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State Counsellor discusses resumption of football events under COVID-19 guidelines



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds a videoconference on possible resumption of football events and government's assistance to sports sector on 12 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi held a videoconference on the possible resumption of football events under control measures against the COVID-19.

Participants at the virtual meeting were Permanent Secretary Dr Thet Khaing Win from the Ministry of Health and Sports, President U Zaw Zaw from Myanmar Football Federation and former Myanmar

national selection goalkeeper Thiha Sithu.

First of all, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Chairperson of the National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), said the discussion would be on the restarting of football matches during the COVID period; Myanmar is interested in football match-

es; that was why football fans would be interested to know when football matches would be restarting, the situation of football matches and how the footballers were faring.

Lifestyle and food were important for good health; it was important to eat healthy food and to take regular exercise in adequate amounts; if a person had good food and regular exercise, it could be said that this

person had good health; that was why health and sports had been put together.

She said during the discussions, she wanted the participants to explain the negative impact of COVID-19 on sports and the efforts to mitigate the negative effects as much as possible; she had read the news that a vaccine for the treatment of COVID-19 has been discovered in Russia; we do not know

yet the veracity of this news report; if the news were true efforts would be made to get this vaccine for the Myanmar people immediately; during this interim period she wanted the people to be patient and keep on following the rules and regulations; if these rules and regulations were being followed, we would be able to overcome the health problem.

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One new case of COVID-19 in Myanmar reported on 12 August, total figure reaches 361

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases reached 361 after 1 new case was reported on 12 August according to Ministry of Health and Sports. Case No. 361 returned from India. Out of the 361 confirmed cases, six died, 318 have recovered, 310 have been discharged from hospitals and 16 were held under investigation.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 12 August 2020



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

New PUIs

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Vice President U Henry Van Thio inspects development sectors in Sagaing, Chin

VICE PRESIDENT U Henry Van Thio arrived at Kalay airport in Sagaing Region by flight after leaving Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

The Vice President and his entourage, including Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Deputy Ministers U Tin Myint, U Khin Maung Win and U Myint Kyaing, Permanent Secretary U Shwe Lay, Directors-General and other officials, were welcome by Chin State Chief Minister Salai Lian Lwal, Speaker of Chin State Hluttaw U Zo Bawi and other departmental officials.

The Vice President, in his capacity as Chairperson of National Disaster Management Committee presented K30 million cash assistance for river bank erosion prevention measures in Bi village in Mingin township and K 4.5 million for river bank erosion prevention measures in Myauksi village of Kalay to the region government.

Then, the Vice President and party inspected coffee farm (Htayzan) of coffee research and information centre in Tiddim Township of Chin State and U Aung Myo Oo, head of state



Vice President U Henry Van Thio hears reports on construction of a new indoor sports stadium in Tiddim Township on 12 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

Department of Agriculture explained distribution processes of coffee beans to local coffee farmers.

After hearing the reports, the Vice President instructed to adopt the way of growing coffee seed instead of giving the coffee sprouts from the coffee farm to the coffee farmers from remote regions as they might face high logistic costs, damages and insufficient sprouts.

He later inspected the construction works of new sports stadium (Bwazan) in Tiddim and instructed to build systematically in line with the criteria after U Than Aung, director of Chin State Sports and Physical Department briefed the facts of new stadium.

The new stadium is 120ft in length, 90ft in width and 36ft in height and is being constructed with K247.5million budget of 2019-2020FY.

He inspected construction of the general administrative office and U Aung Min Khant, project manager of Equal Construction and Decoration Co.,ltd explained the works.

It is a two-storey truss building with140ft in length, 34ft in width and 24ft in height and worth of K384.327 million.

—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

Statement of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) on its inspection of prisons, jails and lock-ups in Myanmar in 2020

1. Since its establishment under Order No. 3/2020 of the Office of the President on 14 January 2020, the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC) has inspected prisons, jails, police detention centres, court lock-ups and hospital guard-wards, on scheduled dates, in accordance with section 43 of the Commission Law in order to examine whether prisoners and detainees are treated in conformity with humanitarian norms, international human rights instruments and domestic legislation.

2. In inspecting, as stipulated in section 44 of the Commission law, spaces in the prisons, jails and lock-ups and facilities for those detained are examined and independent interviews with the prisoners and detainees are conducted. The findings of the inspections together with recommendations are referred to the relevant Union-Level organizations.

3. Since the commencement of its functions till July 2020, the Commission has inspected 10 prisons, 8 jails, 12 police detention centres, 7 court lock-ups and 5 hospital guard-wards as follows:

(a) 27 January to 1 February: Mandalay Central Prison; Meikhtila Prison; Htone Bo –Male 1, Htone Bo Male 2, Htone Bo Female, 24-mile and Phayar Ngasu Labour Camps; police detention centres, court lock-ups and hospital guard-wards in Meiktila.

(b) 18 to 21 February: Pyay Prison; Paungde Prison, police detention centres, court lock-ups and hospital guard-wards .

(c) 24 February: Sarmalaut Agricultural and Livestock Training School.

(d) 17 to 21 March: Putao Prison; Myitkyina Prison, police detention centres,court lock-ups and hospital guard-wards.

(e) 8 and 9 July: Insein Central Prison;

(f) 14 to 17 July: Yamethin Prison; Nay Pyi Taw Jail, Pyinmana police detention centre and labour camps 1 and 2 of Kintha.

(g) 23 July: Thayet Prison; Thayet police detention centre and court lock-up.

4. On these inspection tours, 361 prisoners and detainees were allowed to separately meet the inspection team to freely reveal their difficulties, violations of their rights and judicial matters without the presence of prison employees. After reviewing their revelations, the relevant organizations at the Union Level are informed accordingly.

5. The team carried out the inspections in accordance with the United Nations Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, contained in section 41 and section 42 of the Procedure of the MNHRC Law and, Myanmar Police Manual and, based on the findings, the following recommendations have

already been put forward to the relevant Union-Level organizations:

(a) Related to health	37
(b) Related to education	10
(c) Related to administration	53
(d) Related to prison transfer	5
(e) Related to sanitation	13
(f) Related to family visit	8
(g) Related to food	6
(h) Related to library	1
(i) Related to prison buildings	11
(j) Related to Lack of communications with families	1
(k) Related to appeal cases	1
(l) Related to drinking water	1
Total	147

6. While inspecting prisons,jails and lock-ups, the inspection team also monitored the implementation of the previous recommendations and progress achieved. The implementation of the new recommendations resulting from the current inspections will be re-examined as well on next inspection tours.

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission
Date:12 August 2020

2020 MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY GENERAL ELECTION

Who is eligible to vote?

- irrespective of sex or religion
- those who are 18 years of age on the date of the election
- citizens, associate citizens, and those who have permission to become naturalized citizens, who do not contravene the provisions of the Hluttaw Election Law
- a person whose name has been included in the voting list of the respective constituency

Who is ineligible to vote?

- a member of a religious order
- person serving a prison sentence
- person adjudged to be of unsound mind as provided for in the relevant law
- person who has not yet been discharged as an insolvent
- person prohibited by the Election Law
- foreigner or person who has assumed foreign citizenship

2020
General Election
Sunday, 8 November 2020



Section 59 (g) in Hluttaw Election Law

IN accordance with section 59 (g) of the Hluttaw Election Law, no one is allowed to vote more than once in any election for a Hluttaw constituency in which he or she has the right to vote. Anyone who is found guilty of or abetting this act shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year, or with fine not exceeding K100,000 (one hundred thousand Kyats), or with both.

State Counsellor discusses resumption of football events under COVID-19 guidelines

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Next, Permanent Secretary Dr Thet Khaing Win discussed the importance of physical exercise in healthcare and medical treatments, as well as in the relief of diseases; due to serious measures against the pandemic under the instruction of central committee and the management of MoHS since early January, Myanmar was a 195th country that found the first positive case in the world; rules of control measures have some impacts on the socio-economic sector of the country, but restrictions were systematically relaxed phase by phase to avoid the second wave of a pandemic like in other countries; regular and unexpected checks were carried out at the businesses which were allowed for reopening.

Health authorities inspected the Yangon United Football Club in Hline Township, Thuwunna football stadium and Yangon Football Academy, and discussed with officials for the Standard operating procedures or guidelines to be able to resume football events; the Myanmar National League has been permitted to restart for the first stage.

On the basis of international guidelines for football events, Myanmar has adopted its appropriate SOP; the games will be held only in Yangon, instead of home and away matches where

spectators are not allowed in the stadium to watch; all the participating players, referees and relevant persons will have to live in the camp for the whole football season; a total of 300 persons have been tested negative; it has been instructed not to closely celebrate for the goals and to adhere to guidelines in the matches and training sessions.

He continued to say that more sports competition will be allowed on the basis of results from control measures in MNL.

