to Power Plant in Mee Lin Gyaing, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Scopes of Works

As a part of the integrated LNG to Power Plant in Mee Lin Gyaing, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, it is proposed to construct a LNG Terminal with the Annual Design Throughput Capacity of 2 million tons, consisting of a special 80,000-175,000m3 LNG Pier and a Workboat Wharf (Heavy Lift Wharf), together with the Jetty, Approach Bridge and Embankment.

Only eligible Bidders with the following key qualifications should participate in the bidding:

- Special design qualification class A in waterway transportation sector, or comprehensive design qualification class A for all sectors;
- Particular qualification class A for geotechnical engineering and hydrogeological exploration, or integrated qualification class A for engineering investigation;
- Capability of design and investigation in harbor and waterway engineering, participation in at least one (1) similar-scale oil and gas terminal design contract and at least one (1) similar jetty design contract since 2015;
- At least three (3) terminal design projects with the construction scale not less than 100 thousand tons within the last five (5) years.

A complete set of Bidding Documents in Chinese could be purchased upon payment of a non-refundable fee of 2,000 CNY (Two Thousand in Chinese Yuan) within office hours from June 29th to July 3rd, 2020 by the qualified bidders who should:

- send a written application through email to the Email Address: liuhan@urec.com.cn (cc: urec-mlg@urec.com.cn), and appendixes in the email should include the evidences to demonstrate the qualifications and experiences, the certificate of legal representative or the power of attorney of legal representative, and the effective identity certificate of legal representative or authorized representative;
- Remit the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents to the following designated account:
Name of payee: Union Resources & Engineering Company Limited
Bank of deposit: Bank of China, Yunnan Branch
Number of account: 1340 0041 7658
- Upon receipt of the specified certificates and the non-refundable fee, UREC will send the Bidding Documents in hard copy and in electronic version to the address given by the qualified bidder who had submitted the specified certificates and paid the fee.

The language used for the purpose of the bidding should be the Chinese.

The Bids should be submitted in the sealed envelopes before 16:00 July 28th, 2020 (local time).

Refer to the Bidding Documents for details of the requirements for Preparation and Submission of Bid together with Security.

BP sells petrochemical arm to Ineos for \$5 billion

LONDON (United Kingdom) — British energy group BP, hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic slashing demand for oil, announced Monday the sale of its petrochemical business to privately-owned rival Ineos for \$5.0 billion (4.4 billion euros).

“The agreed sale... will further strengthen BP’s balance sheet and delivers its target for agreed divestments a year earlier than originally scheduled,” a statement said.

BP chief executive Bernard Looney added:

“I recognize this decision will come as a surprise and we will do our best to minimize uncertainty. I am confident however that the businesses will thrive as part of Ineos, a global leader in petrochemicals.”

BP said that 1,700 staff employed by its petrochemical business worldwide were expected to transfer to Ineos on completion of the sale that meets a \$15-billion divestment target one year early.

“Today’s agreement is another deliberate step in building a BP that can compete and succeed through the energy transition,” Looney said.

The Irish national, who became CEO of BP in February, is targeting “net zero” carbon emissions for the company by 2050.

In the immediate future, BP must rebuild its finances, having earlier this month said it would take a hit of up to \$17.5 billion in the second quarter.

With the coronavirus fallout ravaging global oil demand, BP has decided also to axe around 10,000 jobs, or 15 per cent of its global workforce.

After companies worldwide closed their doors and airlines grounded planes at the height of the COVID-19 outbreak towards the end of the first quarter, oil prices dropped off a cliff, causing them to briefly turn negative.

Prices have however rebounded sharply in recent weeks as govern-



File photo shows the headquarters of BP (British Petroleum) are seen, in Aberdeen, Scotland on 21 January 2015. PHOTO: AFP

ments ease lockdowns and businesses slowly reopen.

‘Top-class business’

“We are delighted to acquire these top-class businesses from BP, extending the Ineos position in global petrochemicals and providing great scope for expansion and integration with our existing business,” Ineos founder and chairman Jim Ratcliffe said

in a separate statement Monday.

BP’s aromatic and acetyls business consists of 15 sites -- five in the Americas, two in Europe and eight across Asia.

