LET'S STAMP OUT MISINFORMATION OR SUPPRESS THE INFODEMIC! PAGE-8 (OPINION)

NATIONAL
Commerce Minister holds retail, wholesale trading forum
PAGE-2

NATIONAL
Two killed, one injured by landmine in Rakhine
PAGE-5

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor "Myanmar-Japan Investment Dialogue on Economic Recovery after COVID-19 and New Investment Opportunities" Keynote Speech

29 JULY 2020

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

It is a pleasure to deliver this keynote address and to welcome all those who have joined us today, senior government officials as well as many hundreds of investors and businesspeople.

I believe that all of us are united in the determination to make an indelible contribution to the emergence of a more prosperous, more peaceful and more democratic Myanmar.

Today we connect via undersea cable and satellite, but we are bound by a force much deeper and more enduring – a bond of history.

Our contemporary diplomatic ties reach back across a number of decades but actually, Myanmar-Japan relations span centuries.

Historians have yet to establish exactly when the first contact between our nations occurred. Some surmise it may have been as early as the early 16th century, a time of exploration and rapid expansion in global trade, as markets and trading routes emerged connecting continents from Asia to the Americas.

As goods, people and ideas spread, it is entirely plausible that traders from Myanmar would have made their way across the seas to Japan. We do know that Japanese samurai warriors were once present in Mrauk-U, forming a trusted contingent of the Arakanese king's bodyguard.

Our shared history has forged close bilateral bonds stronger than tama-hagane.

We harbour warm sentiments of trust and appreciation for the Government and the people of Japan for your fair, balanced and constructive engagement throughout the years following our independence, until today.

Japan has maintained a welcome presence in Myanmar, and in the hearts and minds of Myanmar's people due to your unwavering, social, economic, and I would say, moral support throughout the years.

SEE PAGE-3

Govt, NCA-S EAOs negotiate for possible bilateral peace talks

REPRESENTATIVES from the Government and Ethnic Armed Organizations Signatories of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement held a negotiation meeting at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

NRPC Vice-Chairman and Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo made an opening remark at the meeting, saying that the UPDJC and JMC meetings play crucial role in peace making process.

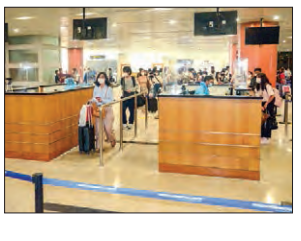
He added the government and NCA-S EAOs have made agreements in the six meetings for implementing JICM agreements,

SEE PAGE-5

The negotiation meeting between Government and NCA-S EAOs is in progress at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre in Nay Pyi Taw on 1 August 2020. **PHOTO: KO HTEIN**

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL
172 Myanmar nationals return home from Japan on 1 August
PAGE-2



NATIONAL
440 Myanmar migrant workers return home via Myawady border
PAGE-5

LOCAL NEWS
Over 7,000 acres put under GAP cultivation of multi-crops in Sagaing region
PAGE-6

"People are the key"

Commerce Minister holds retail, wholesale trading forum

THE retail and wholesale trading forum was held at the office of UMFCCI yesterday morning.

Firstly, Union Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint said the forum was organized to achieve good potentials for retail and wholesale trading sector in the post COVID-19 period by coordinating with those participating in these sectors as the providers of the whole supply chain in retail and wholesale businesses are facing difficulties during COVID-19 pandemic and the demand is also decreasing.

The government released COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP) and under this goal, it includes promoting innovative products to ease the hardships of businesspeople and it is also cooperating with the relevant departments and organizations for the future plans, he added.

The Union Minister continued that the retailers and wholesalers should discuss their suggestions, programmes and practical support to solve their difficulties and for the development of retail and wholesale businesses.

Afterwards, Deputy Minister U Aung Htoo, UMFCCI President U Zaw Min Win, officials of departments concerned, experts, relevant organizations members, retailers and wholesalers participated in the discussion under four topics—opportunities and challenging in conducting innovative retail and wholesale businesses, chances and challenges that the foreign and Myanmar businesspeople face while they are cooperating with the foreign businesspeople, suggestions and good points and weak points in conducting the businesses in line with the supportive programmes, policies and procedures for retail and wholesale businesses.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

Union Minister Dr Than Myint stresses retail and wholesale trading matters during the fourm held at the UMFCCI on 1 August 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

Myanmar returnees from Japan queuing for their immigration process at the Yangon International Airport on 1 August 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

172 Myanmar nationals return home from Japan on 1 August

A total of 172 Myanmar nationals flied back home from Japan yesterday.

All Nippon Airways (ANA)'s relief flight carrying the Myanmar citizens from Narita International Airport in Japan landed at the Yangon International Airport at 5 pm.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Yangon Region government provided the returnees with proper medical checks and arranged 21-day quarantine for them.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been working with Myanmar embassies in foreign countries and local ministries concerned to bring back citizens stranded abroad due to the suspension of international commercial flights, in accordance with the guidance of the National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19. A total of 546 Myanmar citizens from Japan have been brought back home to date.

This is third batch of repatriating Myanmar citizens from Japan. Fourth batch is scheduled to be repatriated on 6 August. — MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

No new case of COVID-19 reported in Myanmar on 1 August, total figure remains at 353

Updated at 8 pm, 1 August 2020

Total Cases	New Case	Total Death Tally
353	0	6

Recovery Update on 1 August 2020 after two consecutive tests

Total Recovery	New Recovery	Discharged from Hospital
297	1	281

New Persons under Investigation from the past 24 hours to 12 noon of 1 August 2020

New PUIs
17

Ministry of Health and Sports

Elections are the main pillar for supporting democracy.

2020 MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY GENERAL ELECTION

UNION ELECTION COMMISSION MYANMAR

The General Election will be held on 8 November 2020.

- Union Election Commission has announced the first edition of eligible voter lists at local offices of the commission in respective wards/village-tracts, in the villages from 25 July 2020 to 7 November 2020.
- If the name of any eligible voter is not included in the list, voter registration can be requested by filling in Form 3.
- Objection can be filed against any ineligible voter in the list by using Form 4.
- Correction for voter list can be requested by using Form 4 (c)
- Voters can cast their votes only if their names are included in the voters list.
- Cooperation is requested for at least one member of each family to check their names without fail to ensure a complete and correct voters list.
- Check the voters lists not to lose voting rights by filling up discrepancies, deleting and making corrections.

2020
General Election
Sunday, 8 November 2020
DAYS
99

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor "Myanmar-Japan Investment Dialogue on Economic Recovery after COVID-19 and New Investment Opportunities" Keynote Speech

FROM PAGE-1

His Excellency Ambassador Maruyama last year described the affinity between our two countries as one based on shared understandings. For example, 'arnarde', a Myanmar term which emphasises consideration for others, closely corresponds to the Japanese concept of '*enryō*' – a subtle blend of thoughtfulness, discretion and tact.

Common understandings such as these will continue to help both countries to overcome any challenge that we may have to face.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

Since 2011, Japanese investment in Myanmar has exceeded US$1.7 billion. With continued people-to-people engagement made possible by this investment, today anime', Japanese cuisine, and many other aspects of Japanese culture are enjoying a wave of popularity in Myanmar, particularly amongst our youth.

We have seen a sharp rise in Japanese language learning. Our commercial capital Yangon now hosts over 300 Japanese language schools, and the number of individuals taking Japanese Language Proficiency Tests is increasing at a rate of 50 per annum.

In Myanmar today, you will find a workforce familiar with Japanese culture and responsive to the needs of Japanese firms.

A 2017 opinion poll conducted by Japan's own Ministry of Foreign Affairs found that over 1 in 3 Myanmar respondents identified Japan as their most trusted country. I do not doubt that if that same poll were conducted today, that figure would be even higher.

Japanese brands have likewise gained prominence amongst Myanmar consumers. Japanese cars, in particular, enjoy overwhelming popularity.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I last visited Tokyo in October where I attended the Myanmar-Japan Investment Forum. On that occasion, I noted that Myanmar would continue to enjoy growth rates well above 6 per cent –securing our position as one of ASEAN's fastest-growing economies.

While much has changed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, forecasts suggest that Myanmar will remain the region's third fastest growing economy, although at rates lower than expected.

Myanmar has so far been spared the worst. This positive situation has been made possible via our 'whole-of-nation' approach to combatting COVID-19, and with the generous support provided by friends and partners around the world.

I am happy to say that our economy appears poised to achieve the much sought after 'V-shape' recovery in 2021, and with it, a return to high rates of equitable, inclusive and sustainable growth where we shall remain for the foreseeable future.

While both Myanmar and Japan have, so far, been able to weather COVID-19 storm– we have to recognise regretfully that the world as a whole has not fared well.

The IMF predicts that cumulative loss to global GDP in 2020 and 2021 may exceed US$9 trillion that is the greatest sum that combined economies of Japan and Germany. In our region alone, drops in demand have removed an estimated US$172 billion from trade.

Interestingly, we have witnessed some of the least affluent countries and, presumably, least capable of mounting a sustained and robust defence against COVID-19, achieve some of the most positive results.

It appears that the most crucial determinant of success has been whether governments were able and willing to take early and decisive action, with the protection of people as a foremost priority.

This is what has occurred in Myanmar. To date, we have just 350 officially recorded cases. However, while our country's caseload remains low, we do not shy away from the fact that COVID-19's social and economic impacts have been significant.

With cross-border travel restrictions in place in most countries, international tourism has been halted. Our garment manufacturing sector and MSMEs have also faced significant disruption.

As recovery efforts continue, we look forward to resuming cross-border travel, including business and tourist travel, and we are taking steps to ensure that this occurs as quickly and as safely as possible. In the meantime, we must continue to engage via the wonders of the digital age.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

Since April 2016, across the combined 34 permitted projects, Japanese investment is estimated to have contributed to the creation of over 6,500 jobs.

We know that meaningful growth and quality job creation will not be achieved without continued quality investment – quality investment that creates quality jobs. Jobs that pay well. Jobs that offer security.

Quality job creation remains at the heart of our Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan, and building upon successes such as Thilawa, we shall be announcing two major job creation initiatives - a brand new industrial park to the west of Yangon, and a new economic zone in Mon State.

Further details will be provided in due course. At this initial stage I wish to affirm that the development of these important new initiatives will be conducted via a Swiss Challenge tender process that will be open, transparent, and competitive.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

I would like to thank both the government and the people of Japan for your support over the years, a support based on common values of democracy, fundamental human rights, rule of law and a firm sense of responsibility.

These principles continue to guide the implementation of our COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan, our Myanmar Investment Promotion Plan and indeed, our Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan.

I believe all of us here sincerely wish to see peace and prosperity flourish throughout Myanmar, and that we share great expectations for Myanmar's future success.

Come rain or shine, Japan's support to Myanmar has been consistent and reliable, solidly based on mutual friendship and trust. And Japanese investments shall always find safe harbour in Myanmar. Those who invest here shall find a warm and welcoming partner. For those who are already here, please be assured that we are determined that your investments should not only grow but also prosper.

I wish you all good health and peace of mind.

Thank you.

■ ■ ■

U Thaung Tun, Minister of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations "Myanmar-Japan Investment Dialogue on Economic Recovery after COVID-19 and New Investment Opportunities" Speech and Presentation

29 July 2020

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

Please permit me to voice my support for the sentiments expressed by Her Excellency the State Counsellor, and to note my sincere appreciation for this opportunity to address you at today's Myanmar-Japan Investment Dialogue.

Before I begin, I wish to thank His Excellency Mr. Hiromasa NAKANO, State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Cabinet Office, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Reconstruction, His Excellency Ichiro MARUYAMA, Japan's Ambassador to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Mr. Nobuhiko SASAKI, Chairman of the Japan External Trade Organisation, and Mr. Kazufumi TAKANA, Managing Director of JETRO's Yangon Office.

My heartfelt thanks also go to the hundreds of distinguished business leaders who have joined us today and who share our eagerness to see the emergence of a more prosperous, peaceful and democratic Myanmar. Your presence here is warmly welcomed.

Finally, my thanks to all who have played a role in preparing for this excellent virtual dialogue. I am confident that today's discussions will provide a fruitful exchange of views until such time that we can be together again.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

I've been asked to offer not only an assessment of where we are today but also where we wish to be tomorrow.

I would like to begin these remarks by acknowledging the dramatic impact that COVID-19 has had on our economies.

With a pandemic-inspired global downturn underway in both developed and emerging economies alike, the disease continues to exact a severe toll.

In Myanmar, the pandemic has disrupted key growth engines – tourism, manufacturing sector and exports.

In recent years, Myanmar experienced amongst our region's highest GDP growth rates. However, the ADB now forecasts the country's 2020 growth at just 1.8 per cent. Yet Myanmar remains among a handful of economies that is expected to post positive growth this calendar year. Encouragingly, the ADB also forecasts a rapid return to pre-crisis growth levels of 6 per cent and above in 2021.

The Government of Myanmar committed to easing the economic burden felt by businesses and households – guided by our COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan – and to establishing the foundations necessary to facilitate our rapid economic recovery as part of a 'whole-of-nation' response.

Thanks to the brave men and women fighting the disease at the front and the decisive actions taken by our governments, we have been able to meet the challenge posed by the pandemic. Just as Japan today sees confirmed COVID-19 cases at rates significantly lower than similarly- sized European countries, we in Myanmar can also be justifiably proud of our collective efforts.

Neither country was forced to choose between managing the pandemic and preserving the lives of its people. Indeed, by acting quickly, we have achieved both objectives simultaneously. While it appears that we have been spared the worst, we still have miles to go before we can rest.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

Japan ranks amongst our most important economic partners. It is the 5th largest investor in our country and 3rd largest export market. Indeed, bilateral trade between our countries has already exceeded US$1.273 billion this current fiscal year and the total bilateral trade since the dawn of our democratic transition has reached US$16.5 billion.

