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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VII, No. 101, 7th Waxing of Second Waso 1382 ME www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com Sunday, 26 July 2020

Govt, NCA-S EAOs begin three-day 6th negotiation meeting

GOVERNMENT and Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement-Signatories, Ethnic Armed Organizations (NCA-S EAOs) have commenced the 6th edition of three-day negotiation meeting at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC) on Shwe Li Road in Yangon yesterday.

Representatives of the government at the meeting were Vice-Chairman of NRPC and Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo, Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, Lt-Gen Min Naung and Lt-Gen Tin Maung Win from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), Peace Commission Secretary and Retired Lt-Gen Khin Zaw Oo, Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Pyone Cho (a) U Htay Win Aung, Peace Commission advisory board members U Hla Maung Shwe and U Moe Zaw Oo and Director-General U Zaw Htay of the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor.

The NCA-S EAOs representatives include NCA Implementation Framework Coordination Group Leader Sao Sai Ngern, NCA Implementation Coordinator U Myo Win, members U Hla Htay, Saw Mra Yazar Lin, Salai Htalaw Hei, Saw Sein Win, Pado Saw Tardo Moo, Pado Saw L Kalusay, Kya Salmon, Saw Kyaw Nyunt, Nai Aung Ma Ngay, Dr Sai Oo and Khun Myint Tun.

Vice-Chairman, Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo delivered an opening remark, saying the peace negotiators from both sides have kept on discussions through videoconferencing despite some restrictions amid COVID-19.

The meeting could make some agreements, including for organizing the 4th session of Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong in the second week of August.

Meanwhile, the government has held four meetings to prepare for the UPC.

The EAOs and the political parties group have sent the lists of their representatives for the conference and leaders to attend opening ceremony.

The decisions from this three-day meeting will be reported to the JICM for approval, and agreements will become Part 3 of Union Accord at the 21st Century Panglong, paving the way of federal-based Union.

NCA Implementation Framework Coordination Group Leader Sao Sai Ngern said the ongoing meeting will try to finalize the remaining issues for discussion.

He also said the stakeholders need to work for turning out fruitful results from the 4th UPC.

Discussions from the first day meeting will be concluded on 27 July.—Ye Gaung Nyunt

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Government and ethnic armed organizations hold the 6th edition of three-day negotiation meeting at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC) on Shwe Li Road in Yangon on 25 July 2020. **PHOTO: PHOE HTAUNG**

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MRTV holds monsoon tree planting event in Nay Pyi Taw

The Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV) organized a monsoon tree planting event in Nay Pyi Taw (Tatkon) yesterday morning.

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint and wife attended and planted star-flower tree and Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun, Pyitthu Hluttaw MP of Tatkon Township U Kyaw Tint, Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung and officials planted seedlings in the park and playground.

The Union Minister and party followed and encouraged the tree planting of the staff from MRTV in the park, playground and both sides of the road.

The Beasts Motorcycle Club led by singer Zaw Win Htut also joined the event and planted the seeds and seedlings around the playground.

In the event, 1,230 seedlings out of collected 4,075 were planted and the rest will continue to be grown during the rainy season.—MNA ■

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Union Minister Dr Pe Myint and wife Daw Khaing Nwe Oo planting the tree at the monsoon tree planting event in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Notification on overcoming anxiety during COVID-19 spread

You are not the only one under pressure from COVID-19, but all of society is and that fact can help to build compassion among the public.

Compassion can reduce hatred between individuals and accept issues for resolving together.

Anxiety can be reduced by this method and everyone should try hard to face and overcome COVID-19 issues.

Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement & Myanmar Medical Association (Mental Health Group)

Myanmar citizens who come back from Thailand queuing for immigration process in Myawady on 25 July. **PHOTO: HTEIN LIN AUNG (IPRD)**

437 Myanmar migrant workers return via Myawady border on 25 July

A total of 437 Myanmar migrant workers from Thailand — 278 males and 159 females — returned home through the Myawady Friendship Bridge (2) in Myawady, Kayin State yesterday.

Kayin State Hluttaw Representative U Thant Zin Aung, Myawady District Administrator U Tay Zar Aung, Deputy District Administrator U Aung Chan Nyein and officials from district and township departments welcomed the returnees at the border checkpoint. The officials also helped them with medical tests and other supplies.

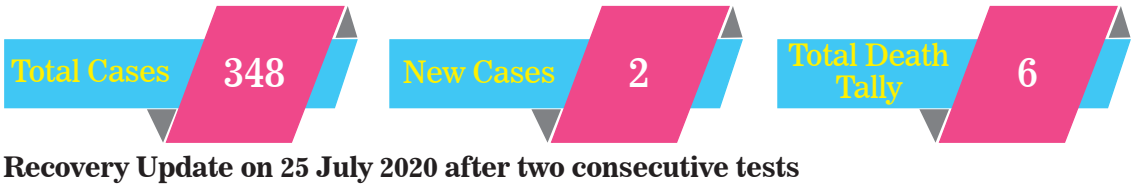
A total of 53,276 returnees including 11,680 in May and 25,338 in June have come back home through this border crossing since 1 May. —Htein Lin Aung (IPRD) ■

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

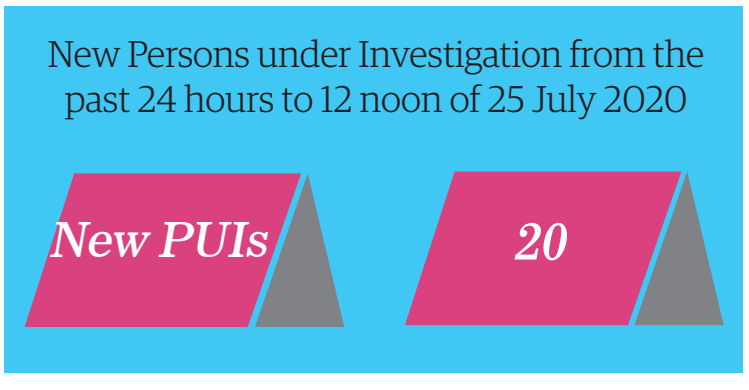
COVID-19 figure in Myanmar reaches 348 after two new cases reported on 25 July

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases reached **348** after **2 new cases** were reported on 25 July according to Ministry of Health and Sports. Case No. 347 returned from USA and Case No 348 from Bangladesh. Out of the **348** confirmed cases, **six** died, **288** have recovered, **269** have been discharged from hospitals and **20** were held under investigation.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 25 July 2020



Recovery Update on 25 July 2020 after two consecutive tests



Three new cases of COVID-19 on 25 July 2020: updated at 8 pm

Case No	Age	Gender	Address	Contact with positive patient	Oversea travel history	Hospital for medical treatment	Lab result	Remark
347	65	Female	Yankin Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, (USA)	Waibargi Specialist Hospital, Yangon	Positive	Keep under Investigation (Bahan Township)
348	36	Male	Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State	No	Yes, (Bangladesh)	District People's Hospital, Maungtaw Township	Positive	Keep under Investigation (Maungtaw Township)

Ministry of Health and Sports

To Be Able To Live A Decent Life

What we are trying to do is not an insignificant endeavour. In short, we are striving for the independence of people so that they will be able to live a decent life. If time has to be wasted in protecting against seditious elements, then what is the use of gaining independence?

(Excerpt from Bogyoke Aung San's speech broadcast on radio on 5th April 1947)

Union Minister U Ohn Win inspects forest plantations in Magway Region

Union Minister U Ohn Win and officials inspect the forest plantations in Magway Region on 25 July 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win inspected the forest plantations in Magway Region yesterday.

The Union Minister first inspected the 45-acre of China-Myanmar friendship forest plantation that was grown during the rainy season of 2017 in the Plot No. 216 of Nga Min Forest Reserve near the Mile Post (28/1) on Nay Pyi Taw-Kanpya Road in Taungdwingyi Township, Magway Region.

Upon inspecting the plantation, he stressed the importance of fully growing the trees and systematically nurturing the plants.

He urged the officials to systematically use agricultural equipment in nurturing trees in accordance with the instructions that are included in the nurturing-plantation subject.

He also visited the Dry Zone Greening Department's 20-acre plantation near the Mile Post (38/4) on Nay Pyi Taw-Kanpya Road in Myothit Township, Magway Region.

At the plantation's briefing hall, officials concerned reported on the data about the trees that were planted there during 2018 and 2019.

On inspecting the 2/2019 plantation, he instructed officials to make the methods of forest inventory uniform – 100% method or sample-based method.

He also inspected the Dry Zone Greening Department's a 500-tree plantation near Mile Post 38/2 and another 20-acre of trees that were grown in 2018 near Mile Post 38/0 on Nay Pyi Taw-Kanpya Road in Myothit Township.

In the afternoon, he visited the 55-acre of plantation in Plot No 218 of Nga Min Forest Reserve near the Mile Post 26/6 on Nay Pyi Taw-Kanpya Road.

After listening to the reports on the trees' conditions at the plantation, he also gave necessary instructions to the officials concerned.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Media to register online for 4th session of Union Peace Conference

THE fourth session of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong will be held at Myanmar International Convention Centre (MICC-I and MICC-II) in Nay Pyi Taw from 12 to 14 August 2020.

The fourth UPC will be held following the prevention, control and treatment measures against COVID-19 and only 60 journalists — 40 from local media and 20 from local-based foreign news agencies will be invited to the event.

Local and foreign correspondents who wish to cover the event are to click the registration link, Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong, at www.moi.gov.mm, the website of the Ministry of Information, to fill out the media registration form. The registration must be done no later than 4 pm on 29 July.

It will set two journalists per media out of the earliest registration lists and prioritize the currently publishing or running newspapers, journals and TV channels. The eligible media lists to the event will be announced on 31 July.

As there are a limited number of people, the photos and video records will be broadcast via the website of Ministry of Information (www.moi.gov.mm, www.mdn.gov.mm, www.mrtv.gov.mm) and Facebook Page (moiwebportalmyanmar, Myanmar Digital News, MRTV) keeping up with the real-time information for the unselected media not to lose rights in covering news.

Those who cover the event must follow the instructions below and the officials of the Ministry of Information will make an arrangement, if necessary:

The correspondents shall inform their arrivals at Nay Pyi Taw Municipal Guesthouse no later than noon of 7 August.

They shall stay at the designated places of Municipal Guesthouse like one room one person under the health instructions from the Ministry of Health and Sports.

During the stay in the Municipal Guesthouse, accommodation and meals must be paid on your own. (will coordinate for a cheaper rate)

On the appointed day, the swab test for COVID-19 will be done free of charge.

If the test result is positive, it will be carried out in accordance with the procedures from the Ministry of Health and Sports.

The issued news media recognition card will only be available at designated areas in MICC (I) and MICC (II), not at the restricted places including the places where the attendees of the conference stay.

At the opening and signing ceremonies, information can be obtained from designated venues and at other times, press conference will be held in the evening at Media Booth and Media Centre.

After the opening ceremony, Ministry of Information will take charge to take souvenir photo due to the limited space and will upload in time on Websites (www.moi.gov.mm, www.mdn.gov.mm, www.mrtv.gov.mm) and on the Facebook Page (moiwebportalmyanmar, Myanmar Digital News, MRTV)

During the conference meetings, transportation to the conference venue and lunch will be provided by Municipal Guesthouse, and masks, gloves and hand sanitizers will be provided by the Ministry of Information.

For further enquiry, they can contact to News and Periodicals Enterprise, Phone: 067-3412125 and 067-3412126.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han, Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

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

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

Myanmar honey relies more on local as pandemic impacts export market

A wooden frame with honeycomb is seen in the hands of a man on 21 July 2020. **PHOTO : ZAYYATU (MAGWAY)**

MYANMAR honey has to rely on the local market because there is no export market for Myanmar honey during COVID-19 period, according to the Apiculture Division in Magway Region.

The honey price is on the decline and the entrepreneurs are facing losses. Although Japan, America, South Korea, China and Thailand markets demand Myanmar honey annually, the export market has recently stopped, however.

"There is no export market for Myanmar honey starting from March because of spreading of coronavirus around the world. So, the local businessmen have to rely on the domestic market. The honey price has also declined and the entrepreneurs are being faced with losses," said U Soe Naing, the regional head of the Apiculture Division of Magway Region.

Previously, the price of honey was K2,700 per viss. According to the current market price, the honey is sold for K2,000 per viss only.

"The honey businessmen will be happy with earning of K2,500 per viss because they have many other costs such as capital costs, transportation costs and labour charges. The honey production has also dropped by 50 per cent this year compared to that of last year because of drought," said U Aung Min, a private honey businessman.

Last year, Myanmar exported zee honey and sunflower honey weighing around 200-250 tonnes annually, according to the Apiculture Division in Magway Region.—Zayyatu (Magway)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Travelling by highway bus lines rising this month

WITH the resuming of the highway bus lines, travelling by these express buses has been slightly rising this month compared to that of last month, said Joint Secretary U Hla Aung of Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA).

"The number of domestic visitors travelling to 102 towns in 14 states and regions using highway bus lines from Aung Mingalar highway terminal and Dagon Ayeyar highway terminal increased in July compared to that in last June. More highway bus lines are running this month," he noted. Last June saw a total of 705 express buses from 207 bus lines transporting over 7,400 passengers to other states and regions from Yangon. From 1 to 20 July, about 845 express buses from 238 bus lines transported over 9,600 passengers, according to YRTA.