“Aromatics provides the building blocks for the global polyester industry, key to fibres, films and packaging,” Ineos said in its statement.

“Acetyls support a wide

range of downstream industries in food flavouring and preservation, pharmaceuticals, paints, adhesives and packaging,” it added. Ineos will pay \$4.0 billion to BP upon completion of the deal -- and the remaining \$1.0 billion by June 2021.

BP’s share price was up 3.2 per cent at 314.5 pence in London afternoon deals following news of the sale.—AFP ■

Toyota sees global production halved in April due to COVID-19 pandemic

TOKYO — Toyota’s global output tumbled 50.8 per cent year-on-year in April to 379,093 vehicles, as the coronavirus pandemic saw demand slump and global plants shuttered, the automaker said Thursday.

Production in both North America and Latin America stood at zero in the recording period, Toyota Motor Corp. said, owing to plants in both regions being taken offline due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Japan’s largest automaker by volume said that just 577 vehicles were produced in Europe, at a single factory in France, marking a 99.2 per cent drop, as the virus’ global spread shuttered operations worldwide.

As for production at domestic facilities in Japan, Toyota said its output dropped 25.9 per cent to 218,054 vehicles, owing to temporary closures of its plants here, amid falling demand and virus-triggered supply chain disruptions. Bucking the downward trend, however, the maker of the popular Prius hybrid and Corolla models, said output in China rose significantly in the reporting period, jumping 27.8 per cent to 143,135 vehicles, as production in late March resumed.—Xinhua ■

Foreign capital keeps flowing into China amid COVID-19, U.S.-China trade tensions

BEIJING — As COVID-19 continues to sweep across the world and wreck economic havoc globally, foreign capital continues to flow into China, according to a report compiled by research firm Rhodium Group published Thursday.

While the COVID-19 outbreak has slammed inbound and outbound deal-making this year, flows

into China have picked up every month since January. The first five months of 2020 has seen foreign M&A (mergers and acquisitions) into China surpassing Chinese outbound M&A activities in both volume and value terms for the first time in a decade.

“Over the past 18 months, we have recorded levels of foreign M&A into

China that were not seen in the previous decade,” the report said.

According to Rhodium, most of the capital inflows has been driven by American and European firms taking advantage of looser foreign ownership limits or betting on Chinese consumer demand.

The activity is happening at a time when U.S.-Chi-

na relations are strained.

However, the report said “foreign appetite for assets in China will remain robust.”

Rhodium researchers also cautioned that reduced foreign direct investment flows will be a global reality for some time and China is no exception.

“The COVID-19 pandemic is dragging on in-

ternational trade, people flows, and cross-border capital movements. UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) predicts that global FDI flows could drop up to 40 per cent in 2020. China is not an exception and is experiencing diminished capital inflows and outflows,” said the report.—Xinhua ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MCC SHENZHEN VOY. NO. (025S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MCC SHENZHEN VOY. NO. (025S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **30-6-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/TMT** 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: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE., LTD.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SKY GLOBE

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SKY GLOBE VOY. NO. (2005)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **30-6-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT-5** 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 ELDER TRIUMPHANT SHIPPING LINES PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V GINTO VOY. NO. (123)

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

Phone No: **2301191/201178**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MITSUI O.S.K KANKAI LTD

Tokyo stocks fall in morning after global virus cases top 10 mil.

TOKYO — Tokyo shares fell Monday morning as expectations for a quick recovery of the global economy waned after the number of confirmed COVID-19 infection cases across the globe topped the 10 million mark over the weekend.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average lost 297.39 points, or 1.32 per cent, from Friday to fall to 22,214.69. The broader Topix index of all First Section issues on the Tokyo Stock Exchange was down 18.93 points, or 1.20 per cent, at 1,558.44.

All industrial categories declined, led by iron and steel, mining and insurance issues.

In the currency market, the U.S. dollar held firm against the yen on investors' flight from riskier assets, fetching 107.16-

20 yen at noon, compared with 107.15-25 yen in New York and 106.98-99 yen in Tokyo at 5 pm Friday.

The euro was quoted at \$1.1243-1246 and 120.49-56 yen against \$1.1213-1223 and 120.27-37 yen in New York and \$1.1225-1226 and 120.09-13 yen in Tokyo late Friday afternoon.