Thanks to the trust Japanese investors have placed in Myanmar, approved FDI from Japan this current fiscal year exceeds US$700 million despite COVID-19– ensuring we remain on track to meet this year's target of US$5.8 billion.

Amidst the global uncertainty, some may well ask: Why invest in Myanmar? Why now?

I say – with this government's pursuit of broad-based, sustainable and inclusive growth, Myanmar offers one of the most exciting investment destinations currently on offer anywhere.

We are the largest country on the Southeast Asian mainland, strategically located in one of the world's fastest-growing regions.

We offer a vibrant and dynamic landbridge, connecting the Indian subcontinent to Southeast Asia. Bordering 40 per cent of the world's population, Myanmar is blessed with 1,200 miles of uninterrupted coastline – from the Bay of Bengal to the Andaman Sea. And, with a sizable population of 54 million and a rapidly growing middle-class, the country also enjoys what has been termed a 'demographic dividend'.

This government recognises the important contribution Japan can and does make to our nation's development aspirations – from agro-industry to transport and storage, from energy to advanced manufacturing.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

Permit me to offer just a brief insight into the many investment reform measures undertaken which have catapulted Myanmar into this year's World Bank Ease of Doing Business top 20 most-improved countries.

Soon after our administration assumed office in 2016, we passed the new Myanmar Investment Law with greatly simplified rules and regulations bringing our investment regime in-line with global standards. A new Companies Law was also promulgated permitting investments in domestic companies of up to 35 per cent and opening our Stock Exchange to foreign participation.

New, modern laws governing business activities have transformed Myanmar's investment regime into one of the region's most liberal according to the OECD's FDI Regulatory Restrictiveness Index – a feat the OECD itself describes as being "almost unprecedented".

We've also launched a fully-digitalised company registration portal – MyCO. Since its launch, 100 per cent of new registrations have been made online.

Thanks to initiatives such as MyCO, the Project Bank, the expansion of our Automated Cargo Clearance System to border towns of Muse, Myawaddy and beyond – between 2014 and 2020, Myanmar leapt 29 places on the UN's e-Government Index – amongst the top 10 most improved countries.

With these initiatives, coupled with a range of complementary legal and procedural reforms, Myanmar's investment future remains bright.

A vast range of investment opportunities is now open to those who seek them. Allow me to name just a few.

I see Myanmar's emergence as a hub for high-value modern manufacturing including – from microprocessors and memory chips – items upon which the 4th Industrial Revolution technologies will depend – from cutting edge computers to connected cars, from the Internet of Things to artificial intelligence.

With rapidly growing demand for sustainable energy solutions, combined with this government's intention to double electric power provision within the coming decade, energy generation and transmission present another highly promising investment area.

Our garments sector continues to expand, with Fitch Solutions predicting Myanmar will remain a dominant regional player – boosted by lower labour and logistical costs and with privileged access to EU markets.

We have also witnessed how COVID-19 has exacerbated existing geopolitical tensions; accelerating major trends already underway. This includes shifts in global supply chains and movements in the manufacturing sector. In this regard, Myanmar seeks to be a preferred destination for those seeking greener and sustainable pastures.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

I am sure many of you would have already heard of the much-heralded New Yangon City project. This proposal envisions Yangon's emergence as a smart and green city, accompanied by world-class infrastructure that caters to the needs of its people while preserving the environment and the country's unique social and cultural heritage.

To support the achievement of this vision, and to facilitate Yangon's return to its rightful place as a jewel in the crown of Asia – it gives me great pleasure to announce here today that we shall soon be launching a new Swiss Challenge competitive tender process for the development of a completely new industrial park and ancillary infrastructure in the Western part of Yangon, unbundled from the larger city development project.

In this regard, we shall adhere to international best practice, ensuring that the process be carried out in a transparent manner through competitive tendering, supported by a leading international transaction advisory firm.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

Consistent with this administration's commitment to opening up our economy, to promoting quality employment opportunities and securing sustainable growth, today I am deeply honoured to announce this government's intention to launch an entirely new Special Economic Zone along the coastline of Mon State.

Building upon Thilawa's success and the realization of the GMS East-West corridor linking the Indian Ocean with the Pacific – this new SEZ shall be bigger and better connected than any other SEZ currently in operation anywhere in Myanmar.

And, just like our West Yangon Industrial Park project, the development of this new SEZ shall be world-class, transparent, open, and internationally competitive.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

COVID-19 has infected both the privileged and the powerless. As a result, our region and indeed our world has undergone radical shifts over just a few short months.

To overcome the crisis, we must ensure a new wave of reforms which will water the roots, not just the leaves.

As we embark on this journey, we are reassured by the presence of our time-tested friend and trusted partner – Japan – and are grateful for your ongoing assistance throughout this particularly challenging period.

Let us join hands and seize this chance to ensure a sussessful recovery today and more sustainable growth tomorrow.

Thank you.

Union Information Minister inspects Photolitho Printing Press in Yangon

Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint visited Photolitho Printing Press on Ngar Htat Kyee Pagoda Road in Bahan Township, Yangon yesterday

Acting Director-General of Printing and Publishing Department (PPD) U Ko Ko Naing reported the printing factory's history and formation, conditions of printing equipment and work implementation to the Union Minister.

After listening to the reports, the Union Minister said it is required to draw up security plans and abide by the plans for important printing tasks.

He urged the officials to oversee the important printing tasks, and discussed other necessary works.

He also inspected printing machines, raw material warehouses and printing works in the factory.

The PPD's Photolitho Printing Press under the Ministry of Information was named after 'Photolithography' that was combined 'Photography' with 'Lithography'.

The factory is printing school textbooks of the Ministry of Education, the books produced by Sarpay Beikman, Shwe Thwe Weekly Journal and Thuta-Paday-Thar Monthly Book, and also undertaking general printing works of the ministry and outsourced customers.

In the afternoon, the Union Minister and party inspected the Kyemon Printing Press on Strand Road in Botahtaung Township and preparations for Myanmar Digital News Online Media.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Union Minister Dr Pe Myint inspects Photolitho Printing Press on Ngar Htat Kyee Pagoda Road in Bahan Township, Yangon on 1 August 2020. **PHOTO : MNA**

Two killed, one injured by landmine in Rakhine

TWO civilians were killed and one was injured in landmine explosion in An Township of Rakhine State, according to the statement of Tatmadaw True News Information Team.

The statement said the military personnel inspected a vehicle driven by Jate Chung Village administrator from Jate Chaung Village to An township in the evening of 30 July while they were serving security along Kazukaing- Dar Lat road and found one injured on the vehicle.

According to the investigation, U Maung Tin, Jate Chaung Villager went to his garden about 1,000 metres from the village and died after stepping on the landmine laid by AA terrorists on 29 July.

His grandson Thet Naing Soe and about seven villagers looked for him on 30 July. Meanwhile, Thet Naing Soe stepped on the mine and died on the spot while U San Win was injured.

Now, the mine victim is under the medical treatment of region Tatmadaw Hospital.

According to the statement, 18 died and 57 were injured from the landmines of AA until 27 June 2020.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

Two soldiers receive maximum penalty for killing woman in Kayin State

Two soldiers who robbed and killed a woman in Polo Hta Village in Papun Township, Kayin State were given maximum punishment after being investigated at Court-Martial, according to Tatmadaw True News Information Team.

The Tatmadaw News Team reported that two soldiers, Than Soe Lwin and Hein Min Htet, who robbed and killed a woman in Kayin State, were arrested on 17 July.

The court-martial investigation was attended by Bilin Township Deputy Administrator U Aung Win Khaing, Kyar Kwin Village Administrator U Man Pi, Yin Ohan Village Administrator U Nay Lin Oo, Danyingon Village Administrator U Kyaw Win, Kazine Village Administrator U Kyi Swe and other 11 towns/villages elders.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Govt, NCA-S EAOs negotiate for possible bilateral peace talks

FROM PAGE-1

and both sides will discuss holding parallel meetings of the State Level Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee in accordance with the decision number 1 of 8th JICM.

Sao Sai Ngin, the team leader of framework negotiation team leader from NCA-S EAOs, said that the government and his team are working for implementation of eight decisions from JICM.

He added more works are required to persuade the remaining ethnic armed groups into peace processes, and called for finding ways for the interest of Union, people and all the nationals.

After the meeting, Director-General U Zaw Htay said, "The meeting emphasized holding formal meetings and bilateral meetings in parallel which was agreed in the 8th JICM, especially JMC-U, UPDJC and JMC-S.

Both the Government and Tatmadaw has agreed this bilateral concept, he added, KNU has not decided to follow it, and that more discussion will be made on 2 August.

> Union Peace Conference has been scheduled from 19 to 21 August, and it should not be postponed any more as the political parties have their own programmes for electoral campaigns as the General Election will be held in November this year.

The director-general continued saying the Union Peace Conference has been scheduled from 19 to 21 August, and it should not be postponed any more as the political parties have their own programmes for electoral campaigns as the General Election will be held in November this year.

He finally confirmed the good health condition of the State Counsellor, denying the false news on social media about her health.

The meeting was attended by NRPC Vice-Chairman and Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo, NRPC members Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, Lt-Gen Min Naung and Lt-Gen Tin Maung Win, Peace Commission advisors U Hla Maung Shwe and U Moe Zaw Oo, and Director-General U Zaw Htay from the Office of the Ministry of the State Counsellor.

Representatives of NCA-S EAOs peace negotiation team at the meeting were its team leader Sao Sai Ngin, coordinator U Myo Win, coordination members U Hla Htay, Dr Lyan Hmon Sar Khaung, Salai Hta Lar Hay, Saw Sein Win, Pado Saw Tardo Hmu, Pado Saw L Klu Sae, Kyar Saw Lamon, Nai Aung Ma Ngay and Khun Myint Tun.

The second day of negotiation meeting will convene at the same venue on 2 August.—Myo Myint, Han Lin Naing

(Translated by Aung Khin)

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Over 7,000 acres put under GAP cultivation of multi-crops in Sagaing Region

Over 7,000 acres of paddy and other crops in Sagaing Region are being cultivated under the GAP system.
PHOTO: WIN OO(ZAYYARTINE)

MORE than 7,000 acres of farmlands were put under cultivation of multi-crops in Sagaing Region in 2019-2020FY under the GAP system, according to the Sagaing Region Agriculture Department.

"At present, over 7,000 acres of paddy and other crops are being cultivated under the GAP system. While we plant the crops under the GAP system, we need to make an initial test of water and land in Mandalay and Yangon laboratories. Sometimes, there are delays, but we are trying our utmost to meet the target. To enable the farmers to earn an income as well as to ensure the safety of the foods, the department is carrying out the GAP system under the supervision of the government," said U Aung Kyi Win, the deputy head of the Sagaing Region Agriculture Department.

In this FY, the department targets to plant about 25,000 acres of monsoon paddy and other corps under the GAP system in monsoon. Now, more than 7,000 acres of monsoon paddy and other crops have reportedly been grown as of July-end. — Win Oo(Zayyartine)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

YWB Lanthit-Saparchaung-1 starts running on 1 August

YANGON Water Bus (YWB) started running between Lanthit and Saparchaung-1 at 6 am yesterday to ensure smooth public transport without traffic congestion in Yangon Region.

The passengers wearing masks can board the vessels and they need to have their temperature checked at the entrance to the pontoon.

YWB suspended for eight months during the coronavirus pandemic allowed the passengers to ride free of charge yesterday in commemoration of the first day of resuming its YWB operation. YWB also gave the gifts to the passengers on the first day of resumption. The vessels can accommodate 80 passengers.

The reopened Yangon water buses have installed payment machines. Passengers can pay the fares through KBZPay and CB wave money account. The YWB fare is K300 per person.

The vessels from Saparchaung will run from 6 am to 9:30 am and from 6:15 pm to 9:15 pm daily. It will leave Saparchaung every half hour.

The reopened Yangon water bus has installed payment machines.
PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG SOE

Also, the vessels from Lanthit will run from 6:15 am to 9:15 am and from 3 pm to 7 pm. It will depart Lanthit every half hour. —Myint Maung Soe

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Briquette makers resume businesses with increasing demand

THE local farmers making briquettes in Tantaw village in Sagaing Township have resumed their businesses and are now happy with an increasing demand recently, according to the local people.

The briquette (alternative to firewood) makers have suspended their businesses beginning from the outbreak of COVID-19.

"We have been doing our family businesses for two years. During the COVID-19 control period, the sale of briquettes has dropped. We sent around 250 bags containing 40 briquettes to other regions previously. Each bag was sold for K2,500. Now, the restaurants and tea shops have reopened and we started sending the briquettes. Even though the briquettes are not as much demanded as in those days, we are a bit convenient for our family livelihoods," said a local briquettes maker.