Former Myanmar national selection player goalkeeper Thi-

tional norms of contracts with the clubs during the events were suspended; there are a total of 5,000 persons, including players, referees, coaches and managers, in the Myanmar professional football industry, as well as about 50,000 amateur persons.

He finally pledged to follow healthcare guidelines to prevent the pandemic.

President U Zaw Zaw from Myanmar Football Federation said that Myanmar National League becomes a professional league in 2009 and contracts with local and foreign players

the players from the leagues and it has been approved by the AFF to take part in the Asian Champion League and the AFC competitions.

The competitions were held in accordance with the season's fixture list. The events were suspended on 20 March and planned to restart on 14 July after the MoHS officials inspected preparations. The MFF used its dormitories, academies and training facilities as the COVID-19 quarantine centres and a total of 3,000 persons have been accommodated there.

U Zaw Zaw added that the MNL events are scheduled for 22 August to restart; after finishing all the games in October, the selection for the national team will be carried out.

He said that two football clubs from the League One were dissolved due to financial difficulties, leaving only 10 clubs in this league; while football club owners have spent a lot of their money for development of Myanmar football, while the MFF has struggled for surviving for 15 years without using the state budgets; the MoHS is also requested to provide more supports.

As local events are also related to Asian level and world level competitions, the executive meeting of AFF was also held online.

The MFF president added the women football events are expected to resume at the end of this year, as well as futsal and aged-classes events; the detailed plans up to December will be reported to the MoHS for its approval.

He also requested to air the events on MRTV and to reopen dormitories at the football academies; explained the sponsor organizations have reduced by around 50 to 60 per cent of their contracts due to economic decline at home and abroad, resulting from the cuts in the number of events and cost.

Amidst the pandemic situations, Myanmar is in the best status, compared with other ASEAN member-countries due to the systematic management of the government and people's adherence to the control measures.

U Zaw Zaw also advised the government to organize school football competitions to promote the soccer level of the country.

The MoHS has planned to organize school football competitions; the WHO is discussing the announcement of Russia on the discovery of COVID-19 vaccine; Myanmar has negotiated with relevant and international organizations to get the vaccines; the ministry is relaxing restriction gradually.

... if all the citizens of a country participated and cooperated with the spirit of a good team, the development of the country could be assured; ...

ha Sithu briefed the impacts of COVID-19 on the income of footballers; suspension of training for some months due to this disease; resumption of the events; agreements for lesser salaries to relieve financial losses of football clubs; MNL players cannot do other jobs in line with interna-

were made in line with the rules of the International Federation of Association Football and the Asian Football Confederation; the success of MNL club is also the dignity of Myanmar; there are 12 clubs in League One and 8 clubs in League Two in MNL; national selection team was formed with

State Counsellor discusses resumption of football events under COVID-19 guidelines

FROM PAGE-3

With respect to the discussions the State Counsellor said that she wanted the footballers to restart their football matches as soon as possible; in the same way, she wanted the country to be up and running in a regular fashion; we need to verify quickly the news about the discovery of preventive vaccine; the Ministry of Health and Sports has been working diligently regarding the prevention of COVID-19; if the situation became safe, she wanted the concerned authorities to allow football matches to be played in the most expeditious manner.

She wanted to know what kind of assistance could be given by the health authorities about the capability loss by footballers for being away from training sessions for about 4 to 5 months; during the quarantine period it was easy to give them special exercises in a systematic way and make efforts to improve their capabilities by providing good food and proper healthy regimes; just as the Myanmar Football Federation has been giving assistance, she wanted the Ministry of Health and Sports to provide assistance from the government side; success in the field of sports was also a success for the country and a matter of pride and dignity for the country; at one time Burma selected football team was the top in Asia; she still remembered this; we need to work hard to reach this level again.

Basically, it was important for the people's health to be good; the fact that Myanmar footballers could play the first part well and during the second part their performance declined was due to the fact that these players had not received adequate nutrition during their youth; it was difficult to repair their health as they became older; the stamina of players who had received adequate nutrition from the time of their birth and players who had not received adequate nutrition during the same period was not the same; we have to make a lot of effort to reach up to international standard; just as efforts are made in the health sector, efforts need to be made in the sports sector also; cooperation was the key and also important;



State Counsellor holds a videoconference on the resumption of football events and support of government on 12 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

if efforts were made as a team real success could be achieved.

In some sports, some people believed that it could be accomplished by a single person; for example, a swimming champion might think that success was achieved single-handedly because the swimming events were individual events; it could not be forgotten that during the process of building up stamina and training, other people had been involved; there were his family and coaches during various stages of his career; no one could know everything single-handedly; we have to take into account the environment, the team and supporters; this is a very important fact; she liked football very much because the world of football brings out this fact in a clear and vivid manner; in playing football, apart from playing the game as a hobby, the spirit of cooperation was very important.

She wanted the footballers to be role models for the youths; she was not saying that they had to be role models in every field; footballers could become role models in having teamwork; it was not the excellence of one single person, for this person had to rely on his comrades to develop his capabilities and skills; in the same way this person had to help his comrades to develop their capabilities and skills; to be able to show this fact was very good for the country; this kind of spirit and training was very good for a new country, a country which

had embarked on the road to development and a developing country; the fact that footballers are taking reduced salaries is for the benefit of supporters and donors who were supporting the team; this kind of spirit is very good; to be able to show how to build up a certain kind of strength through cooperation is very good indeed; this is the spirit of a footballer.

The spirit of a good foot-

resumed.

In her concluding remark, the State Counsellor said the government encourages football not only as a game but also as a tool for motivation; football competitions need to be organized at schools; each town must have at least a football ground; the economic situation of business firms plays a crucial role for supporting this industry; development of sports is related

have caused the outbreak of the second wave; imposition of rules again have more impacts on the country and its people; football events should be aired on the television channels and it will surely motivate the people.

The State Counsellor continued to say that the government will work for the people as much as possible although the country is not a developed and prosperous nation; doubt on Myanmar's capacity for controlling COVID-19 have been removed; the sportsman spirit is needed to maintain the prevailing success in this measure; this attitude must be cultivated in facing win or loss; the defeat must be turned into the victory; as the spirit of the athlete is valued, this profession will also be supported.

She said that football can attract the largest number of global fans; Myanmar football status should be developed; with understanding the impacts of COVID, the government will render possible assistance; all the resources of the country are intended for its people as 'People are the Key'; resources and wealth of country are just for the people, including football players; recovery of football industry will be facilitated, and the government will help for the earliest resumption of football events and airing the games on television channels.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Myaing, Aung Khin)

...the sportsman spirit is needed to maintain the prevailing success in this measure; this attitude must be cultivated in facing win or loss; the defeat must be turned into the victory; ...

baller is the spirit of a good team; the spirit of a good team should be the spirit of a country; if all the citizens of a country participated and cooperated with the spirit of a good team, the development of the country could be assured; the efforts that had been made to restart the Myanmar National League matches were not only in accordance with the rules and regulations issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports but also in accordance with the needs of the country; this was why she was happy to learn that it was possible for the Myanmar National League matches to be

to the prosperity of a country; plans for football events during the pandemic are good; the central committee on COVID-19 holds the meeting every 15 days for relaxing restrictions.

She added that the government will consider about the football academies and the dormitories of private schools; both of these issues are being related; high schools have been reopened for one month and restrictions will be eased in accordance with the outcome; the immediate recovery is expected for the whole country through safe plans; public pressures for relaxing control measures

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing donates blood in Yangon

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing encouraged Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, Air) officers from Yangon Command who donated blood collectively at National Blood Bank under the Ministry of Health and Sports in Latha Township in Yangon yesterday morning.

At the National Blood Bank, Deputy Director-General Dr Thida Aung explained the works in blood donation of Tatmadaw members.

The Senior General and Tatmadaw personnel had participated in the blood donation with military officers and well-wishers, they presented nutritious foods to those who donated blood with friendly greeting.

The Senior General presented the nutritious foods to the blood donors.

The Deputy Director- Gen-



Tatmadaw (Army, Navy, Air) officers from Yangon Command donate blood at National Blood Bank in Latha Township on 12 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

eral received food supplements
donated by the Tatmadaw fam-
ilies, and returned certificates

of honour.
Tatmadaw (Army, Navy,
Air) officers have donated blood

for nine times to the same blood
bank, according to the Office
of the Commander-in-Chief of

Defence Services.—MNA
(Translated by
Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung inspects border area development, human resources development in Shan State

UNION Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Ye Aung accompanied by Shan State Minister for Security and Border Affairs Colonel Hla Oo inspected the progress of border areas and human resources on 10 August.

The Union Minister and party arrived at the Technical School for Nationalities Youths from Border Areas in Aungban and the officials of training school briefed the construction works of 4-storey teaching building, 3-storey sleeping quarter, 3-storey with 4 attached apartments of civil-servant housing, warehouse and kitchen.