"Fears about another global business shutdown are taking over the market," said Maki Sawada, vice president of the investment research and investor services department at Nomura Securities Co. The Nikkei lost as many as 400 points at the outset as a sharp rise in the number of new infection cases in Japan and elsewhere in the world once again clouded market sentiment, brokers said. — Kyodo News ■

European stocks stall as virus cases rebound



File photo shows A board displaying the chart of Germany's share index DAX is seen behind a sign indicating the location of a fire extinguisher on 1 June 2018 at the stock exchange in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany. PHOTO: AFP

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Europe's stock markets edged higher on Monday as investors balanced easing global lockdowns against news of surging coronavirus infections in several countries including the United States.

London advanced as dealers positioned themselves before British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's announcement this week on reopening up the UK's shattered travel sector, with share price gains for holiday company TUI and airline EasyJet.

BP's share price jumped 2.7 per cent to 313 pence after the British energy major, hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic slashing demand for

oil, unveiled the sale of its petrochemical business to privately-owned rival Ineos for \$5.0 billion (4.4 billion euros). However Asian equity markets tanked Monday, tracking Friday's steep Wall Street losses, as soaring COVID-19 infections prompted US officials to reimpose containment measures that have fanned worries about the econom-

ic recovery.

"European markets are treading water as we kick-off a new week, with the positive implications of easing lockdown measures weighed up against surging COVID-19 cases throughout the US," said Joshua Mahony, senior market analyst at online trading firm IG.

"Nevertheless, while the US experience does provide a warning sign of what could be around the corner, investors seem happy to jump aboard travel stocks such as TUI and EasyJet ahead of a surge in European travel for the month ahead.

"With Johnson set to announce a host of countries within which UK travellers can visit without the need of a quarantine on return, we are seeing some optimism that demand could pick up as the government essentially provides the go-ahead for summer holiday plans."—AFP ■

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

circulation@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
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French ex-PM Fillon given five year sentence in fraud trial

PARIS (France) — A Paris court on Monday sentenced former French prime minister Francois Fillon to five years in prison, with three suspended, after finding him guilty of orchestrating a fake job for his wife, a scandal that cost him his shot at the presidency in 2017.

Fillon's wife Penelope was handed a suspended three-year sentence for participating in a scheme that saw her paid over a million euros in public funds over a 15-year period.

Both were ordered to pay fines of 375,000 euros (\$423,000) and also reimburse one million euros to the National Assembly, where Penelope supposedly worked as Fillon's parliamentary assistant from 1998 to 2013.

With three years of the five years suspended, Fillon faces two years behind bars in jail. But the couple immediately appealed the ruling, meaning neither will be detained for now pending the appeal.

The couple made no statements as they left the courthouse.

The case was widely seen as a test of whether French politicians would be held to account after decades of getting off lightly on charges of nepotism or financial misconduct.

Test for French elite

The allegations that Fillon had pilfered the public coffers for years pummelled his image as an upright fiscal hawk promising to right the country's finances -- and loomed large in the "yellow vest" anti-government protests that rocked the country in 2018-2019.

A newspaper report on the fake job surfaced early in January 2017, just after Fillon clinched the nomination from his rightwing Republicans party as candidate for a presidential race he was widely tipped to win.

It later emerged that Fillon had also used public money to pay two of his children a combined 117,000 euros for alleged sham work while he was a senator, before becoming premier in the government of then-pres-



Former French Prime minister Francois Fillon (R) arrives at the Paris' courthouse on 29 June 2020 for the ruling on a trial for embezzlement in the context of an alleged job fraud. Francois Fillon, his wife Penelope and his former substitute at the National Assembly, Marc Joulaud were on trial in Paris for the fictitious jobs Penelope Fillon allegedly benefited from. **PHOTO: AFP**

ident Nicolas Sarkozy.

He was also accused of getting the millionaire owner of a literary magazine to pay his wife 135,000 euros for "consulting

work" that was largely fake.

A third defendant, Marc Joulaud -- who stood in for Fillon in parliament when he was a cabinet minister, and who also

hired Penelope Fillon as an assistant -- was also found guilty.

