Chanc to vote in the election every 5 years is an invaluable right of citizens: VP

Vice President U Henry Van Thio and entourage inspect the landslide on the ring road of Thantlang Town in Chin State on 15 August 2020. PHOTO: MNA

Myanmar’s export of rice and rice-related goods in 2018 has reached the highest level in a period of 73 years after 1934, and it is the first point. The second point is that the development pace of the country’s tourism industry in 2019 has been acknowledged by UNWTO as the fastest of the year, as the industry gained 40.2 per cent increase during the period. In fact, those developments are the results of the concerted efforts of the Union Government, departments and the relevant organizations, with the involvement of the people. Hence, inclusive undertakings in the interest of the country and the people are a must, he said.

SEE PAGE-2
People are the key

Chance to vote in the election every 5 years is an invaluable right …
Advance voting process for local voters outside their constituencies in 2020 General Election

- Heads of training schools, hospitals, and jails are to contact the sub-election commissions to get documents of Form 15.
- They must return these documents to sub-commission of respective townships by 26 August 2020 after the documents are filled by the voters.
- Sub-election commission of respective townships must send ballot papers and envelopes for advance voting to the training schools, hospitals, and jails by 7 October 2020.
- Advance voting must be organized at training schools, hospitals, and jails on their appropriate day from 8 October 2020 to 21 October 2020.
- The envelopes containing ballot papers must be sent back to sub-election commission of respective townships by 4 pm on 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.

Film industry’s centenary steering committee discusses detailed planning

The steering committee for successful holding of centenary for Myanmar’s motion picture industry organized a coordination meeting at the Mingalar Hall of Yangon Region Government in Yangon yesterday.

The meeting was attended by the steering committee’s chairman and Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint and members, sub-committees chairpersons and members, officials from broadcasting media and movie theatres, and guests.

Speaking at the event, the Union Minister said since May last year arrangements for Myanmar film industry’s centenary celebration had been made.

The centenary celebration is scheduled to be organized on 13 October following the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports despite COVID-19 restrictions at present, he said.

He asked the Myanmar Motion Picture Organization (MMPO) patrons and officials to give suggestions on arrangements and courses of actions for organizing the centenary event.

Relevant sub-committees have been formed for the centenary celebration, and it is crucial to work on sector-wise procedures, he added.

He also discussed the formation of a working group so that sub-committees, working committee and steering committee can effectively cooperate.

The steering committee secretary and Information and Public Relations Department Acting Director-General U Aye Kywe reported the steering committee works and arrangements for the centenary celebration.

The steering committee member Yangon Region Security and Border Affairs Minister Colonel Win Tint and Development Affairs Minister U Maung Maung Soe, MMPO’s patrons U Kyi Soe Tun, U Aung Lwin, U Hnin Moe, U Aung Myint Myat and U Soe Moe, Myanmar Radio and Television (MRTV) Director-General U Ye Naing, sub-committees chairpersons and secretaries, and broadcasting department officials discussed the matters related to the centenary celebrations, showing classic movies, organizing paper-reading sessions, the publication of the centenary magazine, displays of booths, and conducting public awareness activities. The meeting was concluded following the Union Minister’s remarks. —MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)
A ceremony to present cash donations for Eternal Peace Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw was held at the State Pariyatti Sasana University in Mandalay yesterday.

The event was attended by Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko and wife, Mandalay Region Shan Ethnic Affairs Minister U Sai Pan Saing, Religious Affairs Department’s Director-General U Myint Oo and wife, State Pariyatti Sasana University (Mandalay)’s Director U Aung Myint Thein Oo, officials, and donors.

U Maung Ko and wife Siri Sudhamma Singi Daw Shwe U (Eternal Group of Companies, Shwe Oakaw Gold Shop) donated K60 million, and U Myint Naing and wife Siri Sudhamma Singi Daw Khin Shwe (Asia Naing Enterprise Ltd.) donated K15 million.