The Union Minister said the new Technical School for Nationalities Youths from Border Areas will be opened soon and the modern kinds of training for vehicle maintenance, mason/carpenter, electricity and aircon maintenance, welding and mobile phone repair will be available at the school for the local youths and the qualified teachers will teach by



Union Minister Lt-Gen Ye Aung looks into teaching aid materials at Technical School for Nationalities Youths from Border Areas in Aungban on 10 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

using modern teaching materials.

The TVET vocational subjects are valuable for sustainable development of lives and it also needs to conduct departmental qualification courses to improve the skills and teaching method of the relevant instructors, he added.

The Union Minister and party inspected at the Training School for Development of Nationalities Youths from Border Areas in Pindaya on 11 August and awarded those who passed the matriculation exam of 2019-2020 academic year and inspected the school

compound.

The Union Minister and party also visited the road construction sites in Pindaya and Ywangan townships of Danu Self-administered Zone. The engineers-in-charge explained the operation from the beginning to

the end of the projects with documentary photos.

The Union Minister said that despite restrictions during the COVID-19 crisis, human resources development and border area development activities could be performed well by spending the permitted fund for 2019-2020 financial year; and the works were completed on time in accordance with the set standards. The Union Minister also urged the officials to exactly follow the COVID-19 preventive measures set by the Ministry of Health and Sports during implementation of the works, and to try to complete the work with the set standards on time.

The Union Minister also urged the locals to cooperate for the long-term stability after the work finished and coordinate the requirements.— MNA ■

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

One new case of COVID-19 in Myanmar reported on 12 August, total figure reaches 361

FROM PAGE-1

One new case of COVID-19 on 12 August 2020: updated at 8 pm

Case No	Age	Gender	Address	Contact with positive patient	Oversea travel history	Hospital for medical treatment	Lab result	Remark
361	35	Male	Yankin Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India	Waibargi Specialist Hospital, Yangon	Positive	Keep under Investigation (Dagon Township)

Union Minister U Kyaw Tin holds videoconference on advance voting of nationals abroad at Myanmar missions in foreign countries



Union Minister U Kyaw Tin discusses on voting processes of nationals abroad with heads of Myanmar missions in foreign country on 11 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

UNION Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin discussed with heads of Myanmar missions in foreign countries about advance voting of nationals

abroad on 11 August.

The meeting was also participated by Permanent Secretary U Soe Han from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Director-General U Aung

Soe Win from the Planning and Administrative Department, Deputy Director-General U Ye Yint Lwin from the Union Election Commission and the ambassa-

dors, permanent representatives, consuls- general and chargé d'affaires from a total of 45 missions abroad.

At the meeting, the Union Minister shared the message of the President to ensure free and fair elections, not to lose voting rights, preparedness for advance voting and assistance of relevant ministries for voting of Myanmar nationals abroad at the 2020 General Election; the need of tripartite coordination among the UEC, MoFA and Myanmar missions abroad to avoid any mismanagements for the elections under restrictions and suspensions of international flights amid COVID-19.

He also quoted in saying the section 47 (b) of Hluttaw Election Law, that ‘the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall take the responsibility of communicating with those who are outside the country and who have the right to vote so as to

enable them to vote in advance’.

The Union Minister advised all the mission heads to thoroughly study directives for advance voting process at their offices, preparations for healthcare measures and reviewing experiences from the previous elections.

He also discussed topics related to extension of 5 August deadline for the voters to fill Form (15), sending back Form 3 of the voters to the MoFA by 17 August through Myanmar missions, carrying advance voting ballot papers to the missions and the secrete vote papers back to the MoFA, adhering to rules of guidelines on COVID-19 control measures of host countries and hotlines for enquiries to the UEC.

Officials from MoFA and the Deputy Director-General of UEC replied to the discussions and questions of participants.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye presides over coordination meeting of MYAC

THE government has developed and implemented long-term plans to promote youth human resources and nurture young generations, said Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye at the second coordination meeting of the Myanmar Youth Affairs Committee (MYAC) in Nay Pyi Taw on 11 August afternoon.

The meeting was also attended by Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe, Deputy Minister U Soe Aung, the Permanent Secretaries, the Directors-General, and the Deputy Directors-General of the relevant ministries, and MYAC members across the country.

At the meeting, Dr Win Myat Aye, in his capacity as Chairperson of the MYAC, said that relevant ministries, representatives for young people, and technical advisors collaboratively drafted the Youth Affairs Policy. The National Strategic Plan of the policy has also been drafted. The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement discussed and collaborated with regional governments to launch Youth Centres in States and regions, and allocated budget funds for purchase of necessary things related to youth develop-

ment. Youth Centres are places in which young people can participate in activities such as the arts and sports.

Dr Win Myat Aye also highlighted the yearly Youth All-Round Development Festivals, which are aiming for promotion of physical, mental, social, and professional abilities of young people, held in the period from 2017 to 2019. He also encouraged the young people of Myanmar to take part in international youth activities.

Two delegates of the MYAC are officially participating in ASEAN youth activities.

Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi, in his capacity as committee Vice-Chairperson (1) of MYAC, said that “duties and responsibilities of MYAC members (draft)” has already been drawn up. He continued that National Strategic Plan of the Youth Affairs Policy has already been drafted, and young people will be able to work collaboratively in accordance with the plan.

Dr Myo Thein Gyi also emphasized the “1,000 days after birth” programme conducted by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

He said that the programme is fundamental to lifelong learning process. He continued that his ministry is working to create an education environment which will be suitable for education amid COVID-19 crisis. Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe, in his capacity as committee Vice-Chairperson (2) of MYAC, said that all relevant ministries and organizations need to work collaboratively in implementation of the Youth Affairs Policy. He continued that young people need to be healthy, educated, altruistic, and patient as well as they need to work unitedly

in order to achieve their goals. He also urged the young people to have healthy lifestyle, good friends and good ethics.

In the meeting, the MYAC Secretary Director-General Dr San San Aye from the Department of Social Welfare, officials from relevant ministries, and youth delegates of the MYAC discussed the “duties and responsibilities of MYAC members (draft)”, matters related to sub-committees and implementation of the strategic plan.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye takes part in the discussions at the second coordination meeting of Myanmar Youth Affairs Committee in Nay Pyi Taw on 11 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

Need to prevent and severely restrict dangerous illegal border crossings



In this type of situation, all of us need to prevent and severely restrict dangerous illegal border crossings. Those who come in illegally do not enter quarantine; if they carry the infection, the disease can spread to others. The steps needed to be taken to investigate and search for people who might have been exposed to the disease (contact tracing) and to quarantine them is such a huge burden for the country. This is a duty we have to undertake without fail so that the people would be free from danger.

Those who come into the country illegally, those who receive them knowingly, and those who cover up will be dealt with strictly and severely according to the law. If you happen to know any occurrence that endangers the public, please inform the ward/village administrative authorities. Giving this type of information does not mean that you are putting someone into trouble. This is just to prevent innocent people from falling into the COVID-19 abyss.

(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's Facebook post on 13 June 2020)

JICM preliminary meeting concluded with 'good results'

THE NCA Implementation Framework Coordination Group Leader Sao Sai Ngern said that the three-day Joint Implementing Coordination Meeting (JICM) preliminary meeting, which was held at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC) in Nay Pyi Taw, was fruitful and obtained good results.

The final-day session of the preliminary meeting was held yesterday afternoon.

The objective of the JICM preliminary meeting is to prepare for the upcoming 9th JICM meeting, and the fourth session of the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong.

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

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

During the meeting, the Coordination Group Leader Sao Sai Ngern said that the three-day preliminary meeting was fruitful because it could make decisions on meeting plan for the upcoming 9th JICM meeting, which would be held on 13 August, and could discuss the matters related to the upcoming fourth session of the Union Peace Conference. Despite both sides' concerns, they could frankly discuss interpretations of terms, according to Sao Sai Ngern.

He said that both sides aimed to get a win-win solution for the sake of the whole Union, and the preliminary meeting achieved good results. Then, he expressed thanks to the



The final-day session of JICM preliminary meeting is in progress on 12 August. **PHOTO: HTAIN NAN NAW**

participants. He also urged all the participants to have health awareness for COVID-19.

Afterwards, the NRPC Vice-Chairman U Tun Tun Oo (Attorney-General of the Union) said that the topics discussed in the preliminary meeting are important matters including future processes for federal system and basic principles, and regarding some points, the EAOs could not make immediate decisions because they need to obtain agreement from all member groups. But the other points

were agreed, and the remaining points will be discussed in future meetings, said U Tun Tun Oo.

Some points that were agreed in the meeting will be included in the Part III of the Union Accord, which is expected to be signed in the fourth session of the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong.