He was also handed a three year suspended sentence. —AFP ■

Sweden's largest pension fund swears off fossil fuels

STOCKHOLM (Sweden)—Sweden's largest pension fund, with over \$70 billion under management, said Monday it would sell off assets in fossil fuel industries, as part of a "growing climate awareness".

AP7, a state-run pension fund that manages pensions for more than four million Swedes, said the decision was based on "market analysis and risk estimation".

"The risk of fossil investing is estimated to increase sub-

stantially," the fund said in a statement.

"The decision to divest from fossil fuel also resonates with a growing climate awareness and demand for sustainable fund investments among AP7's clients," it added.

AP7 intends to sell its assets in companies that are "extracting, refining and distributing power from coal, oil and gas for more than five per cent of their total production", a spokesman told AFP.

Affected companies accounted for "way over three per cent" of AP7's assets, and the plan was for divestments to begin immediately in order to reach the goal of "overall carbon neutrality" by 2030.

The fund currently has holdings in oil giant BP, rival Royal Dutch Shell, and US-based Exxon Mobil and Chevron.

AP7 has a total capital of around 670 billion Swedish kronor \$72 billion or 64 billion euros).

In neighbouring Norway, the country's sovereign wealth fund, the largest in the world, announced in 2019 that it would divest from certain oil companies in order to reduce the country's exposure to oil, however it excluded major players like Exxon Mobil and Total.

In May, the wealth fund placed 12 new companies on its blacklist, including mining giants such as Switzerland's Glencore and Britain's Anglo American - and energy companies such as Germany's RWE, Australia's AGL Energy and South Africa's Sasol, because of their dependence on coal. —AFP ■



Ingrid Lissdahl, a Swedish pensioner, poses at the Pensioner Association office of Huddinge, where she volunteers on June 14, 2013 in Huddinge near Stockholm. **PHOTO: AFP**

UK newspaper The Times launches news radio station

LONDON (United Kingdom) — The British newspaper group that owns The Times and Sunday Times launched Monday a news and current affairs radio station, aiming to position itself as a rival to the BBC.

Times Radio went live on digital radio, online and via smart speaker at 0500 GMT and had Prime Minister Boris Johnson as its first big-name guest.

Morning speech radio has traditionally been dominated by BBC Radio 4's "Today" programme, which has often set the political agenda for the day.

The new station said it aims to appeal to listeners who may have been turned off by what it called the "febrile tone of political debate" on other radio networks.

Instead of "unnecessarily adversarial interviews" and presenter interruptions, it wants to focus on "informed expertise", The Times said in an article to announce the launch.

It also aims to provide a "daily soundtrack" to people still working from home during the coronavirus crisis, said Tim Levell, a former BBC executive

in charge of the new station.

"Lockdown is still continuing, although of course it's easing, and we want to be a fresh voice... particularly (for) those at home," he added.

Some glitches were reported, however, with listeners tuning in via smart speaker directed to a radio station of the same name in Malawi.

The African station is based in the southern city of Blantyre, more than 5,000 miles (8,000 kilometres) from the British capital.

Times Radio is a partnership between The Times, the Sunday Times weekly and its owners' News UK's radio division, Wireless, which also owns the Talksport and Talkradio networks.

News UK is a subsidiary of News Corp, whose executive chairman is Rupert Murdoch. It also owns Dow Jones and the Wall Street Journal.

The Sun, which is also owned by News UK, launched its own radio station, Sun Talk, in April 2009 but it closed 18 months later as part of cost-cutting measures. —AFP ■

Kyrgyz protest against draft law on misinformation

BISHKEK (Kyrgyzstan) — Hundreds of Kyrgyz on Monday protested against a draft law they say will hit press and internet freedoms in Central Asia's most democratic country.

The bill, which President Sooronbai Jeenbekov has yet to sign into law, would force websites to remove information deemed fake by a government organ without a court order being necessary.

The draft legislation against "manipulation of information" sailed through ex-Soviet Kyrgyzstan's pro-government parliament last week, despite the MP who proposed it receiving thousands of critical comments on Facebook.

Journalists have said that the law will be used to force them to remove anti-corruption investigations from their websites as the republic of more than six million prepares for parliamentary elections in the autumn.