The clay has been melted and mixed with the charcoal to be dried in the sun for three days. Each briquette can be used for over one hour.—Zaw Myint Naing (District IPRD)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Briquette makers start their businesses again due to local market demand. **PHOTO: ZAW MYINT NAING (DISTRICT IPRD)**

CORONAVIRUS VACCINE

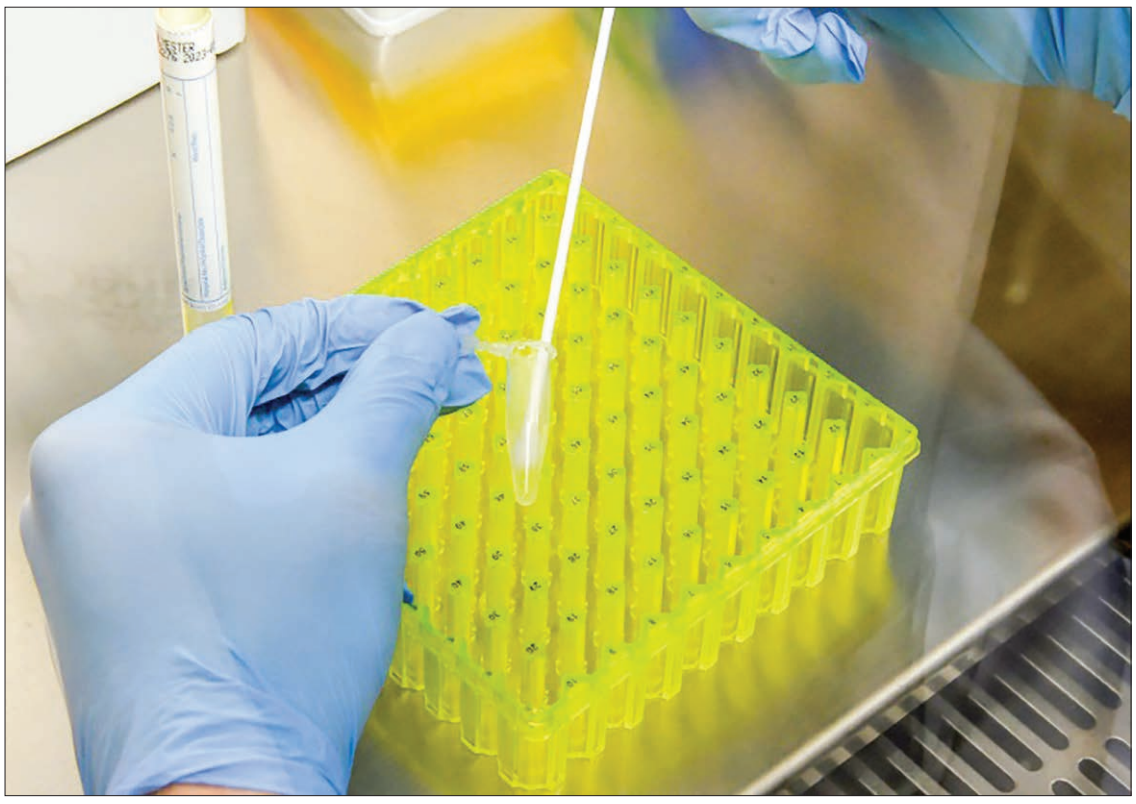
Sanofi, GSK reach virus vaccine deals with US, EU

PHARMA giants Sanofi and GSK will receive up to $2.1 billion from the US government for the development of a COVID-19 vaccine, the companies said Friday, as the world scrambles for an answer to the pandemic.

At the same time, the European Union said it had reached a deal with Sanofi for the supply of 300 million doses of a potential coronavirus vaccine.

The European Commission, the bloc's executive arm which negotiated the agreement, said it would allow all 27 EU member countries to purchase the vaccine once it was proven to be safe and effective. The United States has identified a vaccine candidate under development by Sanofi and GSK for its "Operation Warp Speed," which aims to rapidly secure millions of doses.

The firms aim to combine a Sanofi-developed antigen, which stimulates the production of germ-killing antibodies, with GSK's adjuvant technology, a substance that bolsters the immune response triggered by a vaccine.



Pharma giants Sanofi and GSK will receive up to $2.1 billion from the US government for the development of a COVID-19 vaccine, the companies said Friday, as the world scrambles for an answer to the pandemic. **PHOTO: AFP**

The American money will "help fund the development activities and secure scale-up of Sanofi's and GSK's manufacturing capabilities in the United States... resulting in a significant increase in capacity."

"The US government will provide up to $2.1 billion, more than half of which is to support further development of the vaccine, including clinical trials, with the remainder used for manufacturing scale-up and delivery of an initial 100 million doses," the companies said.

"The US government has a further option for the supply of an additional 500 million doses longer term," they added.

The United States is the country the worst hit by the coronavirus outbreak, with over 150,000 deaths out of the global toll of more than 667,000.

Europe meanwhile has recorded nearly 210,000 deaths from 3.2 million cases, and with infections rising again in several countries there are fears a "second wave" of the pandemic could be on the way. Sanofi, based in France, and GSK of Britain said clinical trials of their vaccine should start in September, with a Phase 3 study under way by the end of the year.

SOURCE: AFP

FIELD HOSPITAL

Hong Kong opens makeshift hospital for COVID-19 patients

HONG Kong opened a temporary field hospital with 500 beds on Saturday to house stable COVID-19 patients as the city battles a new wave of virus infections.

The financial hub had been a poster child for tackling the coronavirus, with local transmissions all but ended by early summer.

But since July the pathogen has returned, with some cases brought in by the tens of thousands of people who were exempted from a mandatory quarantine imposed on most arrivals.

The opening of the hospital comes a day after city leader Carrie Lam announced the postponement of upcoming legislative elections for a year, saying the decision was purely to protect public health and had "nothing to do with politics".

More than 2,000 new infections have been detected since the start of July -- 60 per cent of the total since the virus first hit the city in late January.

The new makeshift hospital set up at the city's AsiaWorld-Expo exhibition centre near the airport, will take in COVID-19 patients aged from 18 to 60.

"Our goal is to triage the patients from the community and provide them with appropriate treatment and hospitalisation arrangement," doctor Larry Lee from the Hospital Authority told media, adding that around 20 to 30 patients are expected to be admitted on the first day.

SOURCE: AFP

"EXPLOSIVE SPREAD"

Japan's Okinawa declares state of emergency as virus cases soar

JAPAN'S Okinawa region has declared a state of emergency and asked people to stay home for two weeks as the popular tourist destination sees an "explosive spread" of coronavirus cases.

Governor Denny Tamaki on Friday asked residents to avoid non-essential outings following a record new daily addition to the southern island's total cases, the majority of which have been detected among US forces based there.

"We're seeing an explosive spread of infections. We declare a state of emergency" through August 15, Tamaki told reporters, adding hospitals were being overwhelmed by the surge.

The measures are non-compulsory and without the aggressive enforcement measures seen in Europe, but similar requests from authorities have been widely respected in Japan.

Okinawa reported 71 new coronavirus cases Friday, bringing its total to 395.

US forces account for 248 of those cases, according to the local government, which has created tensions with local officials, including the governor who has said he was "shocked" by the high numbers.

There are approximately 20,000 US Marines in Okinawa, along with thousands more troops from other US military services.

Their presence on the island is a longstanding sore spot, with many in the region arguing they bear a disproportionate share of the burden of hosting American forces. Okinawa's move comes as Tokyo called for restaurants, bars and karaoke parlours to shut at 10 pm from August 3 until the end of the month after the number of daily cases hit a new record.

SOURCE: AFP

Governor Denny Tamaki on Friday asked residents to avoid non-essential outings following a record new daily addition to the southern island's total cases, the majority of which have been detected among US forces based there. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

2 AUGUST 2020
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Let's stamp out misinformation or suppress the infodemic!

THE coronavirus pandemic has mercilessly wreaked havoc across the globe for more than six months back. And, nobody has sensibly known yet that it might last until an unforeseeable period. The deadly pathogen has killed at least six-hundred thousand, and over seventeen million have caught the viral disease all over the world. WHO has also maintained the pandemic's status as a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) -- its highest level of alarm.

Since the infections are still rampant and the vaccines are yet to be found we have many challenges ahead to vigilantly encounter any possible second or third wave of the pandemic. In the meantime, pieces of misinformation about COVID are floating especially in the social media circles.

That is an added danger to all of us because the world's nations are trying their best to strategically stem the infectious outbreak and spread in every corner of the world.

Some pages and posts on social media are brimming with false news stories on the novel coronavirus. Misinformation about COVID, some may coin 'infodemic', is as dangerous as the infection itself. Some can say they may have benign inaccuracies. However, we need to be more careful about the correct news stories and information on the pandemic. We need to differentiate between information and misinformation. News consumers should remain vigilant against any signs of misinformation at all times, especially in this coronavirus era.

> We need to be more careful about the correct news stories and information on the pandemic. We need to differentiate between information and misinformation. News consumers should remain vigilant against any signs of misinformation at all times, especially in this coronavirus era.

Every government and its health authorities have formed a national task force to impose and enforce rules and regulations in connection with the preventative measures against the coronavirus disease. They have imposed restrictions on their people along with health awareness protocols to be followed. At the same time, they have to disseminate correct and accurate news and information amongst their people. People need to know only the real-time information — not any stint of misinformation or false news or fake news stories about the global infectious disease.

To save lives, we all need to abide by the health information — not misinformation like 'coronavirus isn't deadly and you can cure it with a herbal remedy or anything'. The WHO guidelines and health authorities' instructions are the only simple protocols for all of us to follow up: frequent handwashing, donning a facemask in public, strictly maintaining the social or physical distance between one another, no gatherings, staying at home if necessary, etc.

To seek real-time information, let's stamp out misinformation or suppress the 'infodemic'.

■ ■ ■

Myanmar Government announces two new major infrastructure projects during Myanmar-Japan Investment Forum

THE Myanmar Government unveiled its intention to proceed with two new nationally significant infrastructure projects, those being the establishment a new Special Economic Zone (SEZ) located in Myanmar's south-east, and the launch of a new industrial park located in Yangon's west as part of an 'unbundled' New Yangon City development project during a virtual Myanmar-Japan Investment Dialogue held on 29 July 2020.

The twin announcement comes one week after a Notice to Proceed with preliminary work on a US$1.5-2billion 1,250-megawatt Liquefied Natural Gas power plant was granted to three Japanese corporations together with a local conglomerate Eden Group.

While delivering the opening remarks the State Counsellor noted that, "Quality job creation remains at the heart of our Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan" and that, "meaningful growth and quality job creation will not be achieved without continued quality investment – quality investment that creates quality jobs. Jobs that pay well. Jobs that offer security."

U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and Chair of the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) provided further details, describing the new SEZ as:

"…building upon Thilawa's success, with a new world-class multi-lane highway now in operation, linking the Indian Ocean with the Pacific – this new SEZ shall be bigger and better connected than any other SEZ currently in operation anywhere in Myanmar."

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi makes a keynote address at virtual Myanmar-Japan Forum via a video clip on 29 July 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

While the exact location was not disclosed, the SEZ is expected to be built in Mon State's coast, allowing for the construction of deep-sea port facilities.

The Union Minister further noted the government's intention to ensure a constant supply of electricity to the SEZ and surrounding areas likely via a direct connection to the national grid.

U Set Aung, Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry and Chair of the Thilawa SEZ championed the new SEZs job creation potential while stating that the government would soon be launching a Swiss Challenge competitive tender process that would allow for potential competitors to present counterproposals, and if successful, refund costs borne by the original project proponent.

Mon and Kayin States are home to a large number of migrant workers forced to return to Myanmar as a result of COVID-19, it is expected to be a major local job creator across a range of industries including manufacturing, logistics, real estate and food processing.

The new SEZ is also likely to attract significant investor interest given recent investment enabling reforms led by the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations combined with its proximity to the Greater Mekong Sub-Region East-West Economic Corridor connecting Yangon's Thilawa SEZ to Da Nang in Viet Nam via Laos and Thailand.

Describing the government's decision to move ahead with the first phase of the 2.75 km2 industrial park as part of the unbundled New Yangon City development project , U Thaung Tun noted:

"…to facilitate Yangon's return to its rightful place as a jewel in the Crown of Asia – it gives me great pleasure to announce here today that we shall soon be launching a new Swiss Challenge competitive tender process for the development of a completely new industrial park and ancillary infrastructure in the Western part of Yangon, unbundled from the larger city development project."

The New Yangon City development project was as being designed to support Yangon's emergence as a smart and green city, accompanied by world-class infrastructure that caters to the needs of its people while preserving the environment and the country's unique social and cultural heritage.

The Union Minister offered assurances that the government would ensure international best practices will be adhered to, including open, transparent, international competitive tendering, supported by a leading international transaction advisory firm.

Located in Yangon's west, the industrial park is expected to include a range of ancillary infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and resettlement areas. The industrial park is also expected to contribute to Myanmar's continued sustainable development, creating new quality employment opportunities, including within the country's rapidly expanding manufacturing sector that has proven resilient despite challenges posed by COVID-19.

Held as part of ongoing investment promotion efforts led by the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, the Myanmar-Japan Investment Dialogue on Economic Recovery After COVID-19 and New Investment Opportunities was organized in partnership with the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) and the Embassy of Japan in Myanmar, with participation from over 1000 individuals and firms.

■ ■ ■

Union Minister U Thaung Tun joins virtual Myanmar-Japan Investment Dialogue on Economic Recovery After COVID-19 and New Investment Opportunities on 29 July 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

WORLD'S LARGEST ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT MARKET

World's biggest TV market to go ahead despite virus

MIPCOM, the world's biggest television and entertainment market, will go ahead in France in October but with much of the moving and shaking going online because of the coronavirus, its organizers said Friday.

The huge gathering in the Riviera resort of Cannes has been scaled back from four to three days with the separate two-day MIPJunior -- which showcases children's content -- now running alongside the main event.

But Netflix's co-chief executive Ted Sarandos will be making the trip for one of the keynote speeches at the streamlined event, which has been rebranded MIPCOM Rendezvous Cannes.

"We understand that some people will be unable to travel to Cannes, so they can be part of the MIPCOM experience digitally," said Laurine Garaude of Reed MIDEM, who run the event.

"New health and safety guidelines meant considerable disruption and extra costs for exhibitors and their stands, so we decided there will be no exhibition stands at MIPCOM Rendezvous Cannes," she added.

Organisers said they were setting up a new digital platform for online screenings and video meetings between executives.

MIPCOM will run from October 12 to 15 alongside the international series festival, Canneseries, which was postponed because of the virus in March.

What is MIPCOM?

MIPCOM (Marché International des Programmes de Communication, English: International Market of Communications Programmes) is an annual trade show held in the French town of Cannes, traditionally in the month of October and running for 4 days. It is owned and organized by Reed MIDEM, a subsidiary of Reed Exhibitions.