The preliminary meeting reached agreement on 15 points for NCA Implementation Framework, 8 topics related to future processes and implementation for post-2020 period, the names

of the sub-topics that still need further negotiation, and 5 points related to federal principle, and the agreement will be included in the Part III of the Union Accord.

After the preliminary meeting, the Director-General U Zaw Htay of the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor and NCA-S EAOs representative Nai Aung Ma Ngay explained the meeting results to the media, and answered the questions raised by the media.—Tun Win Naing, Hein Min Soe *(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)*



Myanmar returnees from foreign countries queuing for immigration process at Yangon International Airport on 12 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

125 Myanmar citizens repatriated from foreign countries

AN MAI relief flight transported 125 Myanmar nationals stranded abroad from Incheon International Airport, the Republic of Korea, to Yangon International Airport yesterday night.

Among them, 92 persons were from the United States while 18 persons and 14 Myanmar seamen from the Republic of Korea.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and local officials helped the returnees for health inspections and arranged for proper 21-day quarantine.

To bring back the Myanmar citizens who are stranded in foreign countries by relief flights and chartered flights in accord-

ance with the instructions from National-Level Central Committee on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cooperated with the relevant ministries and Myanmar embassies from respective countries and brought back a total of 10,482 citizens to date.—MNA *(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)*

Secure firm foundations for Democratic Federal Union through political agreements

A three-day preliminary meeting on holding the 9th Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting on Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement concluded yesterday at the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the three-day session, the two sides were able to make a decision for holding the 9th JICM meeting, and negotiate and amended matters related with holding the fourth session of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong.

We would like to express thanks to leaders of both sides for the positive results which ensured moving forward. The agreements were only finalized after both sides understood the concerns of each other.

Both sides understand that it is required for them to take time to make decisions over some points, such as future tasks and basic directives for building a federal democratic union, and the leaders of the ethnic armed organizations needed to seek agreement from their respective organizations.

... the 9th JICM which is held today can be regarded as an important step and an important precursor for the successful convening of the 4th session of the Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panglong.

However, most points were agreed upon by the two sides at the negotiating table. We are confident that the consensus on the points, which have not yet been agreed to by both sides at the negotiating table, would be reached after the next session.

During the three-day session, 15 framework agreements for NCA implementation, which will be signed as part of Part-III of the Union Accord at the fourth session of the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong, sub-titles under the eight titles for the step-by-step process for post-2020 period and five points for federal basic principles.

Hence, the 9th JICM which is held today can be regarded as an important step and an important precursor for the successful convening of the 4th session of the Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panglong.

It is very important for us this year to lay down priorities and action plans acceptable to all participants on ways to continue the implementation of the NCA and the peace process.

The NCA belongs to all of the stake holders. It is necessary for all stakeholders who have signed the agreement to share responsibility and accountability.

The main sources of armed conflicts were the inability to resolve the political problems. In the coming fourth session of the Union Peace Conference- 21st Century Panglong, we will attempt to solve the source of the armed conflicts through dialogue and with Panglong spirit.

To bring total peace to the people of Myanmar, who have borne the brunt of the more than 70 years of internal armed conflicts, it is very important to achieve political agreements that are acceptable to different forces.

RUSSIA'S 'SPUTNIK V' COVID-19 VACCINE

WHO wants to review Russian vaccine safety data

THE World Health Organization said any WHO stamp of approval on a COVID-19 vaccine candidate would require a rigorous safety data review, after Russia announced Tuesday it had approved a vaccine.

President Vladimir Putin said Russia had become the first country to approve a vaccine offering “sustainable immunity” against the new coronavirus.

“We are in close contact with the Russian health authorities and discussions are ongoing with respect to possible WHO pre-qualification of the vaccine,” the United Nations health agency’s spokesman Tarik Jasarevic told reporters in Geneva at an online press briefing.

“Pre-qualification of any vaccine includes the rigorous review and assessment of all the required safety and efficacy data.”

Russia’s Sputnik V vaccine has been developed by the Gamaleya research institute in coordination with the country’s defence ministry.

A total of 165 candidate vaccines are being worked on around the world, according to the latest WHO overview produced on July 31.

Of those, 139 are still in pre-clinical evaluation, while the other 26 are in the various phases of being tested on humans, of which six are the furthest ahead,

having reached Phase 3 of clinical evaluation.

The Gamaleya candidate being produced in Russia, which is among the 26 being tested on humans, is listed as being in Phase 1.

Kirill Dmitriev, the head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund which finances the vaccine project, said Phase 3 trials would start on Wednesday, industrial production was expected from September and that 20 countries had pre-ordered more than a billion doses.

‘Stamp of quality’

“Every country has national regulatory agencies that approve the use of vaccines or medicines on its territory,” Jasarevic explained.

“WHO has in place a process of pre-qualification for vaccines but also for medicines. Manufacturers ask to have the WHO pre-qualification because it is a sort of stamp of quality.

“To get this, there is a review and assessment of all required safety and efficacy data that are gathered through the clinical trials. WHO will do this for any candidate vaccine.”

The pandemic has seen an unprecedented mobilization of funding and research to rush through a vaccine that can protect billions of people worldwide.

“We are encouraged by the speed by which several candidate

vaccines have been developing and as we have been always saying, we hope some of these vaccines will prove to be safe and efficient,” said Jasarevic.

“Accelerating progress does not mean compromising on safety,” he said.

Pre-orders of COVID-19 vaccine

Although none of the coronavirus vaccines under development has proved its efficacy yet in clinical trials, at least 5.7 billion doses have been pre-ordered around the world.

First shipments of a COVID-19 vaccine created by Western laboratories have often been snapped up by the United States.

Five vaccines -- three Western and two Chinese -- are in Phase 3 efficacy trials involving thousands of people.

In a surprise announcement, Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed Tuesday that a vaccine dubbed “Sputnik V” -- after the Soviet satellite -- conferred “sustainable immunity” against the novel coronavirus.

As research laboratories around the world race to develop a vaccine, manufacturers have received financing to help them prepare to have millions of doses ready to administer in 2021 or even before the end of the year.

Oxford University, working with the Swedish-British pharmaceutical group AstraZeneca,



A researcher works on a vaccine against the new COVID-19 virus at the Copenhagen University research lab in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 23 March, 2020. (AFP PHOTO)

hopes to have results by September while the US biotech company Moderna, partnering with the US National Institutes of Health (NIH), is aiming for the end of the year, possibly November.

US: 700 million doses

President Donald Trump has launched “Operation Warp Speed” in a bid to develop, manufacture and distribute a COVID-19 vaccine to all Americans by January 2021.

Hundreds of millions of dollars have been directed to vaccine developers including nearly \$500 million to Johnson & Johnson at the end of March.

The United States has allocated funding to more companies than other nation in the hope that

one of them will come up with the vaccine to counter the highly contagious virus.

So far, Washington has handed out at a total of least 9.4 billion dollars to seven vaccine developers and signed manufacturing contracts with five of them to provide 700 million doses.

The companies involved are: Johnson & Johnson, Moderna, Oxford/AstraZeneca, Novavax, Pfizer/BioNTech, Sanofi/GSK, Merck Sharp and Dohme.

Europe: 700 million doses

Two vaccine developers -- Oxford/AstraZeneca and Sanofi/GSK -- have signed or are in advanced negotiations with the European Commission to provide a combined 700 million vaccine doses.

Britain, Japan, Brazil

Britain, because of Brexit, is negotiating a separate pre-order of 250 million doses from four developers.

Japan is counting on 490 million doses from three suppliers including 250 million from Novavax of the United States.

Japanese pharmaceutical giant Takeda bought the rights to a Novavax vaccine for Japan, which has funded the research. It would be produced locally.

Brazil chose a similar model, ordering 100 million doses from AstraZeneca, and partnering with China’s Sinovac to produce 120 millions of “CoronaVac,” which is already undergoing testing with Brazilians.

SOURCE: AFP

SUSTAINABLE IMMUNITY”: COVID-19 VACCINE

Russia claims first coronavirus vaccine as global cases top 20 million



A medical worker wearing protective equipment holds swab samples at a medical facility in Moscow on 16 July, 2020. PHOTO: AFP

RUSSIA claimed Tuesday it has developed the world’s first vaccine offering “sustainable immunity” against the coronavirus, as the pandemic marked another bleak milestone with 20 million infections globally. Western scientists have raised concerns about the speed with which Russia has developed vaccines, suggesting that researchers might be cutting corners.

And the World Health Organization on Tuesday warned that any approval of the Russian vaccine would require rigorous review of data to show its safety and efficacy.

But President Vladimir Putin said that one of his own daughters had received the inoculation, dubbed “Sputnik” after the pioneering 1950s Soviet satellite.

“I know that it is quite effective, that it gives sustainable immunity,”

Putin said of the vaccine developed by the Gamaleya research institute in coordination with Moscow’s defence ministry.