People are travelling to other states and regions from Yangon by highway buses mainly from Aung Mingalar highway terminal and Dagon Ayeyar highway terminal. 256 bus lines are operating over 2,500 express buses at Aung Mingalar highway terminal and about 124 bus lines operating over 1,100 express buses at Dagon Ayeyar highway terminal.—YarMaNya

(Translated by Hay Mar)

(FILE) Highway buses are seen at the Aung Mingalar Bus Terminal. **PHOTO : YARMANYA**

Domestic investments touch K20,871 bln as of 31 July

INVESTMENTS by Myanmar citizens in the country has reached over K20,871 billion as of the end of July 2020 mostly in the development of the real estate, manufacturing, transportation and communications, hotels and tourism and construction sectors, according to the data released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The domestic investments were permitted for a total of 1,731 businesses in 11 sectors with an estimated capital of over K20,871 billion (K20871785.949 million).

Myanmar citizens have invested a total of K4,714.858 billion in 93 businesses in the development of the real estate sector, K3,900.796 billion in 930 businesses in the manufacturing sector, K3,013.801 billion in 52 businesses in the transport and communications sector, K2,208.309 billion in 194 businesses in hotels and tourism sector and K1,132.470 billion in 68 businesses in the construction sector.

Moreover, MIC has given the green light to Myanmar citizens to make investments amounting to K899.828 billion in 12 businesses in the industrial development sector, K833.086 billion in 24 businesses in the energy sector, K370.259 billion in 91 businesses in the livestock and fisheries sector, K212.389 billion in 72 businesses in the mining sector, K90.600 billion in 19 businesses in the agricultural sector, K3,490.744 billion in 175 businesses in other sectors and K4.640 billion in one business in oil and natural gas sector.

In 2015-2016 fiscal year (which ended at the end of March 2016), more than K11,624 billion of the domestic investment were granted. Now, around K9,247 billion of investments were made in the present government period (four years and three months).

To be able to get the tax exemption and other benefits, the domestic investors have to fill up the forms to get the permission from Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) and then submit the forms to MIC in Nay Pyi Taw.

Then, the Proposal Assessment Team will discuss the completed forms. After assessing by the team, MIC will issue the granted letters to the domestic enterprises. —Zin Yaw Aye

(Translated by Hay Mar)

It is very important to live with vigilance

It has been said that the way COVID-19 disease spread was different from country to country. It changed from one place to the other. In Myanmar, it has been said that most of the infection cases did not show any symptoms. It was very dangerous. If the symptoms were visible the disease could be avoided. If the COVID-19 disease did not show visible symptoms, it could not be avoided. That was why it was very important to live with vigilance.

(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's discussions with senior health officials on 30 June 2020)

Union Information Minister visits MRTV in Nay Pyi Taw

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint inspected the works of Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV) in Nay Pyi Taw (Tatkon) on the morning of 25 July.

The Union Minister firstly held a meeting together with Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun, Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung and MRTV's officials at its meeting hall.

During the meeting, MRTV's Director-General U Ye Naing and the programme directors presented the completion of the Studio preparation for campaign broadcast of 2020 Multi-Party Democracy General Election, renovation and upgrading of broadcast studios of MRTV and processes for MRTV Online Media.

Afterwards, the Union Minister and party inspected the sample shooting of traditional ethnic wear, preparation of the studio for campaign broadcast of political parties in 2020 Multi-Party Democracy General Election, 5.1 Surround Sound Studio and newsroom studio.

The broadcasting system of MRTV under the Ministry of Information was started broadcasting into High Definition -HD instead of Standard Definition-SD on 15 February 2020.

The officials upgraded the MRTV News Room starting from 21 June of this year and also gave training to the staff to produce broadcast programmes with quality displays and sound system. The broadcast programmes will be launched when the operation is completed in August. —MNA *(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)*

Union Minister Dr Pe Myint and party inspect the audio equipment of 5.1 Surround Sound Studio at the MRTV Office in Nay Pyi Taw (Tatkon) on 25 July 2020. **PHOTO : MNA**

29 foreign returnees arrive in Lashio via Chinshwehaw

CHINSHWEHAW'S COVID-19 Control Working Committee handed over a total of 29 Myanmar nationals who returned from foreign countries to the officials in Lashio in past two days.

Twenty-one of them were transported to Lashio on 24 July and eight on 25 July. Nine of them are males and 20 are females.

The Chinshwehaw's COVID Committee handed over a total of 13,695 returnees, 7,583 males and 6,112 females, to townships concerned since 30 April.—Zin Zin (IPRD)

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Foreign returnees queue to have their temperature checked at the Chinshwehaw border checkpoint on 25 July 2020. **PHOTO : ZIN ZIN (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**

Trade Mark Ads Call Thin Thin May, 09251022355

AFTER ADMITTING TO FELONY CHARGES

Drug firm Indivior to pay US $600 mn over opioid treatment

A subsidiary of pharmaceutical firm Indivior on Friday admitted to a felony charge as part of a $600 million settlement after the US Justice Department accused it of pushing a treatment for opioid addicts unlawfully.

"When a drug manufacturer claims to be part of a solution for opioid addicts, we expect honesty and candor to government officials, as well as to the physicians and patients making important treatment decisions based on those representations," Deputy Assistant Attorney-General Michael Granston of the Justice Department's civil division said in a statement.

The settlement, which requires approval from a federal judge, comes after a grand jury last year said that Indivior marketed Suboxone Film, an opioid-based drug, as a safe and controllable treatment for opioid and heroin addiction.

The grand jury indictment said that -- until 2014 known as Reckitt Benckiser Group -- sought to boost sales by exaggerating the safety of the drug and connecting patients with doctors who were known to overprescribe it and other opioids, taking advantage of the country's huge opioid addiction crisis.

Beginning in 2010, the indictment said, Indivior illegally told health care providers and programmes that Suboxone Film, which contains the opioid buprenorphine, was better and safer than similar drugs, when in fact it was not.

The aim was to force generic competitors from the market, the indictment said.

Reckitt Benckiser Group agreed in July 2019 to pay $1.4 billion -- the largest opioid-related settlement ever -- to resolve its liability in the case.

On Friday, Indivior Solutions, a subsidiary of the parent company based in Slough, Britain and Richmond, Virginia, pled guilty to one count of making false statement relating to health care matters.

The $600 million fine will be paid along with its parent companies, the Justice Department said.

Indivior Chief Executive Officer Mark Crossley said in a statement the incident "does not reflect the values Indivior has strived to demonstrate and uphold during our long history of partnering with health care providers, policymakers, and communities to fight the opioid crisis."

SOURCE: AFP

A subsidiary of pharmaceutical firm Indivior on Friday admitted to a felony charge as part of a $600 million settlement after the US Justice Department accused it of pushing a treatment for opioid addicts unlawfully. **PHOTO: AFP**

INTERNATIONAL TRADE RULES

WTO hands Russia partial victory against EU anti-dumping measures

A World Trade Organization panel on Friday partially found in favour of Moscow in a case it brought against the European Union over anti-dumping duties imposed on imports from Russia.

In its nearly 200-page report, the panel found that the "cost adjustment methodology" that Brussels uses to calculate dumping margins was inconsistent with international trade rules, and urged the bloc to bring its practices in line.

However, it rejected Russia's claim that the EU's framework anti-dumping regulation itself was inconsistent with the Anti-Dumping Agreement (ADA).

This marks the third WTO ruling faulting the EU over its anti-dumping measures.

Dumping means that an exporting country sells a product or service into the importing country at prices below what it charges at home.

The use of anti-dumping duties are permitted under international trade rules as long as they adhere to strict conditions, and disputes over their use are often brought before the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body.

The WTO panel's ruling related to a case first brought by Russia in May 2015, when Moscow requested consultations with Brussels over the calculation methodology.

When the two sides failed to reach an agreement, Moscow in November 2016 asked the WTO to set up the expert panel to settle the issue.

Both sides are free to appeal the decision.

However, the WTO's appeals panel has been paralysed since last December, after the US blocked the appointment of new judges, leaving it without the quorum needed to hear cases.

SOURCE: AFP

Dumping means that an exporting country sells a product or service into the importing country at prices below what it charges at home. **PHOTO: CGTN/XINHUA**

HIGHLY ANTICIPATED MEETING

US congressional antitrust hearing with Big Tech CEOs postponed

A highly anticipated antitrust hearing including top executives of four Big Tech firms, originally set for Monday, has been postponed.

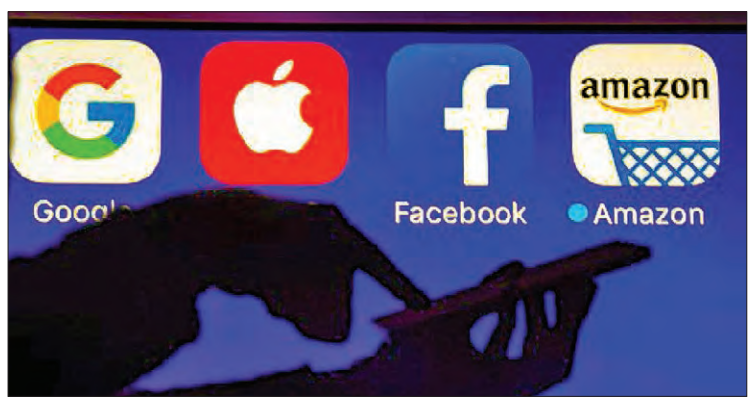
A notice filed by the House Judiciary Committee set no new date for the hearing titled "Examining the Dominance of Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google."

The hearing would have conflicted with the memorial service for the late representative and civil rights leader John Lewis, to lie in state in the US Capitol.

The hearing was called amid rising concerns over Big Tech dominance, which has become even more pronounced during the coronavirus pandemic, and coincides with investigations at the federal and state level of the online giants.

Chief executives Tim Cook of Apple, Jeff Bezos of Amazon, Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook and Sundar Pichai of Google and its parent firm Alphabet had agreed to participate in the session.

SOURCE: AFP



Chief executives Tim Cook of Apple, Jeff Bezos of Amazon, Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook and Sundar Pichai of Google and its parent firm Alphabet had agreed to participate in the session. **PHOTO: AFP**

POPULARIZATION OF SPACE KNOWLEDGE

China launches global naming campaign for Mars rover

Guests attend the launching ceremony of a global naming campaign for the country's Mars rover in Wenchang, south China's Hainan Province, July 24, 2020. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

THE China National Space Administration (CNSA) on Friday announced the launch of a global naming campaign for the country's Mars rover.

According to the Lunar Exploration and Space Programme Centre of the CNSA, the naming activity will be carried out in four stages, including name submission, top 10 proposed names selected by judges, top three names selected by public voting and the final selection.

From now until midnight on Aug. 12, participants can submit their proposed names through the Baidu mobile app, the official submission channel or to the office of the global naming campaign in a paper form.

The CNSA said the campaign is expected to promote the popularization of space knowledge and attract the public's attention to the space industry.

China launched Mars mission Tianwen-1 on Thursday, aiming to complete orbiting, landing and roving in one mission, and taking the first step in its planetary exploration of the solar system.

Tianwen-1 is expected to reach Mars around February 2021. After it enters Mars' orbit, it will spend two to three months surveying potential landing sites using a high-resolution camera to prepare for the landing in May.

After landing, a rover will be released to conduct scientific exploration with an expected lifespan of at least 90 Martian days (about three months on Earth), and the orbiter, with a design life of one Martian year (about 687 days on Earth), will relay communications for the rover while conducting its own scientific detection.

SOURCE: Xinhua

CATEGORY 1 STORM

Men work atop a vessel in the Corpus Christi Ship Channel on March 11, 2019. The Texan city is bracing for the first Atlanic hurricane of 2020, Hanna, to make landfall on Saturday. **PHOTO: AFP**

Virus-hit Texas braces as 2020's first hurricane, Hanna, takes aim

TEXAS, already struggling with a surge in coronavirus cases, was bracing Saturday after storm Hanna strengthened into the first Atlantic hurricane of 2020, with meteorologists warning of heavy rain, storm surge and potentially life-threatening flash flooding.

The Category 1 storm, with wind speeds of around 75 miles per hour (120 kilometres per hour), strengthened to a hurricane overnight and is expected to make landfall by afternoon or early evening, the National Hurricane Centre (NHC) said.

It could bring storm surge of up to five feet and as many as 18 inches of rain to parts of south Texas, the NHC said, warning of dangerous flash flooding.

Hanna was about 100 miles east south-east of Corpus Christi, Texas, at 7:00 am local time (1200 GMT), and was moving west at about nine miles per hour, an NHC advisory said.

Expected to make a slight turn later in the day, it "should make landfall along the Texas coast within the hurricane warning area this afternoon or early this evening," the advisory continued.

Storm warnings were already in effect along Texas's Gulf Coast early Saturday. In Corpus Christi officials closed libraries and museums as the city braced for the storm, local media reported.

SOURCE: AFP

'Brazil's most famous cobra' sparks trafficking probe, draws fans

A cobra that bit a veterinary student in Brazil, putting him in a coma, has turned into a celebrity by sparking an investigation into an alleged exotic animal trafficking ring.

The monocled cobra, which is native to Asia, bit 22-year-old Pedro Krambeck Lehmkuhl on July 7 in Brasilia, sending doctors on a frantic search for the right antivenom -- so rare in Brazil that the lone doses had to be rushed from Sao Paulo.

Questions about how the snake ended up at the student's apartment soon turned into a police investigation that found 16 other snakes at a property belonging to a friend of Lehmkuhl's, as well as three sharks, seven more snakes, a Moray eel and a Tupinambis lizard at another property.