The event is geared towards the television industry, primarily attended by representatives of television studios and broadcasters, who use the event as a marketplace to buy and sell new programmes and formats for international distribution, as well as celebrities to promote programming. The event also features keynote presentations and panels featuring representatives of the industry discussing new trends and developments. Additionally, MIPCOM has been used to globally premiere highly anticipated new programmes.

Prior to MIPCOM, a spin-off event known as MIPJunior is held, which is devoted exclusively to the children's television industry.

MIPCOM also has a sister event, MIPTV Media Market, which is a similar format also in Cannes by the same organizers, in the opposite half of the year (usually April). MIPCOM is slightly better attended than MIPTV.

SOURCE: AFP

■ ■ ■

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 1 August 2020)

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

SPECIAL FEATURES: According to the observations at (18:30)hrs MST today, the Tropical Storm "Sinlaku"over the Gulf of Tomkin and is centred at about (165) miles Southeast of Hanoi(Viet Nam). It is forecast to move Northwestwards and cross the Upper Viet Nam.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 2 August 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Sagaing and Magway regions, Kachin and Northern Shan states, fairly widespread in Mandalay, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions, Kayah State and widespread in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Taninthayi Region and Kayin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon – Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35-40)mph. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (8-11) feet Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon–Taninthayi Coasts and about (5-8) feet off and along Rakhine Coast.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Increase of rain in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions, Shan, Rakhine, Kayah, Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 August 2020: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 August 2020: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 August 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Flood Bulletin

(Issued at: 12:00 hrs MST on 1-8-2020)

Flood condition of Ayeyawady River

According to the (11:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Ayeyawady River at NyaungU has exceeded by about (1) foot above its danger level. It may fall below its danger level during the next (3) days.

According to the (11:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Ayeyawady River at Seiktha has exceeded by about (1½) feet above its danger level. It may continue to rise from the present water level about (½) foot during the next (2) days and may remain above its danger level.

According to the (11:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Ayeyawady River at Hinthada has exceeded by about (3½) inches above its danger level. It may continue to rise from the present water level by about (½) foot during the next (3) days and may remain above its danger level.

According to the (11:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Ayeyawady River at Zalun has exceeded by about (3) inches above its danger level. It may continue to rise from the present water level about (½) foot during the next (3) days and may remain above its danger level.

Advisory

It is especially advertised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas in Hinthada and Zalun townships, and Seiktha to take precaution measure.

Pakistan blames Afghanistan for deadly border clash

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan on Friday blamed Afghan troops for initiating a recent fatal clash at the border, saying its forces returned fire only to protect themselves.

Pakistan's foreign ministry, responding to allegations from its neighbor of firing on civilians in the Afghan border town of Spin Boldak, said the "Pakistani force did not open fire first and responded in self-defence only."

Afghan authorities had claimed that 15 people were killed in Spin Boldak due to shelling by Pakistani forces.

The exchange between the border forces of the two countries on Thursday was apparently linked to a violent confrontation at the Chaman-Spin Boldak border crossing between Pakistani security forces and a crowd of civilians that ransacked their offices and a nearby quarantine centre. The confrontation on the Pakistani side followed a protest over restrictions on pedestrian crossing of the border due to the coronavirus pandemic. —Kyodo ■

Pakistani soldiers patrol at the Torkham crossing between Pakistan and Afghanistan in Pakistan's Khyber Agency on June 14, 2016. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Philippines losing virus war, doctors warn Duterte

MANILA — Dozens of doctors' groups on Saturday warned that the Philippines was losing the coronavirus fight, urging President Rodrigo Duterte to tighten a recently eased lockdown as cases surged and hospitals turned away patients.

The Philippines imposed one of the harshest lockdowns in the world in mid-March, that kept people at home except to buy food and seek health treatment. **PHOTO: AFP**

Eighty medical associations representing tens of thousands of doctors signed the open letter as the country posted another record nearly 5,000 new cases on Saturday, pushing the total to more than 98,000.

"Healthcare workers are united in sounding off a distress signal to the nation -- our healthcare system has been overwhelmed," the letter said.

"We are waging a losing battle against COVID-19, and we need to draw up a consolidated, definitive plan of action."

An increasing number of health workers have fallen ill or quit their jobs, while some packed hospitals are now refusing to admit new patients, it added.

The health department earlier said 34 health workers are among those who have died of the disease in the Philippines. Total deaths stood at 2,039 as of Saturday.

The government has blamed poor compliance with health protocols for the sharp increase in infections.

The country imposed one of the harshest lockdowns in the world in mid-March, that kept people at home except to buy food and seek health treatment.

But the government recently loosened the restrictions to allow people to return to work after predictions that the Philippine economy will fall into recession, with millions of jobs already lost.—AFP ■

Record spikes in Asia as WHO issues grim virus warning

GENEVA — Southeast Asian countries reported record rises of new coronavirus cases on Saturday as the WHO warned the effects of the pandemic would be felt for decades and the scramble for a vaccine heated up.

Six months after the World Health Organization declared a global emergency, the novel coronavirus has killed more than 680,000 people and infected more than 17.5 million, according to an AFP tally.

As countries across Western Europe announced new lockdowns and reported historic economic slumps, the World Health Organization said the pandemic was a "once-in-a-century health crisis, the effects of which will be felt for decades to come."

The outlook was bleak in Asia as well. India and the Philippines reported record increases in new daily infections at 57,000 and 5,000, despite tightened restrictions. "We are waging a losing battle against COVID-19, and we need to draw up a consolidated, definitive plan of action," said an open letter signed by 80 Filipino medical associations.

Japan's Okinawa declared a state of emergency after a record jump in cases on the island -- many linked to US military forces stationed there.

Hong Kong meanwhile opened a new makeshift hospital to house COVID-19 patients after cases rose to new highs.

Vaccine race

The pandemic has spurred a race for a vaccine with several Chinese companies at the forefront, while Russia has set a target date of September to roll out its own medicine.

However, US infectious disease expert Anthony Fauci said it was unlikely his country would use any vaccine developed in either country, where regulatory systems are far more opaque than they are in the West.

"I do hope that the Chinese and the Russians are actually testing the vaccine before they are administering the vaccine to anyone," he said. As part of its own "Operation Warp Speed", the US government will pay pharma giants Sanofi and GSK up to $2.1 billion for the development of a COVID-19 vaccine, the companies said.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hooch tragedy death toll rises to 62 in India's northern state Punjab

NEW DELHI – The death toll in the hooch tragedy in India's northern state of Punjab rose to 62 on Saturday, reported the Press Trust of India (PTI).

The deaths reportedly took place since Wednesday in the districts of the state, namely Tarn Taran, Batala and Amritsar.

As many as 19 deaths are said to have taken place in Tarn Taran, 11 in Amritsar and nine in Batala in the past 24 hours.

The rest of the deaths took place earlier in the week.

Those who died are said to have consumed liquor that appeared to have been distilled in Amritsar's Muchhal village, PTI quoted officials as saying.– Xinhua ■

China's basic policy towards India remains unchanged: Chinese ambassador

NEW DELHI – Chinese ambassador in India Sun Weidong said on Thursday China's basic policy towards India remains unchanged, urging the two sides to work together to bring bilateral relations back on the track of sound and steady development.

At a webinar on "China-India Relations: The Way Forward " held by the Institute of Chinese Studies (ICS) based in New Delhi, Sun noted that in the current era, the basic national conditions of China and India as the two largest developing neighbors remain unchanged.

"The orientation of China and India being partners, friendly cooperation and common development remains unchanged," he added. "The general structure that China and India cannot live without each other remains unchanged."

"These three 'unchanged' are our basic judgment of the current China-India relations," he said. "It is based on this judgment that China's basic policy towards India remains unchanged."– Xinhua ■

Berlin protest against virus curbs draws thousands

BERLIN — Loudly chanting their opposition to face masks and vaccines, thousands of people gathered in Berlin on Saturday to protest against coronavirus restrictions.

Police put turnout at around 17,000 -- well below the 500,000 organisers had announced as they urged a "day of freedom" from months of virus curbs.

Despite Germany's comparatively low toll, authorities are concerned at a rise in infections over recent weeks and politicians took to social media to criticize the rally as irresponsible.

"We are the second wave," shouted the crowd, a mixture of hard left and right and conspiracy theorists as they converged on the Brandenburg Gate, demanding "resistance" and dubbing the pandemic "the biggest conspiracy theory".—AFP ■

Russia, Kazakhstan sign deal on creating Soyuz-5 rocket launch complex

NUR-SULTAN — Russia and Kazakhstan on Thursday concluded a contract on creating the Baiterek launch compound for Soyuz-5 carrier rockets at the Baikonur Cosmodrome in southwestern Kazakhstan, Russia's Roscosmos State Space Corporation announced.

The agreement was signed between Rocket and Space Corporation Energia, a subsidiary of Roscosmos, and the Russian-Kazakh joint venture Baiterek. "The ink of the document signals that the Baiterek project has entered the implementation phase," Anatoly Krasnikov, Roscosmos's representative in Kazakhstan, said at an online briefing.

Krasnikov noted that the creation of the Baiterek rocket complex is based on the Zenit-M launch facility at Baikonur. The first launch of Soyuz-5 is scheduled for 2023.—AFP ■

UAE starts up first Arab nuclear plant

The UAE has substantial oil and gas reserves but has made huge investments in developing alternatives, including solar energy and now the Barakah nuclear power plant. **PHOTO: BARAKAH NUCLEAR POWER PLANT/AFP/FILE**

RIYADH — The oil-rich United Arab Emirates on Saturday announced the startup of its Barakah nuclear power plant, scoring another first for the Arab world.

The announcement, coinciding with the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha, comes hot on the heels of the UAE's launch of the Arab world's first probe to Mars.

"UAE first nuclear reactor at the Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant has achieved first criticality and successfully started up," tweeted Hamad Alkaabi, the country's representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

"This is a historic milestone for the nation with a vision set to deliver a new form of clean energy for the nation," he tweeted in English, along with a photograph of technicians raising their arms in celebration.

The UAE premier and ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, tweeted that work at Barakah had "succeeded in loading nuclear fuel packages, carrying out comprehensive tests and successfully completing the operation".

"Congratulations on realising this historic achievement in the energy sector & marking this milestone in the roadmap for sustainable development," Sheikh Mohammed said.

The UAE started loading fuel rods into the reactor at Barakah in February, after regulators gave the green light for the first of the plant's four reactors, opening the way for commercial operations.

The plant on the Gulf coast west of Abu Dhabi had been due to go online in late 2017 but faced a number of delays that officials attributed to safety and regulatory requirements.

The Nawah Energy Company said at the time that Unit 1 would begin commercial operations after a "series of tests" leading to the start-up process.

During the process, the unit would be synchronised with the power grid and the first electricity produced.

The UAE has substantial oil and gas reserves, but with a power-hungry population of 10 million it has made huge investments in developing clean alternatives, including solar energy.

Barakah, which means "blessing" in Arabic, is a regional first -- Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, has said it plans to build up to 16 nuclear reactors, but the project has yet to materialise.—AFP ■

Massive rally held in far-eastern Russian city

MOSCOW — Thousands of people braved the rain in the far-eastern city of Khabarovsk on Saturday to attend another huge protest march against the arrest of the region's popular governor.

For a fourth weekend, demonstrators marched through the streets chanting anti-Kremlin slogans and in support of ex-governor Sergei Furgal, who was arrested and taken to Moscow last month to face charges of masterminding murders 15 years ago.

The arrest of the 50-year-old -- who was elected in 2018, beating a rival from the majority United Russia party -- has sparked unprecedented protests in the far-eastern region.

Locals see the move as politically motivated and question why he is being tried in the faraway capital.

"To grab the governor like that, like the worst bandit... that's spitting into the faces of the citizens who elected him," 40-year-old Stanislav Nasonov told AFP at the rally.

Furgal, held in Moscow's notorious Lefortovo prison, has been fired, and President Vladimir Putin has replaced him with a new young governor with no ties to the region in a move that has not gone down well in Khabarovsk.

The protest movement against the government is the largest outside of Moscow in several years.

The rally on Saturday was visibly smaller than the previous weekend, which was the largest over 22 days of near daily protests.

Journalists estimated turnout at around 30,000 people while the Khabarovsk city hall put the number at just 3,500, claiming there was "falling interest".

Last week, the Kremlin said the protests were fuelled by opposition activists from outside the region.

'No trust'

Despite a downpour, spirits were high among the marchers on Saturday, who clapped, waved signs and Russian flags and chanted "20 years -- no trust" in reference to the time Vladimir Putin has spent in power.—AFP ■

The protest movement against the government is the largest outside of Moscow in several years. **PHOTO: AFP**

Revised Japan-ASEAN trade deal takes effect

TOKYO — A revised free trade pact between Japan and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations facilitating the cross-border flow of services and investment entered into force on Saturday.

The deal took effect for Japan and five ASEAN members -- Laos, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The five remaining members -- Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines -- are set to join after they conclude domestic procedures.

ASEAN as a whole was Japan's third-largest trade partner after China and the United States in 2019, with exports to the bloc totalling 11.58 trillion yen ($110 billion) and imports worth 11.76 trillion yen, according to Finance Ministry data.

It is a major market for Japanese firms as well as a key link in supply chains, with many companies setting up factories in the region to take advantage of cheaper labor.

The ASEAN-Japan summit is held on the outskirts of Bangkok on Nov. 4, 2019. **(POOL PHOTO)(KYODO)**

The original economic partnership agreement with ASEAN took effect in 2008, becoming Japan's first multilateral free trade pact. It was focused on eliminating tariffs on goods but provided for further negotiations on services and investment.

Those negotiations began in 2010, with a consensus reached at the ministerial level in 2017. Japan said in June it had concluded domestic procedures, clearing the way for the deal to take effect.

Under the revised pact, the countries are required to maintain transparency in regulating services and not discriminate against foreign investors.