And Health Minister Mikhail Murashko said that clinical trials of the vaccine involving several thousand participants would continue. Russia hopes to begin production in September and start vaccinating medical staff immediately afterwards.

Kirill Dmitriyev, the head of the Russian sovereign wealth fund that helped develop the vaccine, said the doubts about the vaccines were part of “coordinated and carefully orchestrated media attacks” designed to “discredit” the country.

He said that 20 foreign countries have pre-ordered over a billion doses.

The race for a vaccine is heating up as nations across the globe

brace for new outbreaks of the disease -- even as they try to restart economies battered by months of lockdown.

According to an AFP tally, the number of confirmed infections worldwide has passed 20.1 million, with almost 737,000 deaths, with that number expected to surpass 750,000 within days.

Tests underway

Elsewhere, Indonesia said it would launch a Phase 3 human trial of a vaccine candidate from China’s Sinovac Biotech.

Phase 3 refers to trials involving large numbers of human test subjects and is usually the last step before regulatory approval.

Sinovac’s vaccine, dubbed CoronaVac, is already being tested on 9,000 Brazilian health workers. SOURCE: AFP

Daw Hmway Hmway Khyne concurrently accredited as Ambassador of Myanmar to the Portuguese Republic

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed Daw Hmway Hmway Khyne, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Italian Republic, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Portuguese Republic.—MNA

Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Wednesday 12 August 2020)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 13 August 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Magway Region, scattered in Lower Sagaing and Mandalay regions, fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw and Southern Shan State and widespread in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Upper Sagaing, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions, Kachin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (30-35)mph. Wave height will be about (6 – 9) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of rain in Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady Regions, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13 August 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13 August 2020: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13 August 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
WWW.GNLM.COM.MM

CHIEF EDITOR

Aungthu Ya
aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm

DEPUTY CHIEF EDITOR

Aye Min Soe
dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT

Kyaw Myaing

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Aung Khin

LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL NEWS EDITORS

Ye Htut Tin
editor1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
Aung Htein
Tun Tun Naing
intlnews@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

SENIOR TRANSLATOR

Zaw Htet Oo

TRANSLATORS

Hay Mar Tin Win, Ei Myat Mon,
Kyaw Zin Lin, Kyaw Zin Tun

REPORTER

Nyein Nyein Ei,
reporter1@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

PHOTOGRAPHER

Kyaw Zeya Win @ Phoe Khwar
Kyaw Zeya

COMPUTER TEAM

Thein Ngwe, Zaw Zaw Aung,
Kay Khaing Win,
Sanda Hnin, Zu Zin Hnin,
Thein Htwe, Nyi Lin Thu

EDITORIAL SECTION

(+95) (01)8604529,
Fax – (+95) (01) 8604305

CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

San Lwin, (+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 974424114

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 974424848
marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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gnlmdaily@gmail.com
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YPS card system installed on more YBS buses: YRTA



YRTA has sold 32,000 payment cards for buses in Yangon as of 10 August. PHOTO: AYE MAUNG

OVER 700 YBS buses are equipped with the bus fare payment system through the use of YPS cards in Yangon region, said Joint Secretary U Hla Aung of Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA).
Yangon Payment Services (YPS) card system was launched onboard the YBS buses starting from 21 July with over 500 YBS buses from 14 lines.
At present, YRTA has added over 700 YBS buses from 21 lines to this system to enable the commuters to pay the bus fares by YPS card. Currently, over 1,200 YBS buses accept the YPS cards for the bus fares, he added.
"We have received positive

comments from the passengers concerning the YPS card system. Also, we have received some positive comments in favour of adopting the YPS card system and we are ready to remedy the weaknesses if any," he noted.
More than 32,000 YPS payment cards have been already sold as of 10 August. With the additional buses using the YPS payment cards, the number of card users has also increased in parallel, according to Asia Starmar Transport Intelligent Company.
Now, more than 3,000 buses are reportedly operational with over 1 million commuters a day.
— Aye Maung
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Lemon growers upset with low demand despite high yield

LEMON growers from Myinmu Township in Sagaing are unhappy with no demand from the market even there is a high yield of lemon.
"Even though we have a high yield of lemon, we could not send it across the county this year like last year.
"Each lemon tree yielded 500 lemons. We grew over 600 lemon trees on our farmland and they can produce over 300,000 per week. Previously, the lemons were exported to China via Muse route.
A lemon was sold for K 35-40. It can bring profit to the local growers. Now, we could not export the lemon to China and the lemon is sold for K 10 per fruit in the local market.

We are being worried about the next season because the lemon can be picked up two times per year," said U Kyaw San, a commercial- scale lemon grower.
Myanmar lemons must be grown with 15 feet between rows and they can be started to harvest within eight months or one year after growing the trees. Then, the lemons can be distributed to the market.
People in the capital reportedly prefer lemons thanks to their health benefits. The fruits are traditionally used for treating throat infections, dental problems and high blood pressure. They also benefit hair and skincare. Lemons also help to strengthen the immune sys-



Lemon price drops in the local market despite high yield this year. PHOTO: AUNG SOE PE (MYINMU)

tem and cleanse the stomach, according to the local growers. —Aung Soe Pe (Myinmu)
(Translated by Hay Mar)

About 60,000 CA patients reported annually in Myanmar

ABOUT 60,000 cancer cases are reported in Myanmar every year, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).
According to WHO's "Cancer Country Profile 2020", Myanmar faced 69,554 new cancer cases and 51,059 died of cancer in 2018. If cancer can be detected in early stages, the CA patients may have greater opportunities to receive early treatment.
Detecting it in the last stages will provide the least chance

for survival, cause long duration of the treatment and create high costs for treatment.
For Myanmar men, the most prevalent cancers are the lungs or oral cavity cancers, which are linked to smoking and chewing of betel nut. For the female population of Myanmar, the largest cancer risks are related to cervical and breast cancers. With conservative thought of Myanmar people, most of the women feel shy and nervous in respect of breast problems.

Also, the women are found to be less aware of those issues. Therefore, most of the patients reach the clinics to get the treatment at later stages.
With the changing lifestyle, the cancer cases are rising not only in Myanmar but also in the whole world.
According to the official statistics of WHO, the mortality rate in Myanmar was 49 per cent in respect to non-communicable diseases in 1990, which have increased to 68 per cent

in 2017.
One in four people in Myanmar are likely to die at an earlier age because of unhealthy lifestyle. Most of deaths are caused by cancer. About 2.5 million people are also suffering from diabetes in Myanmar. Myanmar saw 19.7 per cent with pre-diabetic, 26.4 per cent with hypertension, 36.7 per cent with high levels of fat in their blood and 22.4 per cent with obesity.
—Zin Yaw Aye
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Mineral exports top \$1.553 bln in current financial year

MYANMAR'S mineral exports have shown a marked increase this financial year, touching US\$1.553 billion between 1 October and 31 July, an increase of \$265 million compared with the year-ago period, according to the data from the Ministry of Commerce.

In the corresponding period of the previous financial year, mineral exports were pegged at just \$1.28 billion.

Both private and public sector mineral exports have recorded an increase in the current budget year, with private sector exports valued at \$1.069 billion and public sector exports estimated at \$484.19 million.

So far, excavation of over 1,250 mining blocks has been permitted on a manageable, small, medium, and large scale, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation.

Due to the limited extraction of natural resources, exports of forest products and minerals had dropped significantly in the previous years. Permits for mining blocks were suspended



Thailand-Myanmar SCI Metal Tech Co., Ltd., Steel Structure Manufacturing Industry, being seen at Thilawa Special Economic Zone on 22 September, 2019. PHOTO: YE HTUT TIN (NLM)

in 2016, but after two years, Myanmar's mining sector has now been opened to local and foreign investors, according to the ministry.

Within two years of the implementation of the Myanmar Mines Law, the Mines Depart-

ment has approved 144 out of 3,000 proposed mining blocks and many more blocks are to be granted the permit.

At present, evaluation teams in Kachin, Kayah, Shan, and Kayin states and Sagaing, Taninthayi, and Magway regions

are screening mining applications, based on the opinions of the respective departments and the region and state governments.

The Myanmar Mines Law was enacted on 24 December 2015, but the law came into force

when the rules were issued on 13 February 2018.

The ministry undertakes the screening process of the proposals for medium and large-scale mining blocks, while regional and state governments are allowed to process applications for small-scale mining blocks.

Under the new regulations, foreign firms can invest in large blocks which cover up to 500,000 acres (about 202,000 hectares), while local firms can invest in all kinds of blocks. Investors can seek a permit to mine for minerals such as gold, copper, lead and tin. The permits cover prospecting, exploration, and production.