So far the probe has led to the firing of two officials at the Brazilian environmental regulator, IBAMA, over suspicions they facilitated fraudulent import permits for a wildlife trafficking ring.

The student's mother and stepfather, a police colonel, were also questioned and fined 8,500 reals (about $1,600) each on a charge of obstructing justice.

SOURCE: AFP

QUANTUM NETWORKING TECHNOLOGY

Quantum loop: U.S. unveils blueprint for 'virtually unhackable' internet

U.S. officials and scientists have begun laying the groundwork for a more secure "virtually unhackable" internet based on quantum computing technology.

At a presentation Thursday, Department of Energy (DOE) officials issued a report that lays out a blueprint strategy for the development of a national quantum internet, using laws of quantum mechanics to transmit information more securely than on existing networks.

The agency is working with universities and industry researchers on the engineering for the initiative with the aim of creating a prototype within a decade.

In February, scientists from DOE's Argonne National Laboratory and the University of Chicago created a 52-mile (83-kilometre) "quantum loop" in the Chicago suburbs, establishing one of the longest land-based quantum networks in the nation.

The aim is to create a parallel, more secure network based on quantum "entanglement," or the transmission of sub-atomic particles.

"One of the hallmarks of quantum transmissions is that they are exceedingly difficult to eavesdrop on as information passes between locations," according to the Energy Department statement. "Scientists plan to use that trait to make virtually unhackable networks."

The department said early adopters could include the banking and health services sectors, adding that there would be applications for national security and aircraft communications.

SOURCE: AFP

Health and discipline or vice versa

THERE is a saying "health is wealth". Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely absence of disease and infirmity as the WHO states. Our national policy pinpoints an integrated concept to raise the level of health of the country and promote the physical, mental and social well-being of the people to achieve the 'Health for All' goal by utilizing the primary healthcare approach. Concurrently, discipline is an asset to all who do wish to live and work with a healthy lifestyle. Keeping a disciplined life or livelihood, we can control our behaviour or the way we live healthily. Health and discipline or vice versa are like the head and tail of a coin as they are closely associated.

Basically, we should cleanse our hands frequently, don a mask in public, distance socially or physically with one another, shun a crowded event or gathering, get body temperature measured where necessary, and so on. Precisely, we all need to follow these health-related protocols directed by the Ministry of Health and Sports in line with the WHO's instructions to stay healthy and disciplined personally as well as to enhance protection for others generally during this coronavirus pandemic era. Unless everyone lives in discipline with the public health-related enforcing rules and regulations, which are in place, authorities can take a disciplinary action upon any rulebreaker or discipline-breaker under the relevant legislation.

> We all need to follow these health-related protocols directed by the Ministry of Health and Sports in line with the WHO's instructions to stay healthy and disciplined personally as well as to enhance protection for others generally during this coronavirus pandemic era.

Here, we would like to quote one of Bogyoke Aung San's speeches: "Now is a time when political consciousness is emerging, with some wavering. Our government complies with demands as much as possible. Like the parents who acquiesce to their children and take action against them if they reach beyond disciplines, our government will take action against those who are undisciplined and take more opportunities than they should. Demand your needs in accordance with rules and disciplines. We will comply with them in accordance with the rules." We need to correlate health and discipline in the fight against COVID, which also impacts upon all of us not just social-economically but politically as well.

International news show that the deadly pathogen has killed approximately 590,000 people worldwide and infected up to 14 million in 196 countries to date since the outbreak erupted in China late last year. Resurgent cases are also rampant in some countries of the world. It results in re-tightening to re-enforce the restrictions once again in those countries. To kill the virus, some countries are sparing no efforts in seeking for vaccines. The World Health Organization, in its most recent assessment following a series of global clinical trials, identified 21 'vaccine candidates'. Almost half are related to Chinese companies or institutes.

So, the global health crisis may stay with us until unforeseeable future. In the meantime, an up-to-date figure in Myanmar indicates 346 confirmed cases with a total of 6 deaths. The Union Government has been containing the coronavirus infection to a certain extent. We call for a friendly reminder once again just to follow and practise the health disciplines above-mentioned so that we all could be able to live and work healthily as a saying goes: "Success is nothing more than a few simple disciplines, practised every day".

■ ■ ■

COVID-19: Major flexible funding from GAVI proved crucial for Myanmar's effective response

DURING the onset of the pandemic, the emergency re-allocation of US$8.8 million from the over US$85 million Health System Strengthening (HSS-2) Gavi-funded programme was crucial to Myanmar's effective response to COVID-19 and the quick resumption of life-saving services by the Ministry of Health and Sports, supported by UNICEF and WHO and other partners.

"With the re-allocation of the funds from Gavi, the Ministry of Health and Sports strengthened community engagement and risk communications, and infection prevention and control and case management, as well as implemented enhanced disease surveillance and preventive measures, laboratory readiness and coordination," said Dr Myint Htwe, Union Minster of the Ministry of Health and Sports.

UNICEF and WHO supported the Government of Myanmar with the procurement of 20,000 Cobas 6800 testing kits, 30,000-each specimen carriers and universal transport media, 370 Oxygen Concentrators, laboratory reagents, US$3.75 million worth of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits, and dissemination of communication materials in Myanmar and 85 ethnic languages, as well as capacity building of health workers.

"Gavi was the first to offer the re-allocation of funds for prevention, control and containment of COVID-19 response. We appreciate Gavi's quick response to the situation in allowing for the reallocation of the HSS-2 grant for the prevention and control of the COVID-19 outbreak in Myanmar," said Dr Stephan Jost, WHO Representative to Myanmar.

As international commercial flights remain temporarily suspended as part of the measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19, the World Food Programme (WFP), on behalf of the United Nations in Myanmar, is launching a series of humanitarian flights linking Yangon and Kuala Lumpur to bring in humanitarian cargo and personnel. **PHOTO: UNITED NATIONS IN MYANMAR**

The support from Gavi was also key in the resumption of routine immunisation services after only six weeks of suspension. Taking necessary infection prevention measures, physical distancing and hand hygiene practices, national routine immunisation re-started in hospitals in all 330 townships and in 98 large hospitals from 18 May 2020 and expanded to nationwide outreach services in June. Despite restriction measures and apprehension in the community, more than 110,000 children came forward to take their third dose of pentavalent vaccine in the month of June. This is about one-and-half times more children who took the vaccine in the same period last year.

Prior to COVID-19, Gavi has supported key immunisation programmes in Myanmar including:

- The nationwide Japanese encephalitis (JE) vaccination campaign, with high coverage and subsequent introduction of JE vaccine to routine immunisation in 2018;
- The measles and rubella nationwide campaign, successfully completed in 2019 in two phases;
- The introduction of Rota vaccine into routine immunisation in February 2020. Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine is expected to be introduced in September this year.

"Gavi congratulates the Ministry of Health and Sports for the effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic and we are glad that we could contribute to the national response plan with our funding. We are particularly impressed with the resumption of routine immunisation in June and the promising catch-up of missed children and coverage rates across the country," said Pascal Bijleveld, Director, Country Support, Gavi. Gavi has been supporting Myanmar since 2002 and as of December 2019 it has provided a cumulative total amount of US$216 million for various programmes.

"As we continue our programmes and activities through 'COVID-safe' engagement modalities, we look forward to our continued and collective partnership, with special thanks to Gavi and all of its donors, so that we may continue to respond to the threats and risks posed by the pandemic while restoring and expanding services to reach all children and communities in Myanmar," said June Kunugi, UNICEF Representative to Myanmar.

"Together, we can re-imagine a better future for children and their families in Myanmar."

Source: Joint Press Relese (Gavi, WHO, UNICEF, MOHS)

■ ■ ■

National routine immunisation re-started in hospitals in all 330 townships and in 98 large hospitals from 18 May 2020 and expanded to nationwide outreach services in June. **PHOTO: UNITED NATIONS IN MYANMAR**

GROWING SKEPTICISM OVER GOVERNMENTS' HANDLING OF THE HEALTH CRISIS

Public unsatisfied

Governments losing support for their handling of COVID-19: survey

GOVERNMENTS are fast losing support for their handling of the coronavirus outbreak from a public that widely believes death and infection figures to be higher than statistics show, a survey of six countries revealed Saturday.

Support for the federal government of the United States, the country with the most reported infections and deaths, dropped by four percentage points from mid-June, with 44 per cent of respondents declaring themselves dissatisfied, said a report by the Kekst CNC communications consulting group.

In Britain, just over a third of respondents approved of their government's actions, a three-point decline in one month, according to the report, based on an opinion poll conducted over five days in mid-July.

It also included France, Sweden, Japan and Germany.

"In most countries this month, support for national governments is falling," the report said.

The notable exception was France, where approval rose by six percentage points, yielding a dissatisfaction rate of 41 per cent.

France, which has the world's seventh-highest COVID-19 toll, has all but emerged from lockdown but has seen infections increase in recent days, prompting the government to order face masks in all enclosed public spaces.

In Sweden, which took a controversial soft approach to lockdown and has a higher toll than its neighbours, the prime minister's approval rating has shrunk from a positive seven percent to a neutral zero, the poll found.

People who participated in the survey - 1,000 per country polled - generally believed the coronavirus to be more widespread, and more deadly, than official figures show.

"Despite relatively low incidence rates compared to earlier in the pandemic in most countries (with the exception of the US), people significantly overestimate the spread and fatality rate of the disease," Kekst CNC said.

In Sweden and Britain, the public believed that six or seven per cent of people have died from the coronavirus, about 100 times the reported rate.

In the United States, respondents estimated that almost a tenth of the population had died of the virus, more than 200 times the real toll, while Germans thought their tally was 300 times higher than what has been reported.

Such views, said the report, "will be impacting consumer behaviour and wider attitudes - business leaders and governments will need to be conscious of this as they move to restart economies and transition into living with coronavirus for the medium to longer term."

The poll also revealed that fear of a second outbreak wave is growing, and that an ever larger number of people believe the impacts will last for more than a year.

People "are becoming resigned to living with coronavirus for the forseeable future, and looking to leaders and business to pave the way forward," the report said. They are also increasingly likely to prioritise limiting the spread of the virus even if the economy suffers. "In the US, 54 per cent want the government to prioritise limiting the spread of the virus over protecting the economy," it said.

The poll found that mask-wearing was generally popular, except in Sweden, where only about 15 per cent of people sport a face-covering in public.

SOURCE: AFP

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 4:00 pm Saturday 25th July, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is weak over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 26th July, 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing Region and Kayin State, scattered in Bago and Ayeyawady Regions, Shan, Chin, Kayah and Mon States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-6) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Weak Monsoon.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26th July, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26th July, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26th July, 2020: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

Flood Bulletin

(Issued at: 14:00 hrs MST on 25-7-2020)

Flood condition of Chindwin River

According to the (13:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Chindwin River at Homalin has exceeded about (1) foot above its danger level. It may fall below its danger level during the next (2) days.

According to the (13:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Chindwin River at Phaungpyin has exceeded about (1½) feet above its danger level. It may remain above its danger level during the next (2) days.

Advisory

It is especially advertised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas in Phaungpyin Township to take precaution measure.

Flood Bulletin

(Issued at: 14:00 hrs MST on 25-7-2020)

Flood condition of Ayeyawady River

According to the (13:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Ayeyawady River at Shwegu has exceeded about (2) inches above its danger level. It may fall below its danger level during the next (1) day.

Coronavirus crisis could spark 'massive' new migration: Red Cross

Travellers at the Istanbul Airport wearing protective face masks queue as an employee serves a passenger, Istanbul, Turkey, June 1, 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE devastating economic toll the coronavirus crisis is taking around the world could spark huge waves of fresh migration once borders reopen, the head of the Red Cross warned in an interview.

Jagan Chapagain, head of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), told AFP he was deeply concerned about the secondary effects of the pandemic.

"Increasingly we are seeing in many countries the impacts on the livelihoods and the food situation," he said in an interview at IFRC's headquarters in Geneva late on Wednesday.

The pandemic and the lockdowns and border closures imposed to halt the spread of the virus have been destroying livelihoods around the planet and are expected to drive many millions more into poverty.

Many people are already faced with the choice of risking exposure to the novel coronavirus or going hungry, Chapagain said, warning that the desperation being generated could have far-reaching consequences.

"What we hear is that many people who are losing livelihoods, once the borders start opening, will feel compelled to move," he said.

"We should not be surprised if there is a massive impact on migration in the coming months and years."

More migration forced on people by desperate circumstances, he said, will result in numerous "tragedies along the way", including more deaths at sea, human trafficking and exploitation.

Chapagain called for urgent support to help "relieve that desperation", stressing that in addition to a moral imperative to help people in need, there is a clear economic argument for helping avoid forced migration.

"The cost of supporting the migrants, during the transit and of course when they reach the country of destination, is much more than supporting people in their livelihoods, education, health needs in their own country," he said.

SOURCE: AFP

Virus fallout sends Sweden's unemployment to highest since 1998

THE Swedish unemployment rate jumped to its highest level since 1998 in June, at nearly 10 per cent, due to the economic fallout from the novel coronavirus, Statistics Sweden said Thursday.

The seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate among 16 to 64-year-olds, the statistics agency's longest-running series, reached 9.4 per cent last month, surpassing the nine percent peak in early 2010 in the wake of the financial crisis.

The rise has been steep: in January unemployment was still at 7.2 per cent and in May it hit 8.6.