It also establishes a dispute settlement mechanism for companies to sue a government for unfair treatment, as well as rules for foreign travellers to enter and stay in the other countries.

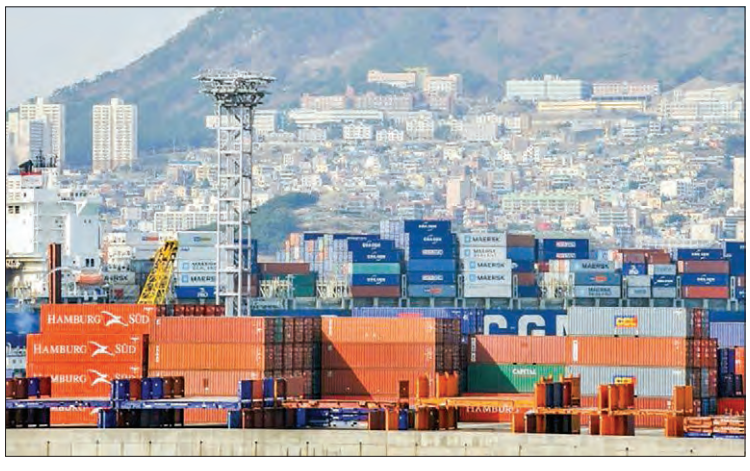
The rules are especially important for Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, none of which have bilateral trade deals with Japan.

Since signing the deal with ASEAN in 2008, Japan has pushed forward with other multilateral free trade pacts such as the revised 11-member Trans-Pacific Partnership and an economic partnership agreement with the European Union. —Kyodo ■

S.Korea's export falls 7 pct in July

SEOUL — South Korea's export fell 7 per cent in July, marking the first single-digit fall in four months, a government report showed Saturday.

Export, which accounts for about half of the export-driven economy, reached 42.83 billion U.S. dollars in July, down 7.0 per cent from a year earlier, according to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy.


File photo of containers in South Korea. **(PHOTO: AFP)**

The outbound shipment shed in single figures in four months, after tumbling 25.5 per cent in April, 23.6 per cent in May and 10.9 per cent in June respectively.

The daily average export slipped 7.0 per cent in July from a year earlier, topping 1.7 billion dollars in four months.

Import declined 11.9 per cent over the year to 38.56 billion dollars in July, sending the trade surplus to 4.27 billion dollars. The trade balance stayed in black for the third consecutive month.—Xinhua ■

Greece reopens six ports to cruise ships

ATHENS — Greece on Saturday reopened six of its main ports to cruise ships for the first time in the coronavirus-shortened tourism season, but no ships are expected before three weeks.

In a letter to the Cruise Lines International Association and three major cruise operators early this week, Tourism Minister Harry Theoharis said the ports of Piraeus in Athens, Rhodes, Iraklio, Volos, Corfu and Katakolo would accept passengers, state agency ANA reported.

After docking at one of the six ports, cruise ships will be able to travel elsewhere in Greece, depending on local coronavirus conditions.

But shipping minister Giannis Plakiotakis said on Thursday that cruises would only restart after August 20.

He said foreign cruise lines had expressed their interest in operating in Greek waters but that "cruises are an international operation and face serious problems because of the coronavirus".

With a quarter of the economy dependent on tourism, Greece has sought to capitalize on its relatively low infection rate to bring in visitors.

So far officials have announced nearly 4,500 infections and 206 deaths.

Last month, Greece began to reopen its land borders to select countries, before allowing mostly European flights to all its airports on July 1.—AFP ■

Cruise ships are not expected back before August 20. **(AFP PHOTO/ FAYEZ NURELDINE)**

Trump says will bar TikTok from US

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Friday he will bar fast-growing social media app TikTok from the United States as American authorities have raised concerns the service could be a tool for Chinese intelligence.

US officials and lawmakers in recent weeks have voiced fears of the wildly popular video platform being used by Beijing for nefarious purposes, but the company has denied any links to the Chinese government.

Media reports circulated earlier Friday saying that Trump would require the US operations of the app be divested from its Chinese parent firm ByteDance, but the president announced a ban. Speaking to reporters on Air Force One, Trump said: "As far as TikTok is concerned, we're banning them from the United States."

He added he would take action as soon as Saturday using emergency economic power or an executive order. However, it was unclear how such a move may be enforced. TikTok, especially popular with young audiences who create and watch its short-form videos, has an estimated billion users worldwide.

TikTok declined to comment on the reports of the forced sales, saying only: "We are confident in the long-term success of TikTok.

"Hundreds of millions of people come to TikTok for entertainment and connection, including our community of creators and artists who are building livelihoods from the platform."

Trump's move comes following a review by the Committee on Foreign Investment (CFIUS) in the United States, which investigates deals affecting US national security.—AFP ■

India's Tata Motors posts major loss as lockdowns hit sales

Tata's luxury car unit Jaguar Land Rover faced sales challenges in its key markets China and Europe, worsened by the virus spread and supply chain disruptions. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

MUMBAI — India's Tata Motors on Friday reported a major quarterly loss as coronavirus lockdowns hit sales in domestic and international markets including Europe and China.

Mumbai-headquartered Tata Motors, the parent of British luxury marque Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), announced a consolidated net loss of 84.39 billion rupees ($1.13 billion) for the quarter ended June 30 against a loss of 36.98 billion rupees a year earlier.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has deeply impacted the auto industry in Q1FY21. We see some disruption due to the intermittent shutdowns and supply chain bottlenecks," CEO Guenter Butschek said in a statement.

A survey of analysts by Bloomberg had predicted the quarterly loss to come in at $1.28 billion.

Tata's luxury car unit JLR faced sales challenges in its key markets China and Europe, worsened by the virus spread and supply chain disruptions.

JLR sales were down 42 per cent during the quarter, the firm said. It was previously struggling to boost demand for luxury cars with the uncertainty surrounding Brexit.

Tata Motors further added JLR would manage "costs and investment spending rigorously" for the rest of financial year 2021.—AFP ■

Caterpillar reports big drop in profits amid murky outlook

DEERFIELD — Caterpillar reported a steep drop in second-quarter profits Friday amid weak demand from industrial clients and said its overall outlook remained clouded by the coronavirus.

The global industrial machinery manufacturer reported a big drop in quarterly earnings and said it had yet to see a pick-up in demand for mining equipment despite higher copper prices. The company, which withdrew its full-year projection in March at the height of coronavirus lockdowns, said there are still too many unknowns to reinstate a forecast.

"Our financial results for the remainder of 2020 will depend on the duration of the pandemic and its impact on global economic conditions," Chief Executive Jim Umpleby said on a conference call with analysts. Revenues fell in all three of Caterpillar's divisions, which manufacture machines for the construction, energy and mining industries. Net income tumbled 71.7 per cent to $458 million as revenues fell 30.7 per cent to $10 billion.—AFP ■

Facebook challenges YouTube with licenced music videos

CAMBRIDGE — Facebook on Friday added licenced music videos to the social network in the US, challenging YouTube for the attention of online audiences. Facebook said users will be able to "come together" around official music videos, with the promise of premier content from J. Balvin, Karol G, Sebastian Yatra, and other artists.

"With official music videos on Facebook, we're creating new social experiences that are about more than just watching the video," music business development vice president Tamara Hrivnak and entertainment vice president Vijaye Raji said in an online post.

"We'll continue working with our music partners to build unique social experiences and bring music into the ways people connect and share."

The Facebook "music experience" was already available in India and Thailand, but is making its US debut this weekend, according to Hrivnak and Raji.—AFP ■

Media scion James Murdoch quits News Corp board

NEW YORK — Former 21st Century Fox chief executive James Murdoch, the son of media tycoon Rupert Murdoch, has resigned from News Corp's board citing clashes over editorial content.

The 47-year-old once seen as his father's successor has been openly critical of some media coverage from publishing empire News Corp's outlets in recent months.

According to a letter written by James Murdoch and released Friday by the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), his resignation was due to "disagreements over certain editorial content published by the company's news outlets and certain other strategic decisions".

News Corp owns the Wall Street Journal, the New York Post, The Times and the Sun newspapers among others, but not Rupert Murdoch's Fox News network. Its media operations have been hit by an advertising slump aggravated by the coronavirus pandemic in Australia.

In May, News Corp announced that it would stop printing more than 100 Australian regional and local newspapers, shifting to digital-only versions instead.—AFP ■

James Murdoch, who has resigned from News Corp, has been critical of the business and its media coverage. **PHOTO: AFP**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V IAL 001 VOY. NO. (074N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V IAL 001 VOY. NO. (074N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **2-8-2020** 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 INTER ASIA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V TRIESTE TRADER VOY. NO. (030S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V TRIESTE TRADER VOY. NO. (030S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **2-8-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/TMT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MCC TRANSPORT (S'PORE) PTE LTD

Infrastructure projects con rapid development in Magw

By Kyaw Htike Soe

A BAILEY bridge over the Mann Creek on the Pathein-Monywa Road in Minbu District, Magway Region is being upgraded to a reinforced concrete facility and the project is nearly finished, said U Aung Nyo, Deputy Director of the Special Bridge Group-5 under the Ministry of Construction.

"Construction of the bridge is almost finished and the bridge would open to traffic after the tarred road which is being built by the Special Bridge Group-11. The project as a whole is 98 percent completed. The bridge will open to traffic after the permission is sought from the local government," he added. The new bridge is 420 ft. in length, 24 ft. in width, 15 ft. in height and has a 3 ft. wide pedestrian walkway on each side. The estimated cost of the bridge including improvement for the approach is Ks. 900 million. Once completed, travellers and local people from nearby areas would be able to use the bridge in all seasons conveniently if though the water level from the Mann Creek rises, according to a source from the Special Bridge Group-5.

The new bridge would contribute to development of trade in the area, facilitate swift flow of commodities and reduce transportation charges for local people. Reliable road transport networks could support businesses of the locals and promote their socioeconomic status. Infrastructural development of a region plays a vital role in helping the country's GDP increase and uplifting the standard of living of poor people. Development of infrastructural projects provides economic growth, creates job prospects for local residents and lifts people out of the poverty. The road transport network plays an important role in fostering economic and social development of a region, improving socioeconomic status of local people, and speeding up the flow of trade.

A new bus terminal will

The bridge over the Mann Creek on the Pathein-Monywa Road in Minbu Township is set to be opened to traffic soon.

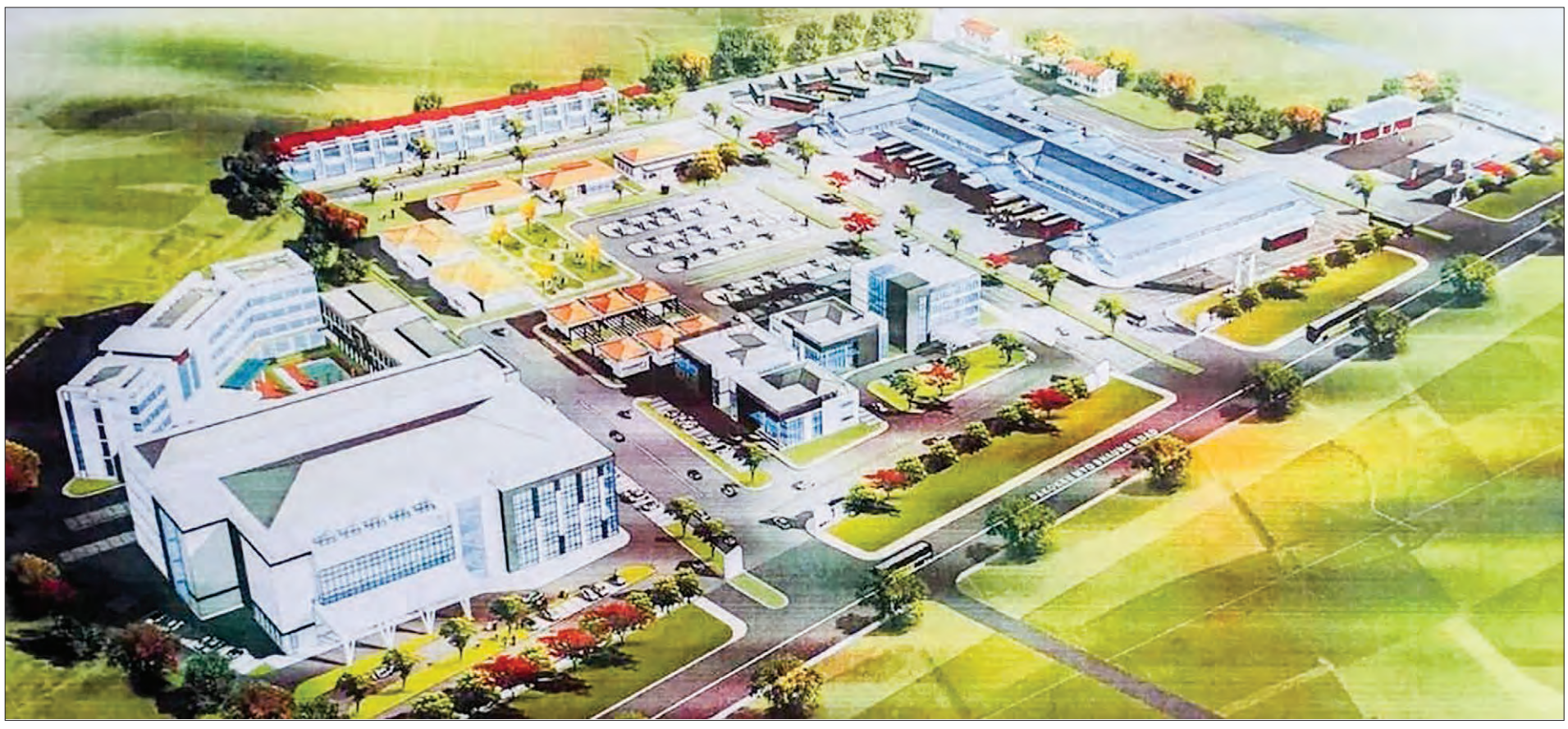


Photo shows scale model of a bus terminal to be built in Pakokku, Magway Region. **PHOTO: IPRD**

tribute to way Region

PHOTO: IPRD

reportedly be built in Pakokku Township, according to a source from the Magway Region's Ministry of Planning, Finance and Municipal Affairs. "We planned to construct a modern bus terminal in Pakokku and it will be different from other bus terminals in Myanmar. Some bus terminals in Myanmar are crowded with passengers and vehicles because the layout design of some terminals is out of date and can't handle the number of passengers today. The new bus terminal is planned to have separate entry and exit gates for the ticket counters. We'll make arrangements to ensure safety of the passenger buses and the bus drivers will no longer need to dispute about parking spaces for their vehicles," Magway Regional Minister for Planning, Finance and Municipal Affairs U Zaw Min explained.