Myanmar export sector relies more on the agriculture and manufacturing sectors. While export earnings from the CMP (cut, make, and pack) garment businesses are increasing the country's reliance on natural resources has been decreasing. Myanmar's mineral products constitute 10 per cent of overall exports. — Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

JICA to organize SMEs recovery discussion online in September: UMFCCI reports

By Nyein Nyein

A virtual discussion event will be held in September for the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to recover during the coronavirus pandemic, the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) stated.

The SMEs are hit hard during the pandemic. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), in cooperation with the private organizations, will organize this to help the SMEs recover from the impacts.

Through virtual discussion, strategies of effective management for the SMEs, the information and data and procedures to seek for JICA SME Two-Step Loan will be shared and supported.

The discussion is scheduled to take place on 2 September,

in Myanmar Language.

Mr Sano Yuji, chief representative of JICA (Yanゴン) office, and his entourage met with UMFCCI President U Zaw Min Win and official concerned in advance of the discussion.

The UMFCCI is helping the businesses stricken by the COVID-19 impacts in accessing the government coronavirus loan.

The UMFCCI received loan applications by 10 August. Starting from 11 August, the UMFCCI, officials from the SME Department, the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation and 21 representatives from the affiliated organizations are assessing the coronavirus loan amount so that the business can take out a loan in time.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Export rice prices sliding amid falling demand by China

By Nyein Nyein

THE export rice prices in recent days are slightly dropping on account of the falling demand by China, said vice chairman U Min Thein of Muse Rice Depot.

In the first week of August, China purchased about 30,000 bags of rice per day. The demand plummeted to about 10,000 bags in recent days.

"The price of rice is declining in China. Earlier, the rice was priced 130-132 Yuan per bag. It is now rarely traded at 125 Yuan. The price slipped back slightly," he said.

The General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC) granted licences to 43 Myanmar companies on 10 July 2020 to export the rice to China through a legitimate trade channel. About 10 of them are exporting rice to China, he continued.

"Although 43 companies are granted licences some of them are lacking documents, and some are still observing the market. Around six companies are sending rice to China," he added.

The prices of rice in the export market significantly plummeted in July against the previous two months, as per data of Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

The prices have remained flat for two months (May and June) and sharply fell in July.

In June, the prices of white rice varieties ranged US\$395 to 440 per metric ton depending on quality. The prices plunged to \$375-420 per metric ton in July.

The prices of rice last month move in the ranges of K36,000-

51,000 per 108-pound-bag of Pawsan varieties, with a drop of K3,000 per bag compared to the previous two months. Meanwhile, low-quality rice fetched 20,500-22,500 in the domestic market, showing a decrease of K1,000 per bag as against the prices in May and June, MRF data showed.

Myanmar exports rice, green grams, onions, chilli and other food commodities while CMP raw materials, building materials, pharmaceuticals and personal goods are imported.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Workers loading the truck with sacks of rice at Botahtaung Jetty in Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAIR

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Indonesia to extend railways to help boost economy

JAKARTA—Indonesia has planned to build over ten thousand kilometres of railways until 2030 to support people’s mobility and transport of goods in the country, Transportation Minister Budi Karya Sumadi said on Tuesday.

Sumadi pointed out that among the areas where the construction of the 10,524 km long rail-ways would be carried out are those in the main islands of Sumatra and Java, which are home to



A man looks at scale models of Chinese-made bullet trains on exhibition at a shopping mall in Jakarta. PHOTO: AFP

about 80 per cent of the country’s over 260 million people. The planned rail-

way construction would lengthen the existing ones which have already been operating across the country, such as the 1,796 km long railways in Sumatra Island, the 4,131 km long railways in Java Island and 45 km long rail-ways in Sulawesi Island, according to local media.

The construction of the railways would also be undertaken for trans- porting goods and people from and to seaports and airports, a senior official at the Transportation Ministry Zulfikri said.— Xinhua ■

Uncertainties to remain in energy market due to COVID-19: EIA

HOUSTON—The U.S. En- ergy Information Adminis- tration (EIA) on Tuesday forecast that uncertainties related to the COVID-19 pandemic will remain be- cause mitigation and reo- pening efforts continue to evolve.

In its August Short- Term Energy Outlook (STEO), EIA said that re- duced economic activity related to the COVID-19 pandemic has caused changes in energy demand and supply patterns in 2020. Uncertainties persist across the outlook for all energy sources, including

liquid fuels, natural gas, electricity, coal, and renew- ables.

For the crude oil prices, EIA expected that Brent crude oil prices will average 43 U.S. dollars per barrel during the second half of 2020 and rise to an average of 50 dollars per barrel in 2021. EIA expect- ed high inventory levels and surplus crude oil pro- duction capacity will limit upward price pressures in the coming months. But as inventories decline into 2021, those upward price pressures will increase, said the STEO.— Xinhua ■

EU revokes trade preferences for Cambodia over human rights concerns

PHNOM PENH—The European Union said Wednesday that duty-free access for Cambodia’s garment and other exports is now partially withdrawn due to the country’s failure to improve its human rights record.

“The EU’s decision to partially withdraw Cambo- dia’s duty-free quota-free access to the EU market is now effective,” the European Commission, the EU’s

executive arm, said in a statement. The move affects such typical export products of Cambodia as garments, footwear and travel goods, which will now be subject to general tariffs applicable to any other member of the World Trade Organization. “It was taken “due to serious and systematic concerns related to human rights ascer- tained in the country,” the commission said.—Kyodo ■



People are seen at a gas station in Plano, Texas, the United States, on April 20, 2020. (PHOTO BY DAN TIAN/ XINHUA)

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY. NO. (029W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO FORTUNE VOY. NO. (029W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-8-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP/MITT** 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.

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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.

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Shipping Agency Department
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German machine tool sector sees steep fall in orders in Q2

FRANKFURT—Incoming orders to the German machine tool industry suffered a sharp fall of 46 per cent in the second quarter (Q2) of this year from a year earlier, mainly due to the coronavirus pandemic and the associated lockdown, according to data from the industry’s association on Wednesday. Data in April-June showed that orders from the German domestic market fell by 36 per cent and foreign orders fell by 51 per cent compared to the same period last year, said a statement from the German Mechanical Engineering Industry Association citing the latest data from the German Machine Tool Builders’ Association (VDW).—Xinhua ■

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Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V GREAT 61 VOY. NO. (2002394)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-8-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **WILMAR** where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V HAN XIN

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V HAN XIN VOY. NO. (2029)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-8-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AIPT-3** where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S WILHELMSSEN SHIPS SERVICE(S) PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V IAL 001 VOY. NO. (075N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V IAL 001 VOY. NO. (075N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-8-2020** 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

Apple must pay \$500 million over patent violations, US court rules

CUPERTINO—Apple must pay more than \$500 million in damages and interest for 4G patent infringements held by intellectual property company PanOptis, a Texas court has ruled. The US tech giant -- now worth almost \$2 trillion -- will appeal Tuesday's decision, local media said.

PanOptis, which specializes in licencing patents, took Apple to court in February last year, claiming it refused to pay for the use of 4G LTE technologies in its smartphones, tablets and watches. "The plaintiffs have repeatedly negotiated with Apple to reach an agreement for a FRAND licence to the Plaintiff's patent portfolios which Apple is infringing," the court filing read. FRAND refers



Apple says it will appeal the court decision that it violated tech patents. PHOTO: AFP

to terms that are "fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory" and is the IT industry standard for technology use. "The negotiations have been unsuccessful because Apple refuses

to pay a FRAND royalty to the Plaintiff's licence." Apple argued unsuccessfully that the patents were invalid, according to legal publications. "Lawsuits like this by companies

who accumulate patents simply to harass the industry only serve to stifle innovation and harm consumers," Apple said in a statement reported by media outlets.—AFP ■

Virus hits Commonwealth Bank profits in 'challenging' year

SYDNEY—Australia's Commonwealth Bank (CBA) reported an 11.3-per cent drop in full-year cash profits Wednesday as it took provisions against loan losses due to the coronavirus crisis.

CBA said its statutory net profit after tax for the year ended June 30 was Aus\$9.6 billion (US\$6.9 billion), up 12.4 per cent from the previous year, mainly due to the sale of some businesses.

The statutory figure had been down 8.1 per cent in 2019 and 4 per cent the previous year as CBA, Australia's biggest bank, was weighed down by fines and reimbursements to customers over a raft of financial irregularities and malpractice claims.

But underlying cash net profit, the bank's preferred measure, was off a sharp 11.3 per cent to Aus\$7.3 billion, reflecting "the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on our customers and the economy", it said.—AFP ■

Cathay Pacific reports first-half loss of US\$1.27 bn

HONG KONG—Hong Kong carrier Cathay Pacific said Wednesday it lost HK\$9.9 billion (US\$1.27 billion) in the first half of this year, making it the latest major airline to reveal how badly the coronavirus pandemic has eviscerated its business.