The all-time high of the indicator dates back to June 1997 when it hit 11.7 per cent at the end of the severe economic crisis that hit Sweden in the 1990s.

According to unadjusted seasonal data, Sweden had 557,000 jobseekers in June, around 150,000 more than a year earlier.

Particularly young people have been hit hard, and youth unemployment hit its highest levels since 1993.

Among 16 to 24-year-olds, seasonally adjusted unemployment reached 28 per cent, compared to 20.4 per cent in January.

Some 173,000 young people under the age of 25 are registered as unemployed, 50,000 more than before the pandemic hit Sweden.

The rapid increase is primarily due to "those who have had temporary contracts and not gotten an extension," according to David Samuelsson, a statistician at Statistics Sweden.

Samuelsson added that youth unemployment has also been hurt by "the number of summer jobs decreasing".

In neighbouring Denmark, which had a much stricter lockdown but hasn't seen the same number of cases, the official unemployment rate reached its highest level since 2012 in May, the latest data available. It then stood at 5.6 per cent, up from 3.7 in February.

In Norway, the unemployment rate was 4.9 percent in June compared to 3.8 in February, according to Statistics Norway.

SOURCE: AFP

Japanese firm compiles wedding protocols to minimize coronavirus risk

AS Japanese couples return to tying the knot, a major Japanese wedding service provider has compiled guidelines to minimize the risk of spreading the coronavirus.

Watabe Wedding Corp., which resumed holding weddings in Japan in June following the lifting of a state of emergency in late May, hopes its more than 100 protocols for planning and holding wedding ceremonies and receptions will help reassure customers.

The new rules include disinfecting rental wedding gowns tried on by brides-to-be after each use.

On the wedding day, a makeup artist wearing a mask and face shield will use disposable brushes and sponges to color the bride's lips and around her eyes, as the virus can be transmitted through contact with mucous membranes.

When the couple exchange rings at the ceremony, the rings will have been placed in advance on a mounting to avoid being handled by a third person.

The guests will be asked to maintain social distancing and refrain from filling each other's glasses -- a common practice in parties in Japan -- at the reception.

The Kyoto-based firm also offers wedding services in various overseas locations, including Hawaii, Guam, Australia, Italy and Singapore.

SOURCE: Kyodo

Supplied photo shows how guests at a wedding ceremony are expected to maintain social distancing. **(PHOTO COURTESY OF WATABE WEDDING CORP.) (KYODO)**

Warning over UK theatre closures due to virus lockdown

BRITAIN'S world-leading theatre industry faces mass redundancies and venue closures because of the effect of the coronavirus lockdown.

Parliament's Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) committee said in a new report that more than 15,000 theatrical performances were cancelled in the first 12 weeks of shutdown from March 23. More than 303 million pound in box office revenue was lost but when additional income was factored in, losses could be 603 million pound.

"We are witnessing the biggest threat to our cultural landscape in a generation," the committee said.

"The failure of the government to act quickly has jeopardized the future of institutions that are part of our national life and the livelihoods of those who work for them."

SOURCE: AFP

"Patient 416"

Vietnam detects first coronavirus case in nearly 100 days

VIETNAM has detected its first locally-transmitted case of coronavirus in nearly 100 days, authorities said Saturday, in a country whose swift and full lockdown won praise for controlling the spread of the disease.

"Patient 416" is a 57-year-old retired Vietnamese man in the southern city of Danang, and the first community transmission since April 16.

Local health officials have tested 105 people who had been in close contact with him, the Ministry of Health said on its website.

The man had taken his mother to a hospital in the days before after showing symptoms of the sickness, authorities said, but gave no confirmation of how he was infected in a country where the virus appeared to have been stubbed out for several months.

"The patient is currently on ventilator support due to respiratory failure," it said, adding his family believe his contacts with others were limited. "He didn't go out of the city and only stayed at home to look after his grandchild and interact with neighbours, he didn't make contact with strangers," it said. Danang has been packed with local tourists returning to its beaches and restaurants since Vietnam lifted its lockdown. Despite sharing a long, ungovernable border with China, Vietnam has recorded just 416 virus cases -- including the latest from Danang -- with no deaths.

Communist authorities were quick to lock down the country after the virus emerged in neighbouring China, with a rigorous state quarantine and contact-tracing system put in place.

A woman wearing a face mask walks along the Tuan Chau harbour in Ha Long Bay, Vietnam. **(AFP PHOTO/ MANAN VATSYAYANA)**

International flights remain strictly limited with a two-week mandatory quarantine laid out for visitors. Some analysts say the tough response to the virus will help the economy as foreign investment and local consumer confidence bounces back.

SOURCE: AFP

Highest figure in months

S. Korea sees surge in new coronavirus cases

SOUTH Korea reported a surge in new coronavirus infections on Saturday, recording its highest figure in nearly four months with dozens of imported cases.

The country added 113 new cases, including 86 among people who arrived from overseas, bringing the total to 14,092, according to the Korea Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

People in traditional Korean hanbok dresses wear face masks as they visit Gyeongbokgung palace in Seoul, South Korea, on Feb 3, 2020. **(JUNG YEON-JE / AFP)/FILE**

It was the second highest figure since March 31, when the country reported 125 new cases. It was also the first time it has seen more than 100 cases since April 1.

All overseas arrivals are required to undergo a two-week quarantine.

South Korea endured one of the worst early outbreaks outside China but brought it broadly under control with an extensive "trace, test and treat" programme while never imposing a compulsory lockdown that was put in place in much of Europe and around the world.

The country has been seen as a model on how to combat the pandemic with the public largely following safety health measures such as wearing face masks.

SOURCE: AFP

New guidelines

US health agency urges schools to reopen to students

THE top US health body has issued new guidelines on the reopening of schools, clearly weighting its recommendations in favour of having students return to their classrooms in fall.

The updated advice from the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was posted Thursday night, and came a few weeks after President Donald Trump asked the agency to change course.

"We owe it to our nation's children to take personal responsibility to do everything we can to lower the levels of COVID-19, so they can go back to school safely," CDC chief Robert Redfield said Friday.

With the virus still rampant in many parts of the country, a number of cities including Houston and Los Angeles have already announced that schools will reopen virtually.

Others like New York, where the epidemic has receded, are opting for a hybrid model. Although the CDC says schools must take into consideration local virus transmission rates, it offers no precise guidance on what the cut-off threshold should be.

Asked by a reporter how he would define a hotspot that should not yet reopen its schools, Redfield said: "Right now we're looking where the percent positivity rate within the community is greater than five per cent."

SOURCE: AFP

Due to health to limited resources

Texas hospital may send virus patients home to die

A hospital in Texas may be forced to send patients "deemed too sick" home to die "by their loved ones," doctors said.

Heath officials at the Starr County Memorial Hospital announced this week that they are creating committees to review patients' cases at the hospital. Around 50% of the patients who have been admitted to emergency rooms tested positive for the virus. Resources are limited and not all patients may be able to be treated at the hospital.

Dr. Jose Vasquez, the county's health authority, said that the situation is "desperate."

"Unfortunately, Starr County Memorial Hospital has limited resources and our doctors are going to have to decide who receives treatment, and who is sent home to die by their loved ones," Starr County Judge Eloy Vera wrote in a Facebook post. "We are in a life and death situation," she added during a press conference.

SOURCE: AFP

Mass anti-Kremlin rallies grip Russia's Far East

KHABAROVSK — Huge anti-government demonstrations erupted in Russia's Far East on Saturday over the arrest of a popular governor who was replaced this week by a Kremlin appointee who never lived in the fraught region.

Residents of Khabarovsk near the border with China have taken to the streets en masse since the head of their region Sergei Furgal was arrested by federal law enforcement and flown to Moscow on murder charges earlier this month.

The running demonstrations have been some of the largest anti-government protests in Russia in years, which the Kremlin said this week were being fuelled by opposition activists outside of the region.

Tens of thousands of residents marched through Khabarovsk waving the region's flag, carrying banners and chanting anti-Putin slogans as passing cars honked their horns in support, an AFP reporter said.

Demonstrators converged in front of the regional administrative building on Lenin square shouting "Freedom" and "Putin resign".

Police wearing masks allowed the demonstrations to go ahead despite a ban on public gatherings as part of measures to contain the coronavirus pandemic.

Estimates of the turnout varied greatly, with Khabarovsk officials saying that 6,500 people attended. Pro-opposition social media channels placed the number much higher at around 90,000. —AFP ■

The running demonstrations in Russia's Far East have been some of the largest anti-government protests in years. **PHOTO: AFP**

America divided two months after death of Floyd

WASHINGTON — One after another, statues recalling slavery in America keep coming down, and night after night demonstrators taunt police in a groundswell of anger over brutality against people of colour.

Two months after African American George Floyd died when a white policeman kneeled on his neck for more than eight minutes, triggering a nationwide and global outcry for justice, the United States is being shaken by an anti-racism surge that, more and more, is dividing its political class.

The days of huge, boisterous nightly marches in cities from New York to Los Angeles may be over but things are still happening. Overnight Thursday, two statues of Christopher Columbus -- for many a symbol of colonization and cruelty to native people -- were taken down in Chicago.

A demonstrator holds up a poster with a rendition of George Floyd on May 30 in Denver. **PHOTO: AFP**

And that same night protesters in Portland, Oregon again clashed with police in a wave of unrest that is now nearly two months old.

With the presidential election 100 days away, this unsettled atmosphere is seen in diametrically opposed ways by the people on either side of it.

For Democrats, taking down Confederate-era statues is a way to acknowledge a racist past and stop glorifying white men who played a part in the oppression of African and Native Americans.

President Donald Trump, appealing to his white, working class base as he seeks re-election with a strong law and order message, calls this practice an act of vandalism and an insult to the heritage of the American South.

As for the protests in Portland, Republicans welcome the administration's sending in federal agents to restore order disrupted by people they label as anarchists.—AFP ■

Trump eases controls on armed drone exports

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration moved Friday to ease controls on exports of armed drones, saying that allies need US technology and that other countries outside of a non-proliferation pact were taking over the market.

The White House announced that President Donald Trump had approved a move to diverge partly from the 1987 Missile Technology Control Regime, in which 35 countries agreed to restrict the sales of unmanned weapons delivery systems.

The MTCR was aimed at controlling the spread of missiles that could deliver large payload like nuclear weapons. —AFP ■

Machu Picchu empty for anniversary as Peru virus cases soar

LIMA — Peru's former Inca citadel Machu Picchu on Friday marked 109 years since it was rediscovered by US explorer Hiram Bingham -- but the iconic site stood empty of tourists after plans to reopen for the anniversary had to be scrapped.

The jewel of Peruvian tourism closed to visitors in mid-March as the country locked down to combat the coronavirus pandemic -- and a recent surge in infections led authorities to shelve its reopening plans, indefinitely for now.

"Last year many people came for the anniversary, but unfortunately this time we won't have any visitors because we still don't have a reopening date for Machu Picchu," Darwin Baca, mayor of the nearby Machu Picchu settlement, told AFP.

"It might be in August because cases are still increasing in Cusco."

The former Inca capital of Cusco is the nearest big city to the UNESCO World Heritage site.

Cusco governor Jean Paul Benavente announced earlier this month that visitors could return to Machu Picchu on July 24 if sanitary conditions permitted -- but five days later he contracted the coronavirus as cases soared in the region. —AFP ■

Picture taken on June 15, 2020 showing an empty Machu Picchu, the 15th century Inca citadel located at 2,430 metres in the Andes mountain range, 80 km from Cusco in southern Peru, which has been closed to tourism since March 16, 2020 due to the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. **PHOTO: (AFP/PERCY HURTADO)**

Asia-Pacific ministers push for free trade in fight against pandemic

KUALA LUMPUR — Trade ministers from the Asia-Pacific region pledged Saturday to work to ensure a free flow of essential goods to fight against the coronavirus pandemic that has wreaked havoc on the global economy.

The ministers from the 21 economies that form the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum met virtually amid the pandemic, with Malaysia, the current APEC host, serving as chair.

Durians are served at the flag-off ceremony of the first batch of Malaysian whole frozen durian to China, in Putrajaya, Malaysia, June 17, 2019. **(XINHUA/CHONG VOON CHUNG)/ FILE PHOTO**

"While we acknowledge that economies may need to implement emergency measures designed to address COVID-19 challenges, we reiterate our commitment to work to facilitate the flow of essential goods and services... and minimize disruptions to trade in medical goods, food and agriculture products, in order to fight the pandemic," they said in a joint statement.

In a separate statement, the ministers declared that members are encouraged to work together to "expedite and facilitate the flow and transit of essential goods," especially medical supplies.

The ministers said they are also looking at a proposal to facilitate essential movement of people across borders to drive the economy during the pandemic.

Malaysian International Trade and Industry Minister Mohamed Azmin Ali, who chaired Saturday's meeting, said the pandemic has served as a rallying point for all APEC members.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged APEC to act fast in a coordinated manner," he told an online press conference. "This health crisis is a real test for APEC in signifying its unity and steadfastness in responding toward revitalizing the regional economy post-pandemic."

APEC is also working on a proposal for a digital platform to share information on the disease caused by the new coronavirus and another for establishing a fund to combat the virus.

"These initiatives, once operationalized, could prove to the global community that APEC is an international organization that stands strong against the test of time and crisis," he added.—Kyodo ■

Oil services giant Schlumberger says 21,000 jobs to go

HOUSTON — Oil services group Schlumberger expects to lay off more than 21,000 employees -- a quarter of staff -- it said on Friday, also reporting a $3.4 billion quarterly loss.