"The bus terminal will not be built with the regional government's budget because it is expected to cost billions of Kyats. So we'll invite bids from interested parties or individuals to construct the bus terminal which will be built on over 20 acres of land. We've already drawn up a detailed design plan for construction of the bus terminal and are in the process of inviting tender. We'll sign a contract with the developers and the project is expected to begin soon," he added. According to the regional minister, the bus terminal is designed to include filling stations, banks, hotels, car parks, shopping centers, ticket counters, souvenir shops and restaurants.

Building and maintaining an inclusive school community through COVID-19

IF it had been predicted at the end of 2019 that most of the world would have been shut down by mid-2020, including businesses, restaurants, and schools, it would have been disregarded. Every school has a continuity plan in place and Yangon American International School has solid foundations in its leadership team and staff body, who are well-prepared for dealing with the unpredictable. However, when it became clear that they were to close indefinitely and move to 100% online learning overnight, the School was truly put to the test. Yangon American International School prides itself on being an inclusive community that recognizes the power and importance of nurturing every child as an individual, in a community that welcomes change, difference and share of voice. "When we prepared the school back in 2018, I knew that one of my priorities was to develop a community of students, parents and staff who felt welcome to join together to learn and enjoy life on campus. Pre-COVID-19, it was clear to see that when anyone stepped through the doors and onto campus, they were immediately welcomed as a part of our community", comments Mr Robert Crutchfield, Principal. Today, U Aung Myo Thein, tells us about his experiences of being a part of the community at Yangon American International School as a parent and what made him choose Yangon American International School. U Aung Myo Thein has been a part of the Parent Teacher Support Organization (PTSO) since his child Matthew (Grade 3) joined last year and is proud to play a fundamental role in building a sense of community at the School. What has the transition from school-based learning to home-based learning meant for the community at Yangon American International School? When parents were first informed that the school was moving to 100% home-based learning due to COVID-19, I think there was some apprehension amongst the parents. Many of us have busy jobs, only a few are educators, and this was a totally new concept for us to wrap our heads around. The School quickly stepped into action, though, and kept in regular contact with families to ensure that we were well-prepared for what was to come. They shared comprehensive plans to ensure that there was a smooth transition from School to home. Not only have the School been in regular communication, the teachers have also been incredible with our children. They speak to classes daily and ensure that each and every child feels confident to learn in their new environment. What does the School do to develop a sense of community amongst parents and how has that changed since the move to home-based learning? For parents in particular, there are a huge array of initiatives and activities to get involved in. For expat and local families alike, this community engagement is key and it really encourages interaction and involvement. When you walk through the doors and onto the Yangon American International School campus, you are welcomed with a sense of kindness and pride; you immediately feel welcome. Parents are able to join the PTSO and we run a multitude of events and activities throughout the school year. From parent groups like dog-walking groups, running groups, and wine nights there are plenty for parents to join to interact and socialize. We also help the students to run events, like Sports Day, Halloween parties, and Winter Festival Concert. We also run a help desk and it is always staffed by a parent ambassador. This helpdesk is especially helpful for new families who are finding their feet. Since COVID-19, we have tried to move as much of this online as possible. We continue to engage in our social groups and have organized a number of video call socials which would usually have been in person. We also continue with our "helpdesk" in a virtual way as opposed to on campus, which has been a great support for families. What kind of initiatives take place at the school to help the wider community in Yangon and how can parents and students be involved? Community Service is a key part of the IB curriculum, and I know that my child has very much enjoyed the service initiatives that they have been involved with. On campus, the older students are encouraged to volunteer to help with younger students, for example through reading, tutoring and coaching activities. This is something that my son Matthew loves as not only does he feel motivated to learn, he also feels a great connection to the younger students. Across the wider community in Yangon, the School partners with local schools to share knowledge and participate in cross-school initiatives through After School Activities. There are a number of charities that the School also supports, and students are encouraged to get involved in these kinds of initiative. One of the reasons that we chose Yangon American International School is the community feel which extends beyond the campus and into the Yangon community. Since COVID-19, it is now clear to see that this community feel does not end there, and the virtual community that we have been building is heart warming to be involved with as a parent. Thank you, U Aung Myo Thein, for sharing your thoughts on the sense of community at Yangon American International School. In terms of education in Myanmar, the future remains uncertain due to the ongoing effects of COVID-19 but one thing is for sure: At Yangon American International School, the team is ready and prepared for change and will work in tandem with parents, students and staff to continue to develop an inclusive community that they are proud of.—GNLM

Former American ambassador to Myanmar reading for students.
PHOTO : SUPPLIED

Keeper Vanlal extends contract with Rakhine United

FORMER Myanmar National Football Team goal keeper Vanlal Haruaia extended his contract with Rakhine United until this year Myanmar National League end of season, according to the statement with the Rakhine United.

"We're delighted to announce that the contract extension of goal keeper Vanlal Haruaia who has signed his contract till the end of this season," said officials from the Rakhine United in the statement.

PHOTO: RUFC

"We Rakhine United has extended his contract till the end of Myanmar National League season (end of September) and we agreed to extend this contract if the timeline of league resume period will be late as a case of COVID-19 pandemic.", officials added.

The former Myanmar National Team keeper created nine appearances when he joined to the team from Dagon FC.

Upon his renewal of the contract with Rakhine United, keeper Vanlal Haruaia said, "The undying support from Rakhine United fans always push us to do even better as a team. I'm happy to extend my contract with the club.

Now, we can't play football on turf and can't restart the training but I will try my best when the league will be back", the keeper added.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Tokyo Olympic Stadium to host athletics event in August

TOKYO — Tokyo's new Olympic Stadium will host its first track and field meeting on 23 Aug, exactly two weeks after the 2020 Games' athletics were due to end, World Athletics announced on Friday (July 31).

The field will be largely made up of Japanese or Japan-based athletes.

"Given the travel restrictions that Japan currently faces, the meeting will be largely a national competition, while a few Kenyan and Ethiopian athletes who compete for Japanese professional clubs may also take part," global governing body World Athletics said in a statement.

It added that "five of the fastest 11 Japanese men of all time will line up in the 100 metres."

The event will consist of nine men's and nine women's events, seven on the track with javelin and long jump in the fields. Because the Japanese high-school championships were cancelled, the organizers plan to add one or two lanes in each track event for high-school athletes.

The stadium held its first sports event, the Emperors Cup final football match on January 1.

With the 2020 Games pushed back a year, Tokyo's new Olympic stadium will host a track and field meet next month. **PHOTO: AFP**

The Golden Grand Prix of Tokyo was originally scheduled for May 10. The athletics at the Olympics were due to run from Jul 24 to Aug 9. — AFP ■

FIFA to assist member associations with COVID-19 Relief Plan

THE Bureau of the FIFA Council has recently approved FIFA's groundbreaking COVID-19 Relief Plan under the terms of the COVID-19 Relief Plan, according to the statement with the FIFA.

Initially, FIFA will make support US$1.5 billion to support all 211 FIFA Member Associations and six Confederations to combat financial difficulties amidst the COVID-19.

"This relief plan is a great example of football's solidarity and commitment in such unprecedented times," said FIFA President Gianni Infantino.

"I would like to thank my colleagues of the Bureau of the Council for approving the decision to move forward with such an important initiative for the benefit of all member associations and confederations.", the FIFA president added.

FIFA will also cooperate its Member Associations and Confederations to assist them in the implementation of the plan through educational sectors in the coming months, according to the statement with the FIFA.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

World Cup winner Hoewedes retires at 32

Benedikt Hoewedes played every minute of the 2014 World Cup. **PHOTO: AFP**

BERLIN — Benedikt Hoewedes, a German World Cup winner, said on Friday that he is retiring aged 32 for family reasons.

He made 44 appearances for Germany at centre-back and full-back and played every minute on the way to triumph in the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

He played more than 330 times for Schalke before spending the 2017-18 season on loan at Juventus and then moving to Lokomotiv Moscow for two seasons. The Russian club agreed to release Hoewedes from his contract in June.

"I was recently with my wife and son in a camper van in the south of France," Hoewedes told Der Spiegel magazine in an interview published on Friday.

"I noticed how happy I was to see my son next to me. Football seemed so unimportant."

"My son is 21 months old and during my time in Moscow I wasn't able to enjoy it. And I suffered from it," he said.

Advertisement

"It's difficult to take the plunge, to give up playing in front of sold-out stadiums. Maybe this period with the coronavirus and these ghostly matches was a harbinger."

Hoewedes also criticized the "brutal" development of football, which "is moving further and further away from the fans".

He is the seventh 2014 world champion to hang up his boots. Two weeks ago, former Borussia Dortmund player Andre Schuerrle surprisingly retired at the age of just 29. —AFP ■

SUNDAY SPECIAL

The Global New Light of Myanmar

Appetite words

By Aurnt Bwe Kaung
Part-time tutor, Department of English, Taungoo University

MY mom is a great artist, indeed. Although her expertise is managing her office, household works and cooking, she never fails to put a sense of art anytime she does her works.

Last 10 years ago, our family was faced with a really tough time. Both my mom and dad were government staff. The whole family depended on my parents' salary which was not sufficient at that time to support a family since my dad was transferred to Sittway, Rakhine State. I was in Grade-9 and my two younger sisters were still at the primary school. So, almost half of my parents' money always went for school costs. Both of our parents had to struggle for the family.

Our family dinner was usually at around 7 pm as my mom went back from her office at 5:30. As soon as she was home, she changed her clothes and started cooking dinner for us. She gave us lectures like "how to clean the house, when to get up, how to behave well at school" while she was cooking. Since she was in her office compound, she plucked some leaves which are good to be meal such as water plants, rosselle, tender bale leaves, and tamarind, sometimes. We did not understand that it is a way to save money for the kitchen.

Indeed, meat was so rare to find room on our dinner table. Though we did not have much meat, we loved what our mom cooked for us as she gave appetite talks while we were having dinner. If the curry is only a bowl of sour tamarind soup and pounded chilies, she would start to talk about the life of happy peasants. She could illustrate our insipid dinner into a delicious scene without changing the curry theme.

"After our ancestor peasants have done their farm work, they plucked fresh leaves nearby the farm. They cooked a big bowl of soup with fresh leaves. They pounded chilies with a bit of salt. Then, they have their warm meal altogether happily." She expounded her lecture while putting more soup into a bowl in the middle of the table.

She somehow decorated our dinner with her words and stories. She might not want us to think that we are having poor meals. We do swear that we had the meal much better than we could by the power of my mom's appetite words. When she cooked bean soup, she would talk about the carefree life of Indians. Plus, she would add a remark that bean makes us strong. When we had just a bowl of fish sauce (Nga-pi-yae), for dinner, she created our appetite by making a medical remark that fish sauce is a combination of fishes so that we must be definitely healthy.

To be honest, we never think what our mom cooked for us was poor. Till now, I often have had great dinners at restaurants but I always yearn for my mom's appetite talks. I believe that there would be no more delicious dinner in the world than the dinner which is full of love under the dim candlelight with my mom's sparkling beautiful words.

■

AN ANSWER TO EVERY QUESTION

By Htar Sandi Naing
Third Year (Honours), English Specialization, University of Yangon

ONE might ask "Are there answers to every question?" I believe that as long as questions exist, there will be answers. Answers can be detected somehow. Questions shouldn't be called questions if there are no answers for them. All you need to do is not to relinquish while on the way to an answer. Stopping half way through unravelling a mystery is like the car that breaks down in the middle of the highway where no one is there to give you a hand. You will get lost in the middle. At that time, you may feel like you no longer have the energy to move forward or backward. You may be emotionally drained out like a car having no fuel to keep on moving.

Basically, when you get stuck in the middle without knowing what to do, I shall remind you not to give up. Giving up is not the solution to all the questions. Would you rather go back and start all over again? Or would you rather keep on trying hard and move forward? Would you rather refuel and fix your car or leave it behind as you walk back home?

There is indeed an answer to every question that exists on this planet. Though we may not have yet figured out the answer, we have to keep in mind that it is there. It is there waiting for us to look for it. It is hidden but we have to solve it. All we need is the determination while searching for it.

Whatever we do, we have to prepare our mind first. We definitely need to get the control of our mind. It matters a lot as it is one of the things which can drag us down. After getting the full control of your mind, you can start finding the answers to your questions. It's like starting up the engine before driving the car.

Before starting to look for an answer, we have to relax our mind a little bit. If not so, our mind will not have enough time to cool down. Similarly, we have to warm up the car engine as well before driving. If not so, it might stop working in the middle of it.

Some might say that we should stop searching for the answers to the questions. Quitting in the middle will not grant you success. It's like going back down while climbing up a mountain. Once you look up, you may think that you are too far to get to the peak. You just have to keep climbing up to get to the summit. You can't keep going back down every time you get scared. Can you keep on changing and quitting? If you keep on changing routes while driving, you will not get to the destination. It means you will never gain success in life as you have wasted your time while starting all over again and again. Never be afraid to face your problem. There is always a solution for every problem. It is up to you to look for the solution. Be intrepid.