"The first six months of 2020 were the most challenging that the Cathay Pacific Group has faced in its more than 70-year history," chairman Patrick Healy said in a stark statement announcing the results.

"The global health crisis has decimated the travel industry and the future

remains highly uncertain, with most analysts suggesting that it will take years to recover to pre-crisis levels," he added.

Like airlines worldwide, Cathay has been battered by the evaporation of global travel during the pandemic. The firm said it carried 4.4 million passengers in the first six months of 2020 -- a 76 percent plunge on-year -- as the pandemic burst out of central China and then spread around the world. At the height of the global lockdowns in April and May, its entire fleet was averaging just 500 passengers a day.—AFP ■



Embassy of India,
Yangon

Independence Day Film Festival 2020

On the occasion of 74th Independence Day of India, a collection of films especially curated by the National Film Development Corporation of India is being streamed online at <http://cinemasofindia.com>. These films will be available to the audience between 7- 21 August 2020.

Transferring Distributor Registered Fungicide

Distributor of the fungicide, Opera 18.3% SE (Epoxiconazole 5% + Pyraclostrobin 13.3% SE) with its registration number P20172768 is transferring from **JJ-PUN Trading Limited**, The Campus, 1st Floor, Wing-A, I Office Park, Rain Tree Drive, Pun Hlaing Estate, Hlaing Thar Yar Township, Yangon, Myanmar to **Y Agro Solution Company Limited**, No.19, Nant Thar Kone Quarter, Insein Township, Yangon, Myanmar. Any objection regarding to this transfer can notify at Co-secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayintnaung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon within 14 days.

BASF Myanmar Limited
Phone – 01 544041

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For **FUJITEC CO., LTD.**
BY ITS ATTORNEY
ACTIP IP LIMITED
P.O. Box No. 26, Yangon.
Phone: 01-8372416
Dated: 13th August, 2020

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Sri Lanka president strengthens Rajapaksa dynasty in new government

COLOMBO—Sri Lanka's President Gotabaya Rajapaksa named two more relatives to a new government unveiled Wednesday, further consolidating his family's grip on power.

His brother Mahinda will lead the government, formed after their nationalist party's landslide win in a parliamentary election last week. Gotabaya and Mahinda will control the key defence and finance portfolios, respectively, in the new 26-member cabinet. Their elder brother Chamal kept his place in the cabinet and was joined by Mahinda's eldest son, Namal, who was named sports minister.

The growing dynastic imprint was strengthened by one of their nephews, Shasheendra Rajapaksa, who joined the government as a state agriculture minister though he will not be in the cabinet. Gotabaya Rajapaksa, 71, became president in November



Sri Lanka's Mahinda Rajapaksa (left) was appointed prime minister a second time by his brother President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in November 2019. **PHOTO: AFP/SRI LANKAN PRESIDENTIAL MEDIA DIVISION/FILE**

last year and named Mahinda, a 74-year-old former president, as prime minister.

Pursuing a nationalist agenda, their party has won a two-thirds majority in parliament, which allows them to change the constitution and tighten their hold on power. The brothers want

to scrap a 2015 constitutional amendment which transferred some executive powers from the president to the prime minister, along with independent institutions to run public services and the judiciary.

In the new cabinet, Mahinda was given three portfolios — fi-

nance, culture and housing — while their eldest brother Chamal, 77, was given irrigation, a powerful position in largely rural Sri Lanka. Chamal was also made the state minister for defence, a non-cabinet position responsible for internal security and disaster management.—AFP ■

World's biggest container ships take shape in South Korea

GEOJE—On the bridge of one of the world's biggest container ships, a worker in a grey protective suit installs the compass that will guide the leviathan across the world.

The finishing touches are being put to the HMM St Petersburg at the Samsung Heavy Industries shipyard on the island of Geoje, at the southern tip of South Korea.

Deep in the bowels of the enormous vessel, welders are dwarfed by the giant engines that will propel it at a maximum

speed of over 22 knots.

At 400 metres (1,300 feet), the HMM St Petersburg is 100 metres longer than the Eiffel Tower is tall, and 62 metres wide.

It has a capacity of 23,820 TEU (twenty-foot equivalent units, the standard measure of a shipping container), which owner Hyundai Merchant Marine (HMM) describes as enough to carry seven billion choco-pies, a popular Korean snack — one for every human being on the planet.—AFP ■



This Samsung Heavy Industries handout picture taken on November 30, 2013 and released on December 5, 2013 shows South Korean shipbuilder Samsung Heavy Industries' tanker-shaped vessel tagged as the world's largest "floating facility", with a length greater than the height of the Empire State Building in New York, at a southern shipyard in Geoje. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Three killed in violence over Facebook post, Congress MLA's house, police station vandalized



Bengaluru Police patrol an area where violence broke out over a derogatory message posted by a politician's relative on social media. **PHOTO: THE STATESMAN/ANN/TWITTER**

BENGALURU—A mob in Bengaluru rampaged through Pulakeshi Nagar on Tuesday night and vandalized a police station and Congress MLA Akhanda Srinivasa Murthy's residence over a derogatory Facebook post shared by the politician's relative.

Three people lost their lives in Bengaluru after violence broke out in the city on Tuesday night allegedly over a Facebook post. According to news agency ANI, as many as 110 people have been arrested in connection with the violence. Nearly 60 police personnel also suffered injuries.

Bengaluru Police Commissioner said that accused Naveen has been arrested. He had allegedly shared a derogatory post on the social media site.—ANI ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Jimmy Lai freed on bail in Hong Kong crackdown

HONG KONG—Hong Kong pro-democracy media mogul Jimmy Lai walked free on bail Wednesday, over 40 hours after he and other critics of China were rounded up by police as part of a widening crackdown on dissent.

When Lai left a police station he was swarmed by a crowd of journalists and cheering supporters, some of whom waved copies of his Apple Daily in a show of their backing.

A clampdown has gathered pace in Hong Kong since China imposed a sweeping security law in June, with opposition politicians disqualified and activists arrested for social media posts. The moves have provoked outrage in the West and fear for millions who last year took to the streets to protest communist China's tightening grip on the semi-autonomous city.—AFP ■

New Zealand election date in doubt as COVID-19 returns

AUCKLAND—Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern weighed delaying New Zealand's upcoming election on Wednesday (Aug 12), as experts investigated whether the coronavirus could have re-entered the country through freight shipments.

Health authorities rushed to implement a rapid lockdown in the country's largest city Auckland, where four more probable COVID-19 infections have been uncovered bringing the outbreak's total to eight.

With 1.5 million people under stay-at-home orders, and millions more at risk of a wider outbreak, Ardern said she was seeking advice on delaying the Sep 19 election. Parliament was due to be dissolved on Wednesday to allow the election to take place, but the centre-left leader held off the move until Monday to monitor how the crisis evolves.—AFP ■

UK enters deepest recession on record as economy shrinks by 20.4%

LONDON —Britain’s economy shrank by a fifth in the second quarter, higher than any European neighbour, as the coronavirus pandemic slammed businesses and plunged the country into a record recession.

“It is clear that the UK is in the largest recession on record,” the Office for National Statistics said after gross domestic product (GDP) contracted by 20.4 per cent in April-June.

Britain’s recession -- its first since 2009 amid the global financial crisis -- was confirmed after two quarterly contractions in a row.

GDP shrank 2.2 per cent in the first three months of this year.

The statistics office said that the contraction for the first six months of 2020 “was slightly below the 22.7 per cent seen in Spain but was more than double the 10.6 per cent fall in United States GDP over this period”. But Britain’s second-quarter contraction beat Spain’s GDP of minus 18.5 per cent.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) said Britain’s dire second



Experts said that hopes of a swift V-shaped recovery look dashed, with the Bank of England warning last week the UK could take longer to rebound than previously predicted. **PHOTO: AFP**

quarter was driven by a 20-per-cent drop in output in April, “the biggest monthly fall on record reflecting widespread... declines in output across the services, production, and construction industries”.

‘Hard times’

Finance minister Rishi Sunak said the data “confirm that hard times are here”.

He added: “Hundreds of thousands of people have already lost their jobs, and sadly in the coming months many more

will.” Chancellor of the Exchequer Sunak plans to end in October the government’s furlough scheme that is paying up to 80 per cent of wages for nearly ten million workers.

The UK -- which has the highest death toll in Europe from the coronavirus -- appears to be paying a heavier price for locking down later than its continental neighbours.

The British economy also relies more heavily on the hard-hit services sector than other European countries.

Rebound begins

While officially in recession, the UK economy is beginning to rebound as the government eases strict restrictions.

GDP output growth was 8.7 per cent in June as the economy slowly emerged from its lockdown implemented in late March, the ONS said.