The Texas-based firm announced a series of charges totalling $3.7 billion, including more than $1.0 billion for severance pay "associated with reducing Schlumberger's workforce by more than 21,000 employees".

The firm said that the vast majority of the charge is expected to be paid during the second half of 2020.

Oil producers have been hit hard by the fall in global crude prices as lockdowns adopted to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus hit demand for energy.

In reaction, firms have slashed investment, impacting firms like Schlumberger which carry out many activities related to exploration and the development of oil fields.

"This has probably been the most challenging quarter in past decades," CEO Olivier Le Peuch said in the earnings statement.—AFP ■

BRICS countries pledge further cooperation in e-commerce, IPR

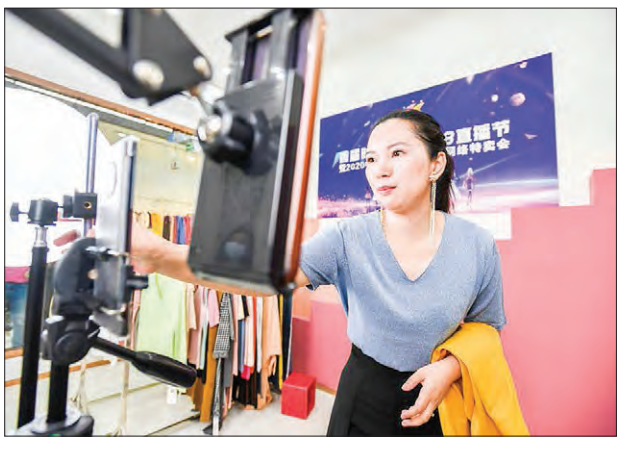
BEIJING — BRICS countries have agreed to strengthen cooperation in areas including e-commerce, intellectual property rights (IPR) as well as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), according to a Thursday meeting attended by economic and trade ministers of the countries.

BRICS countries should step up collaboration in the face of downward pressure on the world economy amid the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ministers agreed, vowing strengthened cooperation in the supply chain and value chain to jointly fight the pandemic.

The parties also promised to jointly safeguard the multilateral trading system, oppose unilateralism and protectionism, support the necessary reform of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and protect the lawful rights and interests of its developing members.

The countries decided to deepen practical cooperation in e-commerce, IPR, SMEs and investment facilitation, among other fields.

Minister of Commerce Zhong Shan said BRICS countries have vast markets and huge development potential, adding that the countries should strengthen their confidence, step up international cooperation in fighting the pandemic, ensure the stability of global industrial and supply chains, and jointly support developing countries and the least developed countries. — Xinhua ■



A young woman sells clothes in front of phone cameras via livestreaming on an e-commerce platform in Shaxi Town in Zhongshan City, south China's Guangdong Province, March 28, 2020. **(XINHUA/LIU DAWEI)**

US orders inspections of 2,000 Boeing planes grounded by pandemic

WASHINGTON — US air safety regulators on Friday ordered plane operators to inspect some 2,000 Boeing jets that have not been flying due to weak travel demand amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued an emergency airworthiness directive for Boeing 737 NG and Classic aircraft to look for corrosion on air check valves that could result in engine failure, an agency spokesman said.

The order affects jets that have been in storage and not flown for seven or more days. If corrosion is found, the valve must be replaced prior to the plane's return to service, the agency said.—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V UNI ACCORD VOY. NO. (0211-652N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V UNI ACCORD VOY. NO. (0211-652N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-7-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S EVERGREEN MARINE (S'PORE) PTE.,LTD.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CAPE FLORES VOY. NO. (096 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CAPE FLORES VOY. NO. (096 N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-7-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** 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 NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPPING LINES

Thaketa crocodile farm develops conservation of Myanmar's crocodile generation

The photo shows Thaketa crocodile farm in Yangon Region. **PHOTO: THAN HTIKE**

By Than Htike

CROCODILES are the reptile animals that have naturally existed since more than 240 million years ago when it might be the beginning of the world and they still remain unchanged. The crocodiles are a large reptile, with a long tail, hard skin and very big jaws and lives in rivers and lakes in hot countries. They are carnivores living both in water and on land. The crocodiles can be seen in Africa, Australia, America, Bangladesh, Brunei, Myanmar, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia and Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Solomon Islands, Thailand and Vietnam. Similarly they can sometimes be spotted in island countries like Japan. There are about 24 crocodile species in the world—14 kinds of crocodile species, 8 of alligator species and two of gavial species.

Different species of crocodiles are still being bred

Like other regional countries, Myanmar is developing the conservation of its crocodile generation for ensuring continued growth for a long time. Myanmar has set up crocodile farms in Mainmahla Islands in Ayeyawady Region and Thaketa Industrial Zone Ward in Yangon Region. The crocodile farm in Thakayta Industrial Zone Ward in Yangon Region located beside Nga Moe Yeik Creek has an area of 40 acres. Thaketa crocodile farm was established by the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development in 1978. In 1994-1995FY, it was run in co-operation with the Department of Fisheries in the process of conserving the crocodiles. On 6 November in 1997, Thaketa crocodile farm was transformed into a recreation camp and opened to the public. The crocodile farm is breeding 549 crocodiles ranging from one to 15 feet in length and there are also the crocodiles of about 40 years old.

One to three feet long crocodiles are kept in No 1 Pond and their age ranges from one to three. One year old crocodile is one foot long. Three years old and six feet long crocodiles are bred in No 3 Pond where there are more 100 crocodiles. More than five and six feet long crocodiles can be identified as males and females. April is the reproductive time of the crocodiles during which noises of crocodiles can be heard in the natural forests. Baby crocodiles coming out of eggs and three feet long crocodiles are being nurtured in No 1 Pond which is opened to the public. Three, five and six feet long crocodiles are being bred in No 3 Pond whose three staffs who are clever at the nature and behavior of the crocodiles explain salient points of the crocodiles to the visitors to the crocodile farm.

Termination of crocodile export

It was in 1978 that Campuchia presented three crocodiles to Myanmar in commemoration of the bilateral friendship. The then Kampuchea has today appeared as Cambodia and Laos. At the outset, these three crocodiles were temporarily kept in Danyingone and then the livestock duty was shifted to the Pearl and Fisheries of the Fisheries and Live-

A saltwater hatchling is seen at Thaketa Crocodile Farm in Yangon, Myanmar, Aug. 14, 2019. Of about 800 eggs laid in May this year, at least 250 eggs failed to hatch so far at the crocodile farm. **PHOTO : XINHUA**

A worker puts hatchlings in nursery unit at Thaketa Crocodile Farm in Yangon, Myanmar, Aug. 14, 2019. Of about 800 eggs laid in May this year, at least 250 eggs failed to hatch so far at the crocodile farm. **PHOTO : XINHUA**

stock Department. The Crocodile Breeding Unit started breeding the crocodiles beside Nga Moe Yeik creek in Thaketa. At the same time, small natural salt water crocodiles have been started breeding in Mainmahla Island in Bogale Township, Ayeyawady Region. In 1980, the small crocodiles came of age and the incubation of the crocodiles began in 1981-1982. In 1990, crocodiles were exported to Thailand and Singapore FOB (Free on Board) by US dollars. In 1994-1995, the Fisheries Department took responsibility for breeding the crocodiles following the termination of the export of crocodiles. At that time, border area peace and stability was under implementation. More than 100 crocodiles from the breeding farm were sent to the border areas of Kokang and Wa in order to carry out the breeding together with poultry and pig for the de-

odiles are seen at Thaketa Crocodile Farm in Yangon, Myanmar, Aug. 14, . Of about 800 eggs laid in May this year, at least 250 eggs failed to hatch so t the crocodile farm. **PHOTO : XINHUA**

velopment of border areas. Later, the crocodiles were not sold any more. Myanmar became a member of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) organized by the United Nations. The crocodile has not been exported until now. From 1997 Thaketa crocodile farm has become a camp of studying crocodile and going for recreation for the public.

Thaketa crocodile farm having an area of 40 acres experiences floods from June to August every year. During the previous rainy season, some brick walls collapsed as the water from Nga Moe Yeik Creek flowed into the crocodile farm without hinge. In cooperation with the local authorities, brick walls had to be renovated to prevent the crocodiles from leaving the ponds.

Saltwater crocodiles can live up to 100 years and the male is greater than the female in size. The average length of the male crocodile is 13 feet and that of the female one, 10 feet. The female crocodile comes of age when it is 8 feet in length. A female crocodile lays 20 to 70 eggs. When it is 90 days long, it is born of. The size of the baby crocodile at birth is 8 inches long. When it is one year old, it is one foot long. One remarkable point is that crocodile eggs hatch into males at the temperature of 30.6 degree centigrade. If there occurs fall and rise in temperature, eggs hatch into females. The saltwater crocodiles are the most hostile creatures and can live on land as well.

Saltwater crocodiles under conservation

Crocodylus porosus species saltwater crocodiles are being conserved in Thaketa crocodile farm and they lay eggs from April to June. These eggs have to be picked up in the natural forest and they have to be naturally covered with hays. The crocodile egg has to be put into the cork container which is covered with sawdust and coconut fibre dust and it is heated by electricity. It takes 90 days to get baby crocodiles. Crocodiles can't be identified as males or females when they are young. When they are seven or eight years old, they can be identified as males or females. Sex organs of the crocodiles usually change from one to six years. The crocodiles are being bred in Thaketa crocodile farm with the aims of ensuring longer existence of the crocodiles, becoming a site of relaxing and seeking knowledge for local and foreign travellers, ensuring public participation in the wildlife conservation, and conducting researches by the university students to seek knowledge. The crocodile species found in Myanmar are Crocodylus palustris, Crocodylus porosus, and Crocodylus siamensis.

The government is striving for ensuring longer existence of the wildlife. On the land measures to conserve wild elephants are being undertaken while the crocodiles living both on land and in water are being naturally bred in Mainmahla Island. Thaketa crocodile farm also is developing the conservation of crocodile generation for ensuring longer existence.

Translated by Htut Htut (Twantay)

Fighting COVID-19 together: Telenor and customers donate K70 mln to the National-Level Central Committee

TELENOR Myanmar on 22 July 2020, handed over a total of K70 million to the National-Level Central Committee for COVID-19 Prevention, Control and Treatment to use for the on-going fight against COVID-19. Telenor customers generously contributed over K5.7 million via SMS-enabled donation programme, an amount matched by over K60 million (K64.3 million) from Telenor Myanmar.

Sending repeated text messages to the SMS facility between 9 April and 30 June, Telenor customers showed their generosity and solidarity to tackle the challenge of COVID-19 "The people of Myanmar are known for their generosity and have proved it again through the SMS donation program.

It shows a strong sense of togetherness in the face of the COVID-19 situation, and we are proud to be able to be a helping hand to communities across the country when in need.

Telenor Myanmar remains committed to actively participate in relief assistance during national emergencies," said Hans Martin Høegh Henrichsen, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer at Telenor Myanmar.

Telenor Myanmar has been monitoring the COVID-19 situation actively since Myanmar saw its first COVID-19 patient in March, and has focused on helping communities stay safe, connected and empowered. Efforts include donating essential hygiene, sanitation, and medical supplies to 15 quarantine centres in Bago region and Mon state through the Network Activities Group (NAG) to keep those quarantined, health workers and visitors safe and to prevent further spread of the disease. Keeping quarantined citizens connected, Telenor Myanmar brought 25,000 SIM cards loaded with 1GB data to regional governments for distribution in relevant centers.

Telenor continues to offer relevant digital services from its one-stop digital platform MyTelenor, introducing services like Telenor Classroom (education) and Telenor Wellness (health/fitness).

Further towards education continuity, Telenor has provided free access to the Ministry of Education's MDEP website to basic education teachers and donated Department of Basic Education (DBE) learning resources (DBE box) to unconnected communities.

Committed to empowering societies, Telenor Myanmar remains actively involved in relief assistance during national emergencies. Since 2015 the company has provided more than K1 billion in humanitarian relief to affected communities as part of its corporate responsibility efforts.—Zin M Tun

PHOTO : SUPPLIED

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Myanmar football stars join ASEAN awareness campaign amid pandemic

THE Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and FIFA have recently launched a joint campaign featuring regional football stars, and two Myanmar young football stars Myat Noe Khin and Nanda Kyaw participated in the event.

The goal is to encourage citizens to be active, and live a healthy and active lifestyle amidst the COVID-19 outbreak.

The two Myanmar football stars said simultaneously in the campaign video that, "Hello we want everyone to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. And in order to achieve this, we need to be active. Whatever the circumstances, even rivals need to stick together. We have to keep our distance, but we do not lose our focus. We can strengthen our solidarity by being an active community, to help achieve the maximum health potential of the ASEAN people. Stay positive, stay strong. Let's go!"

William Ramirez, in his capacity as the Chair of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Sports also delivered speech in the campaign that, "The ASEAN sports sector is currently focusing, among others, on strengthening the contribution of sports to ASEAN community-building. During this pandemic, it is important for us to work hand in hand with our key partners. We are pleased to collaborate with FIFA in this campaign to leverage the role of sports in social development".

The campaign videos also mark the first initiative for ASEAN and FIFA since signing an agreement in November 2019 on the sidelines of the 35th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok to implement joint activities. —Lynn Thit (Tgi)

European football and survival up for grabs in Premier League finale

LONDON—The Premier League will finally reach the end of its longest season on Sunday with plenty still on the line at both ends of the table.