The mostly young protesters who marched towards the country's main house of government demanded Jeenbekov not sign the bill into law and that initiator Gulshat Asylbayeva resign her parliamentary mandate.—AFP ■

Six killed in attack on Pakistan Stock Exchange



Police officers inspect the site after gunmen attacked the Pakistani stock exchange building in Karachi, Pakistan on 29 June. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

KARACHI (Pakistan) — Baloch separatists opened fire and hurled a grenade at the Pakistan Stock Exchange in Karachi Monday, authorities said, killing six people including a policeman.

Four security guards, a police officer and a bystander were killed in the melee, while local police chief Ghulam Nabi Memon said all four assailants were also dead.

"Police have recovered modern automatic weapons and explosive materials from the terrorists," Karachi police said in a statement.

The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) later claimed responsibility in a message sent to AFP, saying an elite unit of fighters

had carried out the assault.

The separatists have carried out a string of high-profile attacks across the country in recent years -- including in the southern port city.

The BLA is one of several insurgent groups fighting primarily in Pakistan's southwestern Balochistan province, which has been rocked by separatist, Islamist and sectarian violence for years.

The group has targeted infrastructure projects and Chinese workers in Pakistan multiple times in recent years, including during a brazen daylight attack on Beijing's consulate in Karachi which killed four people in 2018.

In May last year, the BLA attacked a luxury hotel near the Afghan border at Gwadar, where a port development is the flagship project of a multi-billion dollar national infrastructure project funded by China.

Last year, the US State Department designated the BLA as a global terrorist group, making it a crime for anyone in the United States to assist the militants and freezing any US assets they may have.

Following Monday's attack Pakistani authorities vowed to strike back against at any group found responsible for the onslaught, promising to dismantle their networks and destroy their bases.

"An investigation has been launched and very soon we will reach their masterminds," interior minister Ijaz Ahmad Shah said in a video message posted after the attack.

Business continued as usual at the Karachi stock exchange after the attack.

"Trading is smooth and continuing. PSX benchmark index one of the Best Performer in Asia today so far," tweeted Mohammed Sohail, a broker at the exchange.

For a while after the attack the bodies of at least two gunmen could be seen in a pool of blood near the exchange. Karachi was once a hotspot for crime and violence, with heavily armed groups tied to politicians frequently gunning down opponents and launching attacks on residential areas.

But the situation has largely stabilised in recent years following operations by security agencies against armed political outfits and Islamist militants.

Militant groups still retain the ability to launch periodic attacks in many rural areas and occasionally in urban centres.

Monday's attack comes more than a week after a grenade was thrown at a line of people waiting outside a government welfare office in the city, killing one and injuring eight others, according to a statement from municipal authorities.—AFP ■

At least 30 die in Bangladesh ferry accident

DHAKA (Bangladesh) — At least 30 people died and a dozen are missing after a ferry capsized and sank Monday in the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka following a collision with another vessel, rescue officials said.

The Morning Bird vessel was hit from behind by another ferry around 9:30 am local time (0330 GMT) during the morning rush hour, when the country's largest river port is packed with vessels.

"We have collected 30 bodies, including 20 males, seven women and three children," Abul Khair, a diver in the fire brigade, told AFP.

"There were at least 50 people on board... Our rescue divers are still searching," coastguard

spokesman commander Hayet Ibne Siddique said.

The ferry -- which departed from central Munshiganj district -- sank as it was about to moor at Sadarghat, Dhaka's main river port used by hundreds of boats to travel to the country's south.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority's chief, Commodore Gollam Sadeq, told AFP the single-deck ship was "not overcrowded" and sank "due to carelessness".

He said the vessel had been cleared to carry passengers until September.

Witnesses told local television stations many passengers appeared to be stuck in the ferry's cabins.

Divers were still pulling bodies from the wreck,

in waters some 40-50 feet (12-15 metres) deep. The deceased were put in body-bags before they were laid in rows at the harbour-front.

Another boat would later arrive to lift the damaged vessel from the water, Siddique said.

Relatives gathered at Sadarghat despite coronavirus social distancing concerns to search for their family.

"I still don't know what happened to them," a man, searching for his cousin and another relative, told reporters.

Boat accidents are common in Bangladesh, which is crisscrossed by more than 230 rivers.

The South Asian nation is heavily reliant on

ferry for transport but has had a poor safety record.