Once you have a question, look for it until you find the answer. You need the courage to search for the answer. Face it! Don't avoid it! Defeat your fear! There is always an answer to every question. The answers are waiting to be revealed while hiding behind the questions. ■

A Society for a Better Life

By Rainbow
Second year honours Chemistry Specialization, Meiktila University

WE, all humans are social beings. We live in society and depending on mutual cooperation, the cause of which we have so much attachment among people. But then, since all human beings are fallible, we can face social problems between us. Social problems are harmful and dejecting conditions of a group of people. So, we had better choose the kind of society which would entirely be comfortable with us.

As for me, I have so many friends who come from all walks of life. I have learned from my real experience that Some of the people are antisocial. By "Antisocial behaviour" I mean "being noisy, rude and abusive to neighbours". As a result, nobody wants to live in that community any longer. Nor do I for living in such an uncivilized society would cause social anxiety. I also had to tolerate such a bad environment. Fortunately, I had a chance to stay within an educated society, named, "Water Hyacinth's Way: English Learning Class". It is a free of charge class, founded and taught by Sayadaw U Dhamma Sara, my mentor. It was here, in this learning environment that I have made friends with both undergraduate and postgraduate students. As for me, I had just sat for the matriculation exam.

The word " Educated Society " may sound arrogant to you. But the word 'education' really carries a profound meaning. Education is appreciated by all human beings, whether educated or not. Education is concerned with pursuing analytical knowledge. Analytical knowledge can criticize what is right or wrong, which is which and why. Education not only makes a person self-dependent but also helps him in decision making. Education is more than we can say, it can have philosophical attitude and equanimity. Our brain is no larger than a lifeless ball. But education or wisdom in our brain provides us with the ability to travel to the world and other planets. So, all people do appreciate education, as well as educated people.

As mentioned above, human is a social being. That is why, we had better live in a better society. But, I don't mean we have to live among graduated people. Our society tend to believe that education is akin to schooling. Education, true education isn't like this. Education is something to do with abstract knowledge. It has the ability to make peaceful. It is essential to lead a happy and prosperous life. It can change human living style and protect us from dangers and diseases. It can create the best social community. So one of the most important social phenomena is education for sure. It can shape mutual-understanding, mutual-respect and mutual-beliefs among people.

Besides, Herbert Spencer said: "The great aim of education is not knowledge but action". So, we need to take right action in parallel with education. Education can shape our lives for our own sake as well as for the sake of our new generation. And we must shape our future to get practical benefits with abstract knowledge which aims at education or wisdom.

Moreover, not only can education take place at school and in university but also at home and at the work place. A true education or wisdom is essential for many careers or jobs. For instance, an author will need to be well-educated in the arena of writing techniques , creative ideas and deep learning of what he or she is going to write. An engineer will need to have a practical knowledge how to construct in the reality, based on his or her theorical knowledge. Plus, every job requires the exercise of analytical knowledge. No matter what our education level or job, career is, every job or career must have analytical knowledge.

And then, we must try to get more knowledge as well as positive attitudes in the position we have been appointed to. I just want to live in such a beautiful society where all people always try to get analytical knowledge and good attitudes. In that society, our enthusiasm can be stimulated and motivated. Every motivation comes from a will to work hard. As for me, I was lucky to stay in a small world of educated people, in which most of my seniors have won scholarships and can speak English very well. They guided me how to learn education effectively and how to win scholarship. Most of my abilities could be shaped by my seniors I owe much gratitude. Moreover, Sayadaw U Dhamma Sara, my mentor and my seniors gave me a chance to stand on my own as an independent learner. As I mentioned above, education is an analytical knowledge and it can build a peaceful, social community. The deepest learning attitude and ideologies can result in the fruits of education and wisdom. So, if we live in an educated society, our life also will be peaceful. Such kind of society can support the growth and prosperity of new generations. Sometimes, our community and society may be narrow-minded, superstitious and conservative. We must find our way out. For youths, they had better choose an educated society. But then, we must not lose self-awareness, which is to support our former society where we grew up.

A saying goes, "Life is looking for betterment". As a human being, his deepest passion is that he wants the best development as much as he can. So, we must decide to move on to green pastures, i.e., it is none other than an educated society. That's why, every youth, promising new generation, must shape their future by looking around for a new educated society. That society can shape our lives better, and build a better and more prosperous society.

■

2 AUGUST 2020
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

PHOTOS: MYO SANDAR WINN

SARUS CRANE POPULATION SURVEYS IN MYANMAR DISCOVER NEW CRANE SITES

By Dr. Tran Triet,
Southeast Asia Programme Coordinator for the International Crane Foundation.

A Sarus Crane chick emerges from its shell! One hundred and twenty-five chicks hatched from nests surveyed by the team during the 2018 breeding season.

A small population of about 400 Sarus Cranes occurs in Myanmar, mostly in the Ayeyawady River Delta. These Sarus Cranes are isolated from the neighbouring populations in India and the Southeast Asian countries of Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. The Sarus Cranes in Myanmar nest and feed on large naturally-flooded rice fields and wetlands interspersed with Eleocharis sedges that produce the tubers they love.

During the Sarus Crane's breeding season from June to November 2018, the Myanmar Crane Team conducted weekly surveys in 102 villages in the Ayeyawady Region, and regularly monitored 78 crane nests. Of these nests, five were abandoned because of disturbances. One hundred and fifty-six eggs were recorded from the remaining 73 nests, from which 125 chicks were hatched and 87 eventually fledged. The fledgling success was almost 70 per cent and crude breeding success, the ratio of fledgling birds versus the number of laid eggs, was 56 per cent.

The team also surveyed the entire Ayeyawady Delta to locate new crane sites and estimate the total population. The team found 299 Sarus Cranes, of which 54 were juveniles. Seven new cranes sites were found in the coastal area and four new sites discovered in the upper delta. The finding of crane sites in the coastal area is an important discovery because it provides the first records of Sarus Crane habitats in the coastal zone of the Ayeyawady Delta.

Bring charming Irrawaddy dolphin back from extinction

By Nat Ye Hla

The Irrawaddy dolphin is an endangered species with a population less than a hundred.

Charming Irrawaddy dolphins.

THE killing of six Irrawaddy dolphins in six months has blown the lid off a big challenge from the illegal battery-shock fishing and pollution in the Ayeyawady River.

Though the conservation of the Irrawaddy dolphins, which are facing the risk of extinction, is considered on the right path, the species are often prey to electrofishing, which has been banned nationwide.

While the highest number of the endangered Irrawaddy dolphins was found this year since 2010, the

The survey carried out this year by the Wildlife Conservation Society of Myanmar (WCS) found 79 dolphins in the river.

With a rounded head and no beak, the three sub-populations of this distinctive dolphin can be found swimming along three rivers in South and Southeast Asia - Ayeyawady River (Myanmar), Mahakam (Indonesia) and Mekong (Cambodia). Recent estimates indicate that there are around 79 individuals left on the Ayeyawady, indicating this is a species right on the edge.

Nonetheless, less than 300 freshwater Irrawaddy dolphins still live, including in Cambodia and Indonesia. Although they are not directly exploited, these river dolphins suffer many threats, including entanglement in gill nets and illegal fishing activities such as electrofishing - which unsustainably removes their food source.

Nevertheless, fishing activities can be done in harmony with river dolphins. In the Ayeyawady river, the local fisherfolk use a traditional fishing method that portrays a unique relationship with the dolphins, called "Cooperative fishing". The fishermen "call" the dolphins by tapping a stick repeatedly on the side of the boat. If the dolphins are up to fishing, they chase shoals of fish towards the waiting nets and signalize the location of the prey.

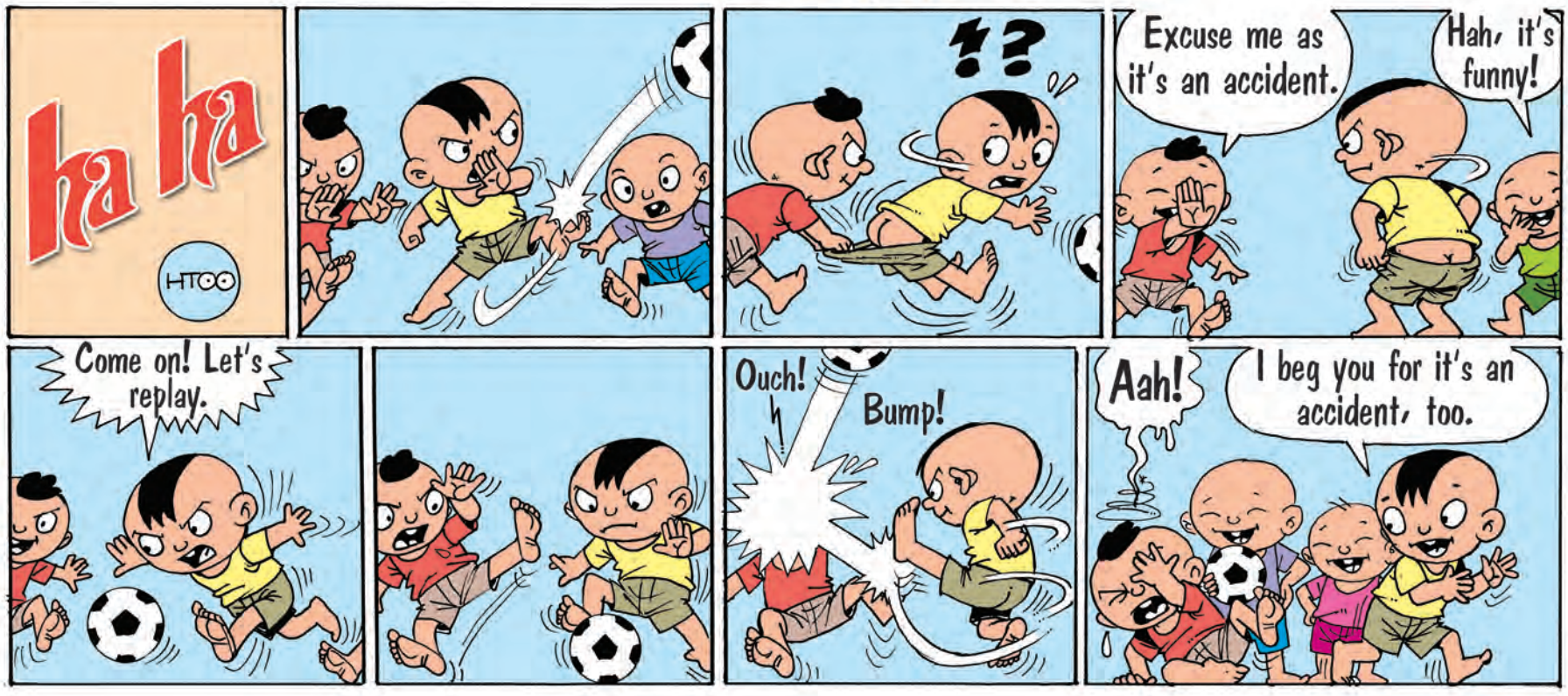
Once the fishermen cast their nets, the dolphins snatch the escaping fish. As this extraordinary interaction can be seen only in a few places around the world.

Two dolphins jump in Ayeyawady River. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Three baby Irrawaddy dolphins seen in Ayeyawady River. PHOTO: WCS

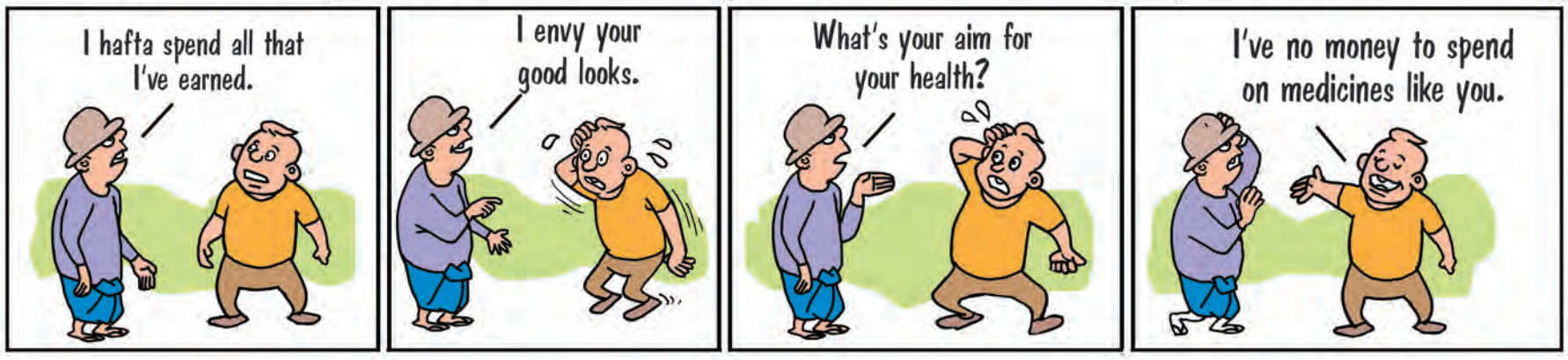
Irrawaddy dolphins are under the threat of electro-fishing method. PHOTO: HTAIK HTAR NAING