Manchester United and Leicester face each other in a shootout for a place in the Champions League next season with Chelsea also hoping to secure their place in the top four.

Wolves and Tottenham are vying for one place in the Europa League.

And at the bottom it could not be closer with one goal separating Aston Villa just outside the relegation zone from Watford in the bottom three, while Bournemouth also have a chance of beating the drop.

Champions League dreams

Leicester fell out of the top four for the first time since September in midweek after a run of three wins in 13 games either side of the coronavirus shutdown.

However, United's and Chelsea's failures to win on Wednesday means the door is still open for Brendan Rodgers's men to salvage all the good work they did early in the season with victory on home soil on Sunday.

Leicester are hampered by injuries to James Maddison, Ben Chilwell and Ricardo Pereira, but have had a full week to prepare in stark contrast to United's packed schedule.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's men have looked jaded in the past week in losing 3-1 to Chelsea in the FA Cup semi-finals and being held 1-1 at home by West Ham.

United have overturned an eight-point deficit to Leicester since the restart, but Rodgers is hoping it is the Red Devils who fold under the pressure.—AFP ■

Manchester United and Chelsea are aiming to seal their place in next season's Champions League on Sunday **(AFP PHOTO/ANDY RAIN)**

Switzerland's Attorney General Michael Lauber has resigned over 'secret' meetings with FIFA boss Gianni Infantino. **AFP/FABRICE COFFRINI**

Swiss legal chief quits amid FIFA controversy

GENEVA—Switzerland's top prosecutor resigned Friday (Jul 24) following a drawn-out controversy over his handling of a corruption investigation targeting FIFA, but continued to deny accusations he lied.

Attorney-General Michael Lauber, suspected of collusion with FIFA chief Gianni Infantino following a series of secret meetings in 2016 and 2017, said in a statement he was resigning "in the interest of the institution". The 54-year-old prosecutor was in charge of Switzerland's probe into the towering corruption scandal that exploded at the heart of world football's governing body in 2015.

The scandal erupted when Swiss police in May that year swarmed the plush Baur au Lac hotel in Zurich before dawn, arresting a number of top football officials.

The Swiss judiciary under Lauber quickly opened criminal proceedings against then-FIFA president Sepp Blatter and other top officials.

But the top prosecutor was forced to recuse himself from the investigation in June 2019, following media revelations he had held several undeclared meetings with Infantino during the course of the probe.—AFP ■

Neymar wins French Cup final for PSG but Mbappe suffers ankle injury

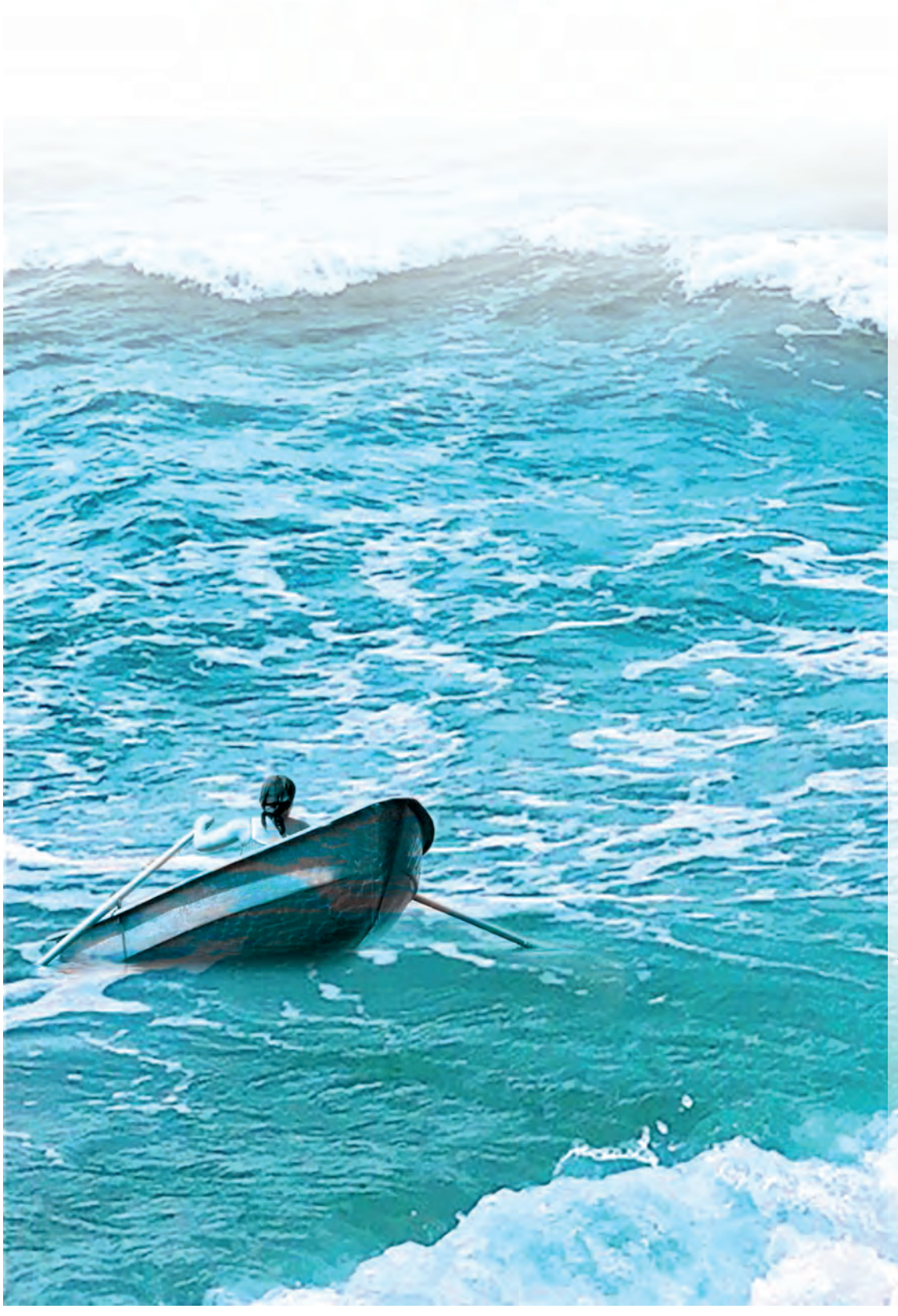
PARIS —Neymar scored the winning goal as Paris Saint-Germain defeated 10-man Saint-Etienne 1-0 in the French Cup final on Friday (Jul 24), the first competitive fixture in the country since March 11 following the coronavirus pandemic.However, coach Thomas Tuchel faces an anxious wait over the fitness of Kylian Mbappe ahead of next month's Champions League quarter-final after the France star limped off during the first half with an ankle injury.The World Cup winner was later seen in the tunnel on crutches.PSG secured the first of a potential three trophies this summer, added a record-extending 13th French Cup to their list of honours with the League Cup final against Lyon to come next Friday before the resumption of their European campaign in Portugal.The final at the Stade de France was the first official match in one of Europe's top football nations to allow fans to attend since March, albeit in severely restricted numbers with just 2,805 spectators -- including President Emmanuel Macron - inside the 80,000-seater venue.—AFP ■

SUNDAY SPECIAL

The Global New Light of Myanmar

The Little BOAT

By Angel Linn
M.Ed, Y.I.O.E



WITH a violent wind from the south and the ebbed tide, in the surging river, there are crested waves with whitish heads and the waves of choppy sea. There a little boat in the middle of the river is rolling and tossing. The boat owner has difficulty to steer his upset boat, going almost crazy.

By the time the tide ebbs, a long mud flat appears on either side of the river. Upon the brownish mud flat, the little white egret can be seen. It stands on one of its legs, placing the other under the wing. The sweet sound of some little birds singing monotonously can be heard again, which might make you yearn for someone dear to you. The sound of the current running with a roar is just the song of the tide fall. In the mid-river is drifting the little boat. It looks so tired.

There the Hyacinth is coming home by downstream, proudly waving its flowers and saying goodbye. In the middle of the waterway, the boat owner looks so tired to go upstream against the rough ebbing tide.

The boat has to avoid the whirl pool. The oar is small too. However, the boat owner must carry out his best effort to cover his way. Since the night is falling ...

Each of us is to travel the route of life. Life may not always be smooth or rough and you may or may not reach your goal. Though the journey is upstream, there are those who can conveniently pass in their own ways. Even a journey of downstream, there are those who cannot go safe and sound. The travelers with same destination...; the travelers of opposite destination..., in a given situation, have to head on such a certain journey. No matter what situation it may be, there must and should be a destination. We all hope our little boat may reach its destination before the sun disappears, rowing as hard as we can, murmuring to ourselves, "Oh, little Village, you are not so far away, are you?"

Mother's Little Mosquito Net

By Maung Nyein Lu

I have a little mosquito net of fine cotton. It was a gift from my seventy-year-old mother. I took it along when I left my hometown for Yangon to attend the university. I was, then, what you might call "a young country bumpkin". So, on my first arrival to this cosmopolitan city, everything appeared to me in colourful rays of wonder and excitement.

I stay at a private hostel in Yoma Avenue near Yangon Institute of Economics. My single hostel room, partitioned with bamboo mattings, looking dark and brown with oil dregs, is 10 x 10 feet wide. Only a few facilities: a bed, a study table and a chair. My study table is almost packed with books in jumble order, a small bundle of letters from my old mother, and a flower vase with brushes thrusted inside; under the table, a cardboard box containing paint tubes. A small yellow light bulb dangling from the ceiling sheds rays on a pencil sketch of my old mother (A 4 size), clipped on the bamboo matting. In the shadowy corner of the room stands a blank canvas.

In fact, you might categorize me as a neat freak because I really wish my room would be spick-and-span always. Yet bad habits are strongly rooted, you know. My room is neat and tidy today, and turns out to be all in a mess on the following day. Another incorrigible habit of mine is this: you might accuse me of being a slob because, every morning, before I get up from bed, first my sleepy head pops out of the mosquito net, and I doze off a few minutes, breathing in the fresh morning air, and it's only at the last minute that I pull my whole body out of the bed. Worse than this, I never fold up the hem of the mosquito net over the canopy frame, but just let it drape over my bed all year round.

1986

As a university student, I met a girl. Her name is 'K'. I was then a fourth year English specialization student. I still remember the evening when I first met 'K'. It was raining hard. I was walking along the Bagan Road on my way back to my hostel. The road was deserted because of the heavy rain. There, a young lady, her black, long hair falling down to her waist, was walking, all alone, in the same direction, with no umbrella, no rain coat. Crazy! Does she think the full moon is shining above her head? She should run for shelter under a big, shady tree and wait until it ceased raining. She was dressed in red one set. A red porcelain doll glistening in the rain. You are so beautiful! You've mesmerized my heart!

I was then walking a bit fast, and at last, caught her steps. Unaware, without asking for her permission, I was holding my umbrella above her head. Crazy me! Because her whole body was already wet, drenched like a drowned rat!

I introduced myself to her. I made friends with her. She said her name was 'K'. I took a close look at her face. Is it teardrops or raindrops rolling down her cheeks? My heart sank. I later learned from bits by bits of information that she was a second-year student, specializing the same subject as mine. I was pleased to hear that Miss 'K' was my junior. We walked side by side along the Bagan Road, wet and shiny in the rain. Because the wanton wind was blowing now and then, I had got the lower part of my Paso wet. I accompanied her to her hall, which was Ta-Gaung Hall. Before we parted, I offered her my free service of helping her in her studies, if she needed my help. I found myself standing there under the portico of the hall till she ran into her room. And I left.

On the following morning, I was hanging around near the lecture room of the second year English specialization. But I saw no sign of 'K' that day. I was worried.

In the evening, I made a hall visit to the Ta-Gaung Hall. Out came K's roommate. She informed me 'K' had fallen sick. From that day on, every evening I paid a visit to 'K'. We sat on a bench in front of the hall, and had a chat. Frankly speaking, five years ago, my heart received the first cut, the deepest cut in my life, from my first love. And I had bitterly turned my back to Love, and buried myself in books and painting. Mine had since then been a lonely heart until I met 'K', and a new heart was born for Love. As for 'K', hers was a broken heart that needed some time for mending. But both of us felt we had now found ourselves attached to one another.

By and by I made friends with K's roommate. So, 'K' and her roommate, as well as other friends, often made a visit to my hostel at weekends. We discussed the lecture notes. I entertained them with snacks in my room. There 'K' would blurt out, "Ko, you are really a mess." And she put my books on the study table back to order, neatly placed the paint tubes in the cardboard box, and the brushes in the flower vase, and she swept the wooden floor clean and shiny. Sitting on my bed, I was very much pleased to observe her tidying my room. Then, she folded the hems of my mosquito net neatly over the canopy frame. She smiled when I told her about how much I love and value this mosquito net, a gift from my old mother.