That helped the pound to steady on Wednesday, while London’s stock market was up 0.9 per cent in mid-morning deals.—AFP ■

OBITUARY

Asleep In Jesus
Mr Alexander Khup Za Lian Thang @ Thangno
Age 60 Years

Mr Alexander Khup Za Lian Thang @ Thangno, beloved son of the late Pu Lt. Col Son Kho Pau, former 2nd Chin Battalion Commander, & Pi Esther Kyin, who lived at 2/4 Tahan, Bogyoke Rd., Kalaymya, Sagaing Region: loving brother of Pa Victor Vum Za Cin Pau & Nu Fung Lian Hluai (NZ), Pa Peter Khup Cin Pau & Nu Niang Lun Vung (USA), Ms Sm. Dim Khan Cing (UK), Nu Pome Neam Cing & (Pa Kip Kho Khai), Pa David Cin Thian Tung Nung @ Bathike Cing & Nu Hau Suan Dim (Canada), (Ms Lia. Lian Lamh Cing), (Pa Mlichael Van Deih Thang) & Nu Phyu Phyu Win; also survived by 16 nieces & nephews, peacefully passed away on Monday 11 pm, 10th August 2020 at home, 35, 53rd Street, Qtr. 4, Botahtaung Tsp., Yangon. Funeral worship services held on 12th August 2020 Wednesday 10 am, at home in Talian, followed by the burial service with interment continually at All Denominational Christian Cemetery. The bereaved family.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Scottish train derails

ABERDEEN —A passenger train derailed in northeast Scotland on Wednesday, with reports of “serious injuries” in what First Minister Nicola Sturgeon described as “an extremely serious incident”.

The crash, close to the town of Stonehaven around 25 kilometres (15 miles) south of Aberdeen, followed severe flooding across parts of the region overnight. Smoke could be seen rising from the scene in pictures broadcast on television news channels.—AFP ■

Almost 60 pct of hotels and restaurants in Germany at risk of closure

BERLIN—Almost 60 per cent of German companies in the hotel and restaurant industry saw their existence at risk, the German Hotel and Restaurant Association (DEHOGA) announced on Tuesday. Companies suffered an average turnover decline of 60.1 per cent in the first seven months of the year, according to a company survey by DEHOGA among 7,200 restaurant and hotel operators.—AFP ■

Joe Biden picks Kamala Harris to be first black woman VP



Kamala Devi Harris is serving as the junior United States Senator from California since 2017. A member of the Democratic Party, Harris is the second African American woman and the first Indian American to serve in the United States Senate. Democratic presidential candidate California Sen. Kamala Harris speaks during the fifth Democratic primary debate of the 2020 presidential campaign season, co-hosted by MSNBC and The Washington Post at Tyler Perry Studios in Atlanta, on Nov. 20, 2019. **CREDIT: AFP /FILE**

WASHINGTON—Presidential hopeful Joe Biden named Senator Ka-

mala Harris, a former rival in the White House race, as his running

mate Tuesday, marking a historic first for American women of color.

Biden’s announcement capped a months-long search for a Democratic partner to challenge President Donald Trump in November.

Harris, who would become America’s first female and first black vice president if elected, is a “fearless fighter for the little guy, and one of the country’s finest public servants,” Biden, 77, said in revealing his running mate.

“I’m proud now to have her as my partner in this campaign.”

The decision, announced in typical 2020 style on social media, was a crucial moment for Biden as he aims to

build a broad coalition of voters to oust Trump from the White House.

It also provided an early financial windfall he said, tweeting after the vice-president announcement that “we are on track to have our biggest fundraising day ever.”

Harris, who at 55 is two decades Biden’s junior, could appeal to younger voters and women, particularly those in the suburbs who have been fleeing Trump.

The former California attorney-general is the first person of Indian descent in the running mate role, and personifies the diversity seen as key to building enthusi-

asm for the Democratic ticket, particularly in a year marked by a historic reckoning on race.

Republican and staunch Trump supporter Sarah Palin -- herself a former vice presidential nominee -- congratulated Harris on Instagram and posted a lengthy list of advice for the campaign trail, including keeping her allies close and staying true to herself.

Harris, who ran for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination against Biden, said she was “honored” to join the ticket and would “do what it takes” to help him win.—AFP ■

Asian qualifiers for World Cup to move to 2021

Asian qualifiers for the FIFA World Cup scheduled to play this year will be shifted to next year, stated FIFA in its announcement yesterday.

Considering the current COVID-19 situation worldwide, FIFA and Asian Football Confederation (AFC) have decided on 12 August that upcoming qualifying matches for World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023, which were originally slated to take place in October and November 2020, will move to 2021, said the source with the FIFA.

Previously, Myanmar team's FIFA World Cup quali-

fiers matches were set to hold in October this year but football authorities from FIFA already decided all the world qualifiers to be postponed.

"With the aim of protecting the health and safety of all participants, FIFA and the AFC will continue to work together to closely monitor the situation in the region and to identify new dates for respective qualifying matches. Further details on the new dates for next round of qualifying matches of World Cup 2022 and AFC Asian Cup 2023 will be announced in due course," a joint FIFA and AFC statement said. —Lynn Thit (Tgi)



File photo shows team Myanmar (red) playing against team Japan (dark blue) during their World Cup qualifiers at the Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on 10 September 2019. **PHOTO: MFF**

Paris marathon joins list of 2020 cancellations



This year's Paris marathon has been cancelled because it is impossible to hold the race during the coronavirus pandemic, organisers said on Wednesday. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

PARIS—This year's Paris marathon has been cancelled because it is impossible to hold the race during the coronavirus pandemic, organizers said on Wednesday. The race through the French capital, moved from its original date of April 5 to November 15, joins a long list of elite marathons across the world to be cancelled this year.

"Faced with the difficulty that many runners, especially those coming from abroad, had in making themselves available for the 15th November, it was decided that it would be better and simpler for those concerned if we organised the Schneider Electric Marathon de Paris in 2021," organizers said. The marathons in New York, Boston, Chicago and Berlin have been scrapped this year and London announced that it would only hold a race for elite runners because organizers say it would be unsafe for 45,000 runners to compete. A contest between Kenya's Eliud Kipchoge, the first man to break the two-hour barrier, and Ethiopian Kenenisa Bekele will take place on a bio-secure closed course in London and Kenya's defending champion Brigid Kosgei will headline the women's field.—AFP ■

Champions League 'Final Eight' kicks off as PSG and Atalanta clash in Lisbon

LISBON — Four months behind schedule because of the coronavirus pandemic, the Champions League has reached the quarter-final stage with Paris Saint-Germain taking on outsiders Atalanta in Lisbon on Wednesday in the first game of the 'Final Eight'.

A straight knockout final tournament held in one place, akin to a World Cup or European Championship, was the only solution available to UEFA in order to complete its most lucrative club competition, suspended for five months from March until last weekend.

Two-legged quarter-finals and semi-finals have been done away with, and all eight teams have come to Lisbon, where they are following strict health guidelines including regular testing. No spectators are allowed inside stadiums.

PSG will therefore meet Atalanta at an empty Estadio da Luz on Wednesday at 1900 GMT, with the winners advancing to a semi-final against either Atletico Madrid or RB Leipzig, who play on Thursday.

The other quarter-finals

are Barcelona against Bayern Munich — the only clubs still in the competition to have won it before — and Manchester City against Lyon.

The final will be on August 23, and UEFA can only hope there is no widespread outbreak of COVID-19 among any of the teams which could threaten the tournament.

European football's governing body has said that as long as a team has 13 healthy players including a goalkeeper, matches must go ahead, otherwise teams

risk forfeiting matches.

There was a scare at the weekend when it was revealed two Atletico players had tested positive, but their squad has travelled to Portugal and their game is set to go ahead.

Before that match, PSG will look to reach the semi-finals for the first time since the Qatari takeover almost a decade ago and they were given a boost on the eve of their match against Atalanta as Kylian Mbappe was declared fit enough to play a part by coach Thomas Tuchel.—AFP ■



The Estadio da Luz, where PSG will play Atalanta behind closed doors on Wednesday, and where the Champions League final will be played on August 23. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Barcelona COVID-19 case had no contact with Champions League squad

BARCELONA — A Barcelona player has tested positive for coronavirus but he has not been in contact with the squad travelling to Lisbon for the Champions League quarter-final against

Bayern Munich, the club said on Wednesday.

"Following PCR tests conducted this Tuesday afternoon on the group of nine players due to begin the preseason today, one

of them has tested positive for COVID-19," Barcelona said in a statement.

"The player has not been in contact with any of the senior team players who are scheduled

to travel to Lisbon this Thursday to compete in the Champions League." The club added the player, who they did not name, "has no symptoms, is in good health and has been quarantined

at his home".

Barca, who were beaten to the Spanish title by Real Madrid, face Bayern in the 'Final Eight' played behind closed in the Portuguese capital on Friday.—AFP ■