SUNDAY COMICS



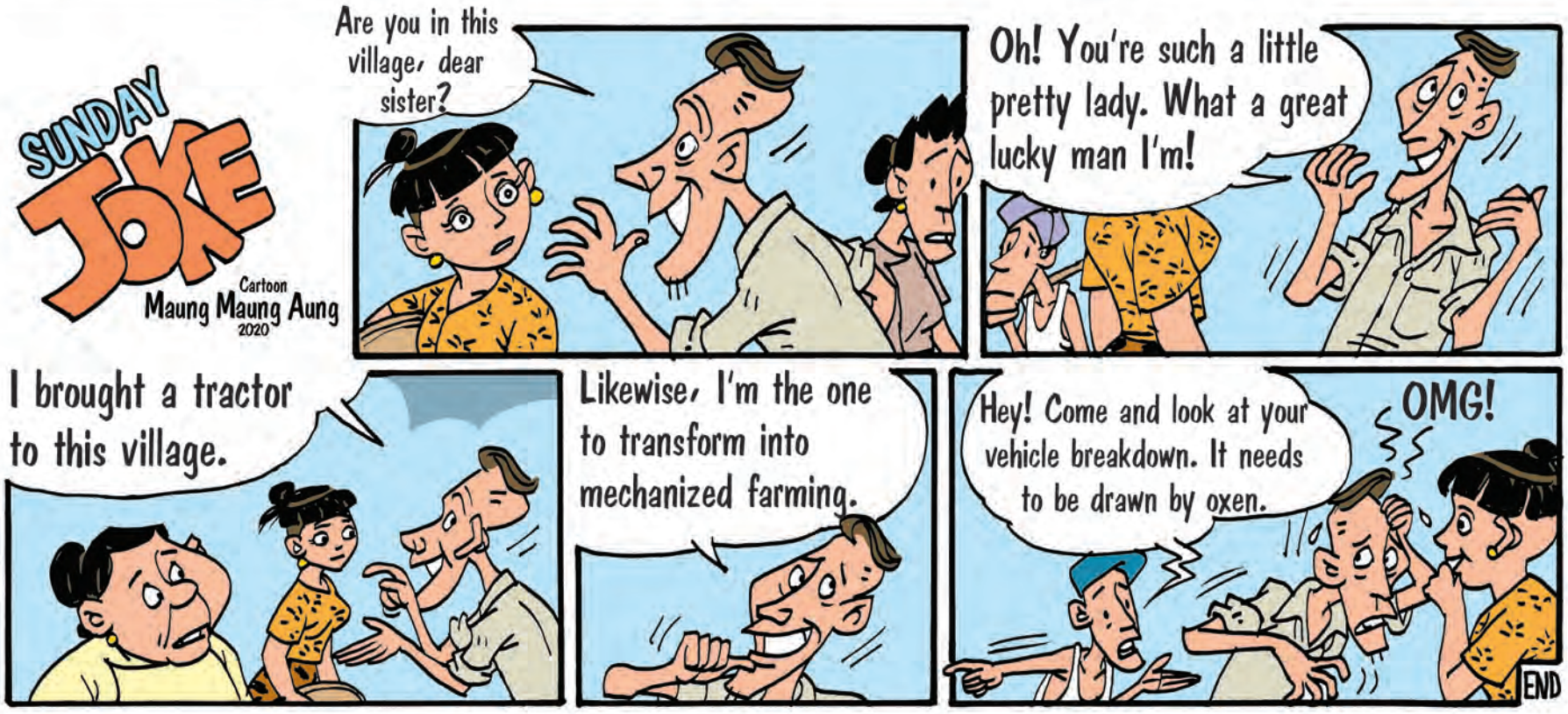
PEOPLE WILL BE PEOPLE

Cartoon
Maung Shwe Win



SUNDAY JOKE

Cartoon
Maung Maung Aung
2020



Asan-sar and the Gan-gaw-myaing Sardan

By Dr. Saw Mra Aung

THE Gan-gaw-myaing Sardan (ကုံကော်မြိုင်စာတမ်း) is an anthology of essays called ' *Asan-sar* (အစမ်းစာ) in Myanmar. It is so called, for most of the essays included in it were written by the participants of the *Gan-gaw-myaing* Literary Talks (ကုံကော်မြိုင်စာပေဝိုင်း) which were frequently held in the Early 1960s on the estate of Yangon University, which is often likened to *Gan-gaw-myaing* (Gan-gaw Forest).

The term ' *Asan-sar*' in this context corresponds to the English term ' Essay', whose French equivalent is ' Essai' meaning ' Attempt or trial or effort' in English. In a loose sense, an essay is a piece of writing that expresses information as well as the writer's opinion. The essays or Asan-sar in this book evoke aesthetic feelings in the readers' mind and imbue them with the writer's idiosyncratic view on their characters. After reading them, they feel as if they had read a good poem. So Sayagyi Zaw Gyi remarked that, like a poem or a novel or a drama, *Asan-sar* should be acknowledged as a sort of aesthetic literature.

' *Asan-sar*' is a sequel to the *Hkhit-san-sar* (ခေတ်စမ်းစာ)(Age –testing literature) movement which was launched at the advent of the 1930s. Prior to 1930, most of Myanmar writers were monks, ex-monks and products of monastic education. Therefore, they used to write long, verbose, complicated and rhymed sentences. Due to verbiage and grandiloquence, their writings hardly came off to the point. So their writing style was boring and tedious. As they focused only on kings, queens, princes, princesses, ministers and high- ranking officials from the court, they seemed to highlight the former glory of ancient Myanmar monarchy. Thus, their vaunted writings did not stand for the entire mass of the public.

When it came to 1930, a brood of Yangon University students such as Maung Sein Tin (Thit-pan- Maung Wa), Maung Ei Maung (Takatho Maung Thant Zin), Zaw Gyi, Minthu Wun, Kutha, Nwe Soe, etc, decided to revolt against this royal writing style. So they invented a new style of writing,fusing the traditionally classical style and the western academic form. Accordingly, they wrote shorter and clearer sentences and their topics were anything around them, whether they be beggars, dogs, cats, trees, brooks, etc. which caught their attention. They depicted their characters from the view-points different from those of others. They, from a vantage point, looked at the world and nature. Besides, they expressed their personal feelings towards their characters. Therefore, their writings could provide the readers with facts of human life, truths of the world and knowledge of nature. As a consequence, the readers could have deeper insight into nature and life. So the *Hkhit-san-sar* was hailed as a sort of literature modern and appropriate to the times by some readers, although traditionalist writers castigated it severely. It was at its height in the mid of the 1930s and went into eclipse and petered out in 1940 when the Second World War spread to Myanmar.

It is found that *Asan-sar* came back into vogue due to the endeavours of new generation writers about two decades afterwards. In the early 1960s, Thakatho Win Mon and Zaw Myint, in league with other literary enthusiasts, frequently held the *Gan-gaw-myaing* Literary Talks (ကုံကော်မြိုင်စာပေဝိုင်း),on the premises of Yangon University. Especially, they ardently perused essays written by western authors and wrote *Asan-sar* or essays on their own in the innovative style. Saya U Aung Thin wrote an essay titled 'ချိုတကူးနှင့် ဂုဏ်ရည်မတူ (Cho-ta-gu and Being Unequal in Status)', Thakatho Win Mon, an essay titled 'ဗမာစွန် (Burma Kite)' and Maung Zaw, an essay titled 'ငါးမမျှားရ (Don't fish)'respectively. Then they mooted their essays to Sayagyi Zaw Gyi for scrutiny. The latter gave feed-back on usage, syntax and idea-organization of the essays. When they told Sayagyi that they were to publish their essays in the book-form , the latter suggested to them that as the essays were small in number, the essays of his and those of his colleagues should be added. Thus, they got 26 essays in total for publication. And, at the suggestion of Sayagyi Zaw Gyi, they named the anthology of those essays ' Gan-gaw-myaing Sardan '. It was published by Bagan Publication House in 1969 for the first time. It has been published so far for five times. It is successful to the extent that some essays of it were included in the Prescribed Text for High School Myanmar Prose.

The *Gan-gaw-myaing Sardan* comprises 26 essays- three by Zaw Gyi, three by Min Thu Wun, two by Nwe Soe, three by Taik Soe , three by Min Yu Wai, three by Takatho Win Mon, two by Maung Zaw, one by Tin Moe and three by Maung Pe Than. The essays written by Zaw Gyi are 'နွေဦးကျက်သရေ (The Grace of Spring)', 'ကဗျာဝိုင်းစာဝိုင်းနှင့် ကျွန်တော် ' (Poetry and Lireray Talks and Me)' and 'ပုဂံမြို့ဟောင်းနှင့် ကျွန်တော်' (Old Bagan and Me)' those by Min Thu Wun are 'အိုးစည်သံ (Sounds of the Open-ended Drum with a Long Body)', 'အလွမ်းရယ်တဲ့ ၁၂ ထွေ (Yearning All the Year Round) 'and 'လူလည်းတထွေရေလည်းတစ်ခြား (Different Races in the Oversea Country),' those by Nwe Soe are 'ကုသိုလ်ဆက် (The Action Sustaining the Merit Already Existed)' and 'စိမ်းလန်းသောတောင်ကုန်းများ (Green Hills)', those by Taik Soe are 'အနုသုခုမ (Aesthestic Art)', ဇော်ဂျီနှင့် နှုတ်ခမ်းဆိုးဆေး ' The (Alchemist and Lip-stick Colour) and 'နေဝင်မြင်သည်ဝရွှေပြည် (The City of Inwa Seen at Dusk),' those by Min Yu Wai are ' တစ်နှစ်တစ်ခါ (Once in a Year)', 'ပိုင်ဆိုင်ခြင်း (Ownership)', and 'ဦးရာကျော်ကောင်းမှု (The Merit of U Yar Kyaw)', those by Aung Thin are 'အနီးအဝေး' (Closeness and Distance), 'ချိုတကူးနှင့် ဂုဏ်ရည်မတူ' (Cho-ta-ku and Being Unequal in Status), and 'ရွှေယုန်နှင့် ရွှေကျား (Golden Rabbit and Golden Tiger)', those by Takatho Win Mon are 'ဗမာစွန်' (Burman Kite), 'မိဖြူ (Mi Phyu)' and 'ဆားဒယ် (The Shallow, Open Square-shaped Iron-box Used for Salt-making),those by Maung Zaw are 'မနက်စောစော (Early Morning)', and 'သီဂီရသ (Singara Rasa), that by Tin Moe is ' သင်းချိုင်းကုန်းမှာ (At the Cemetery Mound)', and those by Maung Pe Than are 'ထင်းရှူးပင်ယိမ်ပုံပမာ (Like the Example of a Fir)', 'သီချင်းညည်းတတ်သည့်အလေ့ (The Habit of Crooning Songs)' and 'စလောင်းဖုံးတစ်ချပ် (A Cauldron Lid)'.

It is found that the characters of the essays included in the Gan-gaw-myaing Sardan are ordinary things animate and inanimate, such as water-pot stands, a female cat, poor Indian couples, whores, a lid of a cauldron, a tree, etc. Ostensibly, they look unimportant and unemotional. However, the writers, with their curious eyes, look at them at the close range and paint a vivid picture of them. The choice of the words is so exquisite, beautiful, evocative and comprehensible that they can make an emotional appeal to the readers' mind and heart. So, even the characters which are ordinary things appears important to the readers. Feelings such as kindness, sympathy, understanding, happiness etc are provoked in their mind. At the same time, they got more profound understanding of life, nature and the world. Therefore, the writer think that the Gan-gaw-myaing Sardan is a precious literary work and that writing of such essays or Asan-sar should be encouraged and revived.

Do We Need Heroes for Our Natural Resources?

By Yar Zar Myint Zaw
B.Sc, Pathein University

As we all know the all-round situations of Myanmar, the sector of natural resources is seriously important. In Myanmar, there are various kinds of natural resources such as offshore and inland crude oil, natural gases, coal, brass, copper, gems, jade, iron, all of which can be manufactured commercially. The best quality ruby of Myanmar can influence 90% of the world's market. Myanmar is the only region in the world that can yield jade most.

Myanmar also depends upon the taxes from the natural resources because, out of all taxes in the whole country, 5.2% is from them, according to EITI (Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative). Although it is said Myanmar is rich in natural resources, the degree of her poverty is the deepest to the extreme. There are not enough schools complete with facilities for the students to learn. There are not enough hospitals and dispensaries complete with medicines and necessary equipment for the medical treatment. The conditions are especially worse in the region where the natural resources are being explored. Although Myanmar is rich in natural resources, since the rate of her economic development progresses more slowly than the countries which are in lack of resources, the country is figuratively referred to being 'under the spell of the curse of resources'.

It must be pointed out, therefore, that Myanmar is weak in the management of natural resources.

According to the Natural Resources Governance Institute, 2017, the index of managing natural resources of Myanmar stood in the position of 83 out of 93 countries. It indicates our management is the worst. In other words, Myanmar lacks essential management in exploring natural resources and making the profit beneficial for the citizens. It also implies that some companies and cronies have still been taking more chances of seizing benefits.

Resources are not permanent and limitless. They will one day run out and be finally used up in the long term. According to The Global Witness, some ex-officials and cronies own many sites of jade in Phakant, Kachin State and they do jade mining as their heart's content. Unless the responsible personnels of the State Level can manage, jade will soon disappear from Myanmar's land.

At present, Myanmar reveals the most prominent lesson in which the rate of poverty is rising due to the fact that the resources cannot be managed well. Just not deniable! The benefits of well-managing in the mining of natural resources can result in the poverty alleviation of the country, the reduction of the harm caused by the disasters and the avoidance of unnecessary casualties that often occur at any time.

During recent days, there took place a landslide in Phakant that tolled nearly 200 deaths of local jade mining workers. This signals the red light of the inferior management on natural resources. Jade... Yes, Jade... But blood-stained Jade. If the management of natural resources has been improved, the rate of the flow of incoming taxes rises more; that of the developing economy also is quicker and the sector of natural resource federalism gets more vivid. The consequence is that the tension between the ethnic groups can be reduced and it leads to peace.

Myanmar people earnestly expect the members of the legislature to forward in our Hluttaw the laws and the bylaws that will effectively manage our natural resources and the benefits from them as soon as possible. In short, all of us must remember that the word 'State-own' refers to all citizens, but not for a handful of the privileged. ■

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