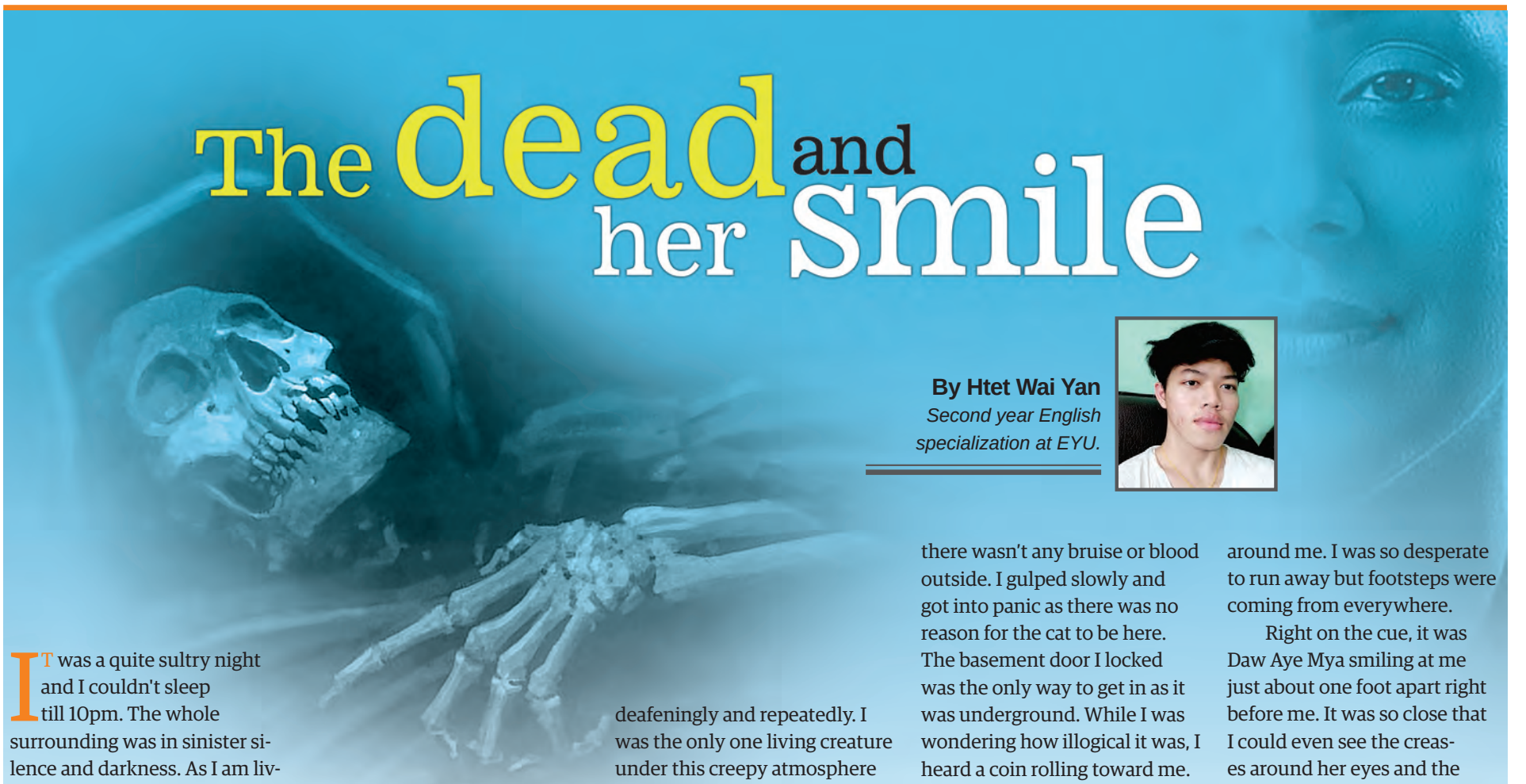
Quietly, she took a close look at the sketch of my old mother on the wall. She blushed when I cracked a joke, saying, "You know, this mosquito net is a gift from your future mother-in-law." She'd then retort, "You're a sentimental guy. I don't like you." And her friends laughed. Ah, those were the days!

Often did she come and clean my room, but two or three days later, my room always ended up in a mess, as usual. My books lay scattered on the study table, like the debris of a detonated building. Paint tubes, brushes, my bulging, red Shan bag, crumbled papers and an empty trash bin on the floor, like a jumbled-up composition of a collage painting. There, on the wall, was hung an acrylic painting (3 x 4 feet), depicting the figure of a waiting pregnant mother on a beach and a little empty earthen pot beside her. I was then working on a series of paintings on the subject of a pregnant mother and an earthen water pot: to me, a pregnant mother and an earthen pot, each carries symbolic meanings of hope, fertility and fragility.

"K," I said, tentatively, "can I ... can I draw a portrait of you?" I always feared she might get angry with me. "Some day," she replied, in a blush.

SEE PAGE-S-3

The dead and her smile



By Htet Wai Yan
Second year English specialization at EYU.

IT was a quite sultry night and I couldn't sleep till 10pm. The whole surrounding was in sinister silence and darkness. As I am living in a rural area remote from the capital, the power supply is cut at 9 pm every night due to diminished electricity.

Before the complete silence made me drowsy, a ghastly stink intervened in my sleep. I had to find out where the smell came from and deal with that mess so that I could have sound sleep.

I came downstairs, gripping the rail not to fall over and ransacked near the refectory and all around. But I still couldn't find where. I started to tremble when the smell got more intense near the basement I hadn't opened for about 5 weeks. I pulled myself together and opened the basement with the key. I could barely see in the refectory with the moonlight but the basement was completely dark as if my eyes got blind.

Staring through this dark from the doorstep made me cringe and I got big prickle of fear when I remembered tomorrow would be the Yet Le (seventh day after death) of my late neighbour Daw Aye Mya, who was my mom's acquaintance. I was bereft of courage because of the ominous dogs howling deafeningly and repeatedly. I was the only one living creature under this creepy atmosphere as my mom wasn't at home. I started to wince. But as I'm 18years old boy, it would be absurd to fear just because of the unknown stink coming from the basement.

I lit the candle and decided not to screw up anymore.

I went down the stairs and the stairs creaked slowly as it was quite dilapidated. The candle light was too weak to see everything but only about one foot right before me. I found a black cat there. I had seen it before. It came from Daw Aye Mya's compound through laurel hedge. It was dead although there wasn't any bruise or blood outside. I gulped slowly and got into panic as there was no reason for the cat to be here. The basement door I locked was the only way to get in as it was underground. While I was wondering how illogical it was, I heard a coin rolling toward me. It was quite sticky with some saliva. All of a sudden, I was thrown into a frenzy. That coin was the ferry toll, 'Gadaw ga' coin I put into Daw Aye Mya's mouth according to the Myanmar burial ritual.

Before I decided to run to the door, I clearly heard footsteps wearing clogs. Unfortunately, no one in our town wore clogs but Daw Aye Mya. I couldn't see her face in the dark but I was pretty sure who she was. She rushed down the stairs and came into darkness. I couldn't know where she was as I could only see about 1 foot around me. I was so desperate to run away but footsteps were coming from everywhere.

Right on the cue, it was Daw Aye Mya smiling at me just about one foot apart right before me. It was so close that I could even see the creases around her eyes and the individual wisp of hair hung from the bun at her forehead. I didn't know what would happen next as she stunned me. And I woke up in my bed. I told everyone about that night but they imputed me as if I was hallucinating. I also accepted it and thought it might be a nightmare as there was no black cat when I checked again. Before I tried to quench my fear as if it was an illusion or a frightful nightmare, to my horror, I found a coin in my pocket, still drenched with saliva.

Mother's Little Mosquito Net

FROM PAGE-S-2

But where is my 'K' now? That 'Some day' never came to me. There, in a shadowy corner of my small room, a blank canvas has been hiding_ for years. Her portrait in my heart, awaiting my final brush stroke, was cherished so much so that it has remained only in my dreams only.

The raindrops falling from the leaves
Makes my heart break down
Gathering all the times I draw you out
I guess you call it longing
I don't think I can get through the long night without you
Did I leave you here because I just can't erase you? ...
Chen (Exo)'s Portrait of You

1988

Our country was like a poor little boat tossed at sea in the storms. A newly appointed tutor in Yangon University, I found myself caught in the high tempo of the political turmoil. I joined the movement of the Artists' Union. I made contributions in raising the fund of the Union, holding the Union's weekly journals in my arm, and selling them in the corners of the Hlè-Tan Market in a sing-song manner.

The 8888 uprising had torn hundreds of lives apart. The warm, sinewy hands I had held tight throughout the movement were now blown away.

'K', my dear 'K', was also blown away to nowhere amid the chaos and turmoil. She never comes back to me. Nevermore.

A pot that has broken into pieces will never be restored its former shape and texture, you know. Some people believe Time remedies the wounds, but I am sure this deep cut within me can never be healed. My messy room remains messy forever, a self-portrait of this broken heart. Whenever I am in low spirits, I, once again, read the letters from my old mother (How many times have I gone over these old letters?). Very often, I find myself lying inside Mother's little mosquito net, and I feel my mental wound is a little bit healed.

My dear 'K' has left me, without having a chance to say goodbye. Since then, Life has been getting more and more complicated.

These days, however, I often feel embarrassed to have witnessed some people who are too much dogmatic politically. Why don't they join hands in the nation building process? Why do they ignore the glaring Truth? Why do they even try to blemish the Truth? These baffling questions finding no answer finally drive me here inside this Mother's little mosquito net. Thus, to me, this little mosquito net, which has not been laundered for years and which has been draped over my bed for ages, has become a work of performance art reflecting the present state of our country.

These days my small room has been laden with grey, heavy clouds of thoughts. I often find myself staying in Mother's little mosquito net. I heave a heavy sigh. Then I lie on my back in bed, half naked, pulling my Paso over my bare chest, staring at the white canopy of the mosquito net, on which the portrait of 'K' appeared like developing a negative. Gradually my pent-up emotions subside. And I feel safe and secure. Then I find myself floating like a silver cloud in the white void of space. Here, in this mosquito net, like a caterpillar inside a silky cocoon, transforming its body to eventually emerge as a butterfly, I've found my private cocoon. Here, inside, I could find the warmth of love, and the solace of the mind. Here, in this little mosquito net, I often take a short break from the real world until I feel I have revived once again, strong enough to go out into the harsh realities.

You know, in our lifetime, we sometimes need a private corner to take a break from our daily routines until the time comes for our mental re-awakening, do we?

Here, on this earth, a heartbroken soul still lives, who sometimes hides himself, like an escapist, in his mother's cocoon-like, little mosquito net. Nobody knows his existence, nobody sees his tears.

26 JULY 2020
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Kaung Mu daw pagoda

Shwe Sandaw Pagoda

A visit to Toungoo

By Maung Maung Aye

AT 11:43 a.m, our car which left Yangon at 7:30 a.m veered from Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw highway into the road leading to Toungoo. It was a 9-mile concrete road lined with shady Kukko trees. Behind the Kukko trees were greenery pea-plantations, some irrigated fields and some freshly ploughed for growing seasonal vegetables. Some clumps of toddy-palm trees were scattered higgledy-piggledy in the fields. I saw some rickety thatch-roofed bamboo-stalls which sold toddy-juice on the road-side. I also found a donation-collecting marquee with some young girls holding tin-bowls in front. When our car went past the marquee, one of the girls ran after us. So I put a one-thousand kyat note into her bowl. I glanced towards Toungoo looming up some distance ahead and saw a medley of roofs among thick foliage of green trees with glittering pagodas towering above them.

Soon, I espied Toungoo University in a large shady campus on the right-side of the road. We dropped in on my elder sister who was posted as an administrative officer at the university for some minutes. At about noon, we came to Kyun-pat road (Road which skirts round the moat), which was the city-circular road of Toungoo. We found large channels on the side of this road. It is said that these channels were the moats which surrounded the city-walls of Ketumati Toungoo. To my knowledge, ' Ketumati' is a Pali word which means ' Possessor of banner'. This city was the capital of the Second Myanmar Empire. It was built by Mingyi Nyo in A.D 1510. He was succeeded by his son Tabinshwehti. When Tabinshwehti was assassinated by a Mon minister, his brother-in-law Kyaw Htin Nawratha acceded to the throne of Toungoo . He was better known as Bayintnaung and could establish dominance over some neighboring countries. During his reign, Myanmar power reached its zenith and Myanmar territory was the largest. Local chronicles also say that, before Ketumati Toungoo, towns such as Toungoo Nge, Toungoo Gyi, Myawadi and Dvaravati had emerged in its neighborhood.

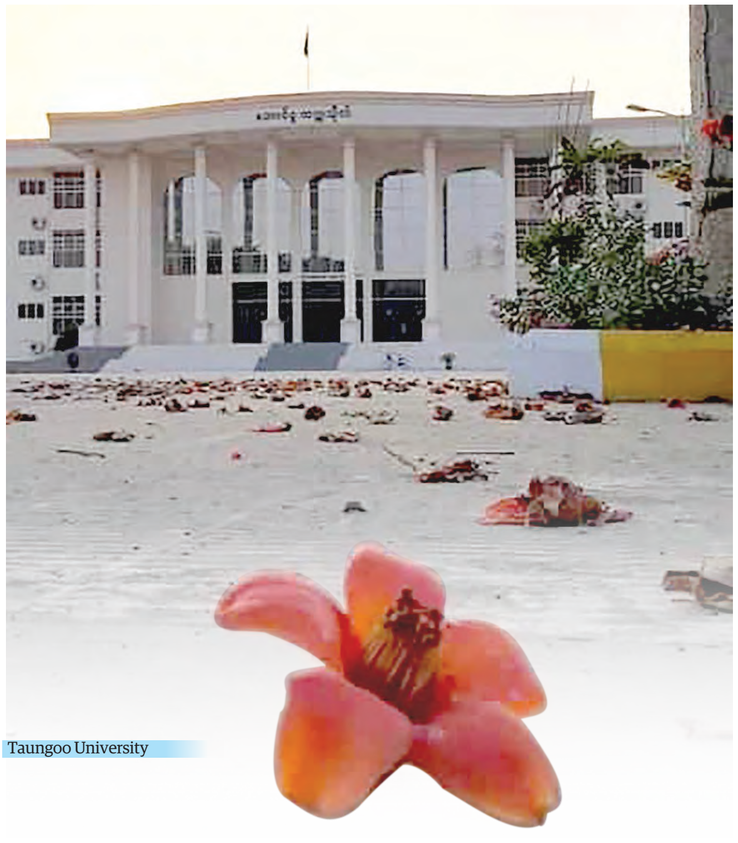
Our car weaved through the maze of roads and streets. As Toungoo was an ancient town,we felt the whole town wrapped in a sort of mysterious air.We also found some main-roads lined with large, shady perennial trees, providing coolness to the whole town. Toungoo was a blend of old and new looks.Some ancient buildings, especially pagodas and other religious structures, were found amongst modern buildings like supermarkets, hotels, restaurants, guest-houses, hospitals, offices, etc. This suggested that Buddhism would have thrived in Toungoo during its hey day and reminded us of undying glory of powerful Toungoo kings.