Experts blame badly maintained vessels, lax

safety standards at shipyards and overcrowding for many of the accidents. In February 2015 at least 78

people died when an overcrowded ship collided with a cargo boat in a central Bangladesh river.—AFP ■



Rescue workers search for victims after a ferry capsized at the Sadarghat ferry terminal in Dhaka on June 29, 2020. At least 30 people died and a dozen are missing after a ferry capsized and sank on June 29 in the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka following a collision with another vessel, rescue officials said. **PHOTO: AFP**

Myanmar national team to play friendly match before World Cup qualifiers

MYANMAR national football team will play a friendly match before the second stage matches of 2022 FIFA World Cup qualification (Asian Zone) in October and November.

Though Myanmar Football Federation (MFF) has invited many football teams in Asia and Southeast Asia to play friendly matches, only a match will be played before World Cup qualification matches in October and November due to the coronavirus pandemic. MFF will set venue and date for the friendly match depending on the invited football team.

FIFA will restart postponed world cup's qualification matches in November and

October.

In the World Cup qualification, the Myanmar national team will play against Japan on 8 October at away ground, Kyrgyzstan on 13 October at home ground and Tajikistan on 17 November at away ground.

— Shine Htet Zaw ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Myanmar's Mg Mg Lwin (C) fights for the ball with Bolivia's Jhasmany Campos (L) and Cristian Arano during their international friendly match in Yangon on 13 October 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**



Half of Tokyo residents oppose Olympics in 2021: poll



The Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic logos are displayed on the Hinomaru driving school building in Tokyo on June 29, 2020.

PHOTO: AFP

TOKYO (Japan) — Just over half of Tokyo's residents don't think the postponed 2020 Olympics should be held next year, backing either a further delay or outright cancellation because of fears over the coronavirus, according to a poll published Monday.

The survey carried out by two Japanese news organisations is only a single data point, but comes after health experts warned that even a year's delay may not be sufficient to hold the Games safely.

The poll conducted over the weekend found 51.7 per cent of respondents hope the Games in 2021 are postponed again or cancelled, while 46.3 per cent

want to see the rescheduled Olympics go ahead.

Among those opposed to a 2021 Games, 27.7 per cent said they want them cancelled altogether, while 24.0 per cent would prefer a second postponement.

The telephone poll, conducted by Kyodo News and Tokyo MX television between June 26-28, received 1,030 replies.

Of those who said they want to see the Games held next year, 31.1 per cent said the event should be in a scaled-back form, including without spectators, while 15.2 per cent said they wanted to see a full-blown Olympics.

— AFP ■

One Championship MMA fights to resume next month

SINGAPORE — Asia's largest mixed martial arts promotion, One Championship, will return behind closed doors in Thailand next month after a five-month break because of the coronavirus, officials said on Monday.

One, which promotes cards across the region in mixed martial arts, Muay Thai and kickboxing, last put on a major show at the end of February.

The Singapore-based company has since cancelled several events and slashed 20 per cent of staff, although it has also revealed a \$70 million funding boost from institutional investors.

With virus outbreaks slowing in many parts of Asia, the company said its flagship events would restart with an event without fans in the Thai capital Bangkok on July 31.

"Most national borders remain closed in Asia, and this has posed unique logistical and operational challenges," One's CEO Chatri Sityodtong said.

The first three major bouts of the "One: No Surrender" event have been confirmed.

Among fighters taking part are ONE flyweight Muay Thai world champion Rodtang "The Iron Man" Jitmuangnon,

Petchdam "The Baby Shark" Petchyindee Academy, and "The Boxing Computer" Yodsanklai IWE Fairtex.

One had already put on fights in its Hero series, feeder events for the main championship, in China in June, before deciding to resume major shows.

The US-based Ultimate Fighting Championship on May 10 became one of the first sports to restart post-coronavirus. UFC has so far successfully put on six shows in tightly controlled environments in Jacksonville, Florida, and Las Vegas.

— AFP ■



This photo is taken on March 18, 2016 shows Aung La N Sang "the Burmese Python" of Myanmar (R) and Mohamed Ali of Egypt (L) posing for photograph before their middleweight Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) One Championship bout at the Thuwunna indoor stadium in Yangon. **PHOTO: AFP**