At about 1 p.m, we made a brief stop at "Laik" Restaurant in downtown Toungoo for lunch. As it is crammed with many people, we had to stand for some time to get a vacant table. Then we had lunch hastily and visited the Kandaw Gyi (Royal Lake) Park across it. The Kandaw Gyi was an ancient lake with a wide expanse of green water surrounded by bunds studded with shady tall trees. We saw many picnickers having lunch under the trees, some posing for photographs and a few lovers having tete-a-tete sitting on benches in the far corners of the park. I learnt from a local that the residential quarter next to the Kandaw Gyi was called ' Rakhine-su' meaning ' Unit of Rakhines' because it was the place where Rakhine soldiers of King Minrajagyi (AD 1593-1612) who came to Toungoo at the request of King Min Ye Thiha Thu to attack Hamsavati in alliance with him in A.D1599 encamped.

At about 1:30 p.m, we proceeded to the Shwe Sandaw Pagoda in downtown Toungoo. It was a ten-minute drive from the Kandaw Gyi. The roads were sheltered by large shady trees. Many people were plying to and fro on bicycles and motor-cycles. When we reached the pagoda, we found some pilgrimage-buses parked in front of the cause-way leading to the pagoda-platform. We paid homage to the pagoda and Buddha images housed in the shrine-rooms. Then we donated some cash to the members of the pagoda trustee-ship board. We saw some pilgrims paying homage to the Buddha images, some offering flowers and joss-sticks and some walking clockwise around the base of the pagoda. It is said this ancient pagoda was 120 cubits high and built by King Thihasur-amahadhammaraja in A.D1578 and a Buddha's hair-relic sent by Sinhalese King Dhammapala to King Bayintnaung was enshrined in it.

Then we went on to the Kaungmhudaw Pagoda on the outskirts of Toungoo, making a detour round busy parts of the town.. It is an ancient wish-fulfilled pagoda built by King Bayintnaung in A.D1551. It is said that he treaded the victorious ground (ဧကာင်ခရမြုန်း) inside its precincts just before his going on the military expedition to Pyi in A.D 1551 and that he, therefore, seized Pyi with ease. When we came to that pagoda, we saw a file of people walking round the statue of King Bayintnaung erected in the north-eastern corner of the precincts. When I asked a pilgrim about the reason, I was replied that they were treading the victorious ground so that their prayers would be answered. So we joined them and walked round the statue.When we left the Kaungmhudaw Pagoda, it was already 3 p.m. So we, in spite of wanting to visit other ancient sites, had to abandon our desire and started on our home-bound trip.

In conclusion, it is found that Toungoo is a pleasant, thriving district-city located in a wide fertile plain bolstered up by the Paunglaung river to the east, the Khabaung river to the south, the Pan-be creek to the west and the Swar creek to the north. Besides, it is a hub of transport between Lower Myanmar and Upper Myanmar and dotted with many ancient buildings such as pagodas, ordination-halls, moats, ruined city-walls, colonial buildings like offices, monasteries, temples, mosques, etc. Moreover, it is a stop-over on the way to Thandaung Gyi, a hilly station where holiday-makers and tourists can enjoy a cloud-sea, cool weather and other beautiful countrified scenes. Therefore, the author think that if the ancient sites in and round Toungoo are to be exposed and preserved the original style, it will surely be a high potential for tourism.


Taungoo University

Gulf of Mottama hosts rare spoon-billed sandpipers Calidris pygmaea in winter

MYANMAR'S total bird species are around 1,114, including new species found within the late five years from 2010 to 2014. Forty-nine are in danger of extinction. A conservation of Spoon-billed Sandpipers (Eurynorhynchus pygmeus), a small wader and critically endangered, has been carried out in Mottama Gulf.

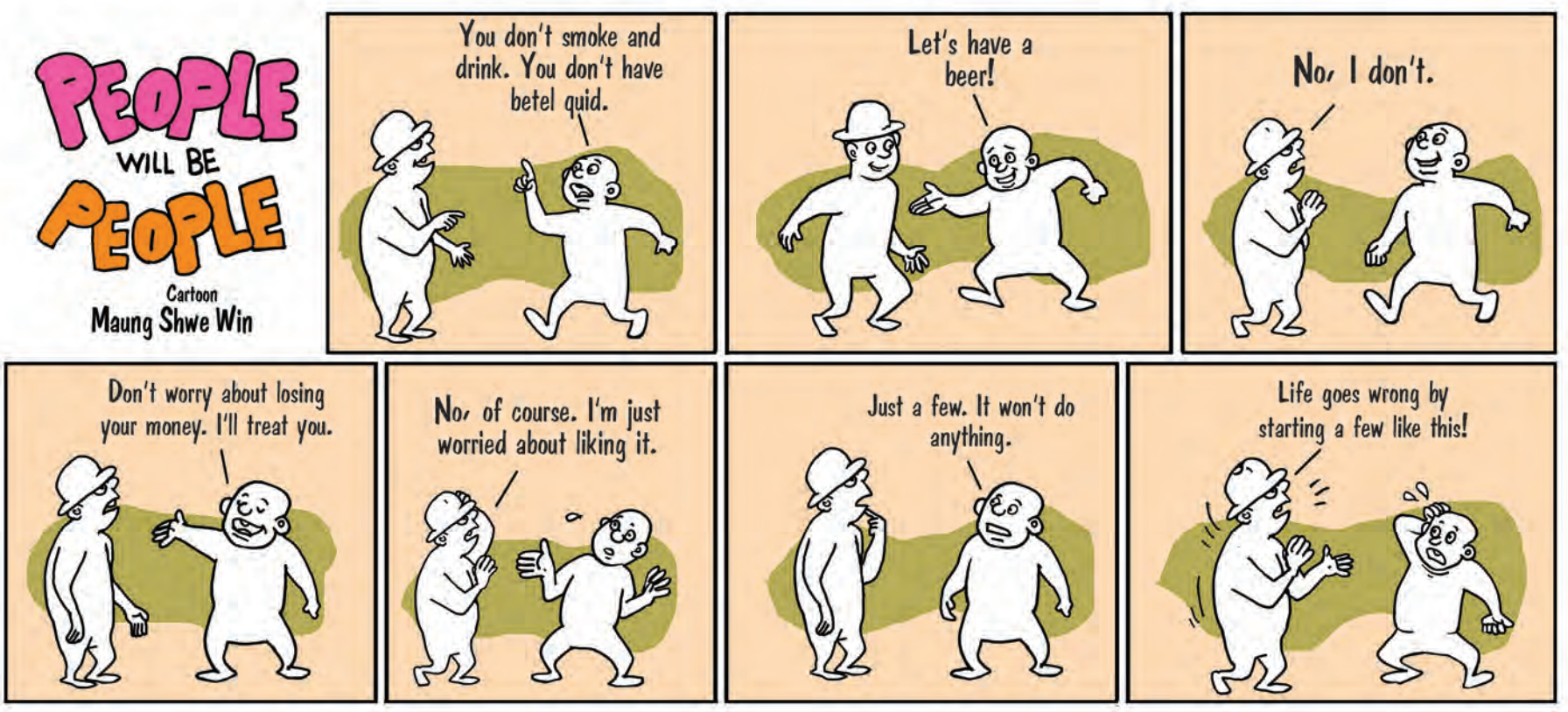
The spoon-billed sandpiper Calidris pygmaea, a migratory Arctic-breeding shorebird, is one of the rarest birds and its population has declined since 1970s.

The total number of small shorebirds present in the Upper Gulf was counted and the proportion of them that were spoon-billed sandpipers was estimated from sample scans. These two quantities were multiplied together to give the estimated number of spoon-billed sandpipers in each of 4 years. Total numbers of combined small shorebird species tripled from 21,000 to 63,000 between 2009 and 2016, coincident with efforts to reduce hunting pressure on waterbirds. However, the proportion of small shorebirds that was spoon-billed sandpipers declined and their estimated absolute numbers fell by about half, from 244 to 112 individuals. It is probable that loss of intertidal habitat and shorebird hunting elsewhere on the migration route of the spoon-billed sandpipers wintering at Mottama is causing a continued decline, although this is occurring at a less rapid rate than that recorded from Arctic Russia before 2010. The number of spoon-billed sandpipers wintering on the Upper Gulf of Mottama remains the highest single-site total for this species from any known wintering site. Preventing resurgence of illegal shorebird hunting and ensuring long-term protection of the intertidal feeding habitats and roost sites in the Gulf are high priorities if extinction of this species is to be averted.

By GNLM

Photo Credit: Birdlife International

SUNDAY COMICS



Behind the textbooks

By Edu Lin
B.Ed, S.I.O.E

ONCE, I happened to get to a private school whose founder is my intimate friend. I found him beside the pile of paintings and some of his teachers were sitting before him. He distributes two or three paintings and told the teachers to hang them onto the walls of their classes and to create a beautiful atmosphere. He added them to place the pupils among the beauties. He used the word 'concealed curriculum' meaning while the students are learning their prescribed textbooks, they get some knowledge given by the atmosphere where they are present.

It is just a creation in which the students will see the beauties; they will like them and they will appreciate them as much as they could.

Then, I got to a school whose name includes the word 'International' and made the emphasized teaching in the English language. I found somewhere a large boot-shelf with numerous small partitions to put boots for each child. The children had to put their boots into their respective partition. Outside of some classrooms, I found the potted plants labeled with the names of the respective children. They had to take care of their plants and water them daily on weekdays. It is just to love nature, to nurture it, and to take responsibility that one has to perform.

It is also a slight mental-pollination from the atmosphere where they got to.

I was invited to an international school last year to see their concert. I found the children's performances and imitations on the little stage without fear. I assumed it is also an additional co-teaching of the necessary things that were behind the curriculum but would be surely useful to them one day. Therefore, it might be called the 'concealed curriculum'.

'A Concealed Curriculum can be defined as the lessons that are taught informally, and usually, unintentionally, in a school system. These include behaviors, perspectives, and attitudes that students pick up while they're at school'.

Not to place arms akimbo while speaking to the adults, not to giggle one's knees while doing the mathematic sums, not to frequently put one's hand into the nose, how to assume to those who do not water their plants; how to assume to those who do not place their boots on the respective places; how to assume to those who tease the one who has a walleye; how to assume to those who denounce the handicapped one; ...

Such above practices are the concealed curriculum that the children can be obtained from school since young. In other words, 'The concealed curriculum begins early in a child's education. Students learn to form opinions and ideas about their environment and their classmates'.

It is known that there are some private schools and colleges in Myanmar that widen the atmosphere of the concealed curriculum and teach the students. They nurture them to form their knowledge about gender, moral conduct, social classes, stereotypes, cultural expectation, politics, language, etc. In every nation, there are many concealed curriculums besides their regular ones. They often shape their citizens' mindsets and opinions.

Two plus three is equal to five. This is a transparent and regular curriculum. However, behind making the one get five by adding two jasmines and three roses or two dead bodies shot by the gun and three dead ones exploded by the hand grenade, loving-kindness and cruelty will certainly be present behind them.

While studies on the concealed curriculum mostly focus on fundamental primary and secondary education, higher education also feels the effects of this latent knowledge. For example, gender biases become present in specific

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fields of study; the quality of and experiences associated with prior education become more significant; and class, gender, and race become more evident at higher levels of education.

One additional aspect of the concealed curriculum that plays a major part in the development of students and their fates is tracking. This method of imposing educational and career paths upon students at young ages relies on various factors such as class and status to reinforce socioeconomic differences. Children tend to be placed on tracks guiding them towards socioeconomic occupations similar to that of their parents, without real considerations for their strengths and weaknesses. As students advance through the educational system, they follow along their tracks by completing the predetermined courses. For example, this is one of the main factors limiting social mobility in some developed countries today.

In my personal opinion, every teacher in Myanmar should also take notice of the concealed curriculum consequences and gently apply them in their daily teaching activities.

By Sahil Palbabu
Grade 8 Student,
ILBC (International Language and Business Centre)

Rainbow

A multicoloured rainbow appears in my sight,
Brightening my day and giving me delight
It stays very high, higher than a kite,
I thought I could touch it by taking a flight.

Beautiful colours beautiful light,
Graceful rain, being very polite

When the clouds threw down theirs spears of rain,
They watered the Earth with their tears of pain
But without the rainbow it's as lame as a grain,
Since it won't even be able to cross the wall of the plains.

Seven colours, even for a short span,
How to spread smile, I want to learn
Continue sign and continue your aim,
Leave with good maintaining its fame.

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