Siri Sudhamma Singi Daw Htay Htay Thein (Mya Thitssar Fruit Mart) and family, Siri Sudhamma Singi Daw Khin Ohn Myint (Thamardi Gold Shop, Aung Soe Moe Electronics and Aung Soe Moe Store) and family, Dr Win Hlaing and wife Sudhamma Singi Daw Mya Sanda Win (Royal Diamond & Jewellery House) and family, U Win Pe Myint (Mya Tagon & Aung Than Su Lottery Ticket Sales Agent) and family, Sudhamma Mani Jotadhara U Kyaw Thein (Aung Theikdhi Condensed Milk and Shwe Myanmar Batter) and family, U Tin Ko Ko and Daw Aye Thida (Shining Star Gem & Jewellery) and family, U Ba Yan Maing (Shan Restaurant) and family, Daw Khin Hnin Oo (a) Ma Su Yin (Myanmar Nan Htoke Gems & Jewellery) and family, Sudhamma Singi Daw Aye Aye Myint and family, and family, Kayaw Than Myint Yi (Aung Myint Moe Hotel and Thar Shyi Trading), and Dr Hla Kywe and Siri Sudhamma Singi Daw Aye Aung (Aung Wint Hlae Business Group Co., Ltd.) donated K10 million each.

U Aung and wife Siri Sudhamma Singi Daw Aye Maw Si (Aung Thamardi Gold and Jewellery), Sudhamma Singi Daw Than Than (Myanmar Tharu Gems Co., Ltd) and family, Sudhamma Singi Daw Mya Mya Than (Merchant) and family, U Than Htay Aung (U Ba Yin Iron Wares) and family, U Myo Chit (Aung Than Wai Machining Electronics, Shwe Wah Win Wedding Hall and Bakery) and family, Daw Ohma Saw Win (Myanmar Ala Silk and Fabrics, Hello Energy) and family, U Kyaw Than Zaw and family, Daw Nyunt Nyunt Aung (Mya Gone Yaung Shwe Kht Store) and family, U Aung Aung and wife Aya Aha Siri Sudhamma Singi Daw Hla Hla Wai, U Myint Aung and wife Siri Sudhamma Singi Daw Myint Myint Yi (Aung Myint Moe Hotel and Thar Shyi Trading), and Dr Hla Kywe and Siri Sudhamma Singi Daw Aye Aung (Aung Wint Hlae Business Group Co., Ltd.) donated K5 million each.

Daw Htwe Htwe (a) Daw Hla Hwee (San Win Myint Industries) and family donated K3 million, and Daw Nyunt Yin Win (Rich Life Co., Ltd) and family donated K2 million.

The Union Minister, the Mandalay Region Shan Ethnic Affairs Minister and the Director-General accepted the donations and presented back certificates of honour to the donors. The Union Minister also expressed words of thanks.

Twenty-eight well-wishers from different regions and states donated a total of K225 million to the Eternal Peace Pagoda at the ceremony.—MNA (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

**Government of Japan provides medical supplies to MoHS**

The Japanese government and its people donated 9.3 million yen worth of medicines and medical supplies to help Myanmar in the fight against COVID-19, and the plane carrying medical supplies landed at Yangon International Airport yesterday morning.

Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Maruyama Ichiro handed over the medical equipment to Professor Dr Zaw Than Tun, Director-General of Department of Medical Research and Dr Kyaw Khin, Deputy Director-General and Head of International Relations Division under the Ministry of Health and Sports.

The Japanese Ambassador said: “The COVID-19 pandemic has been occurring all over the world. We can see Myanmar can control the outbreak well. The Japanese government appreciates the moves of Myanmar. But, there are some confirmed cases in Myanmar, and so we provide the medical supplies. The medicines that we donated today are produced in Japan, and we will keep providing such medical supplies.”

This donation is the first batch out of the 2 million yen assistance for medical equipment and facilities to help Myanmar’s response to the pandemic as part of the economic and social development programme of Japan in Myanmar.

“They donate medical equipment, including quality beds and suction machines which are used at ICU (Intensive Care Unit). Although our country controls the disease to a certain extent, we need to have such medical supplies to prevent the second wave of COVID-19 by looking at our neighbouring countries. So, we thank the Japanese government and its people for their donations,” said Director-General Professor Dr Zaw Than Tun.

The Japanese government cooperated with the Ministry of Health and Sports for malaria research and anti-malaria programmes before the outbreak of COVID-19 and also provided in upgrading testing laboratories during COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) keeps providing the medicines and medical supplies in response to COVID-19, according to Deputy Director-General Dr Kyaw Khin. —Zaw Gyi (Translated by Khine Thazin Hla)

To shape the future with your vote, let’s check the voters’ list.
Fisheries sector

There were many fish varieties in Myanmar; foreigners know only a few varieties of Myanmar fish; she wanted efforts to be made so that foreigners would come to know the remaining fish varieties and also look for markets. She thought that it would be very beneficial for the fishery and prawn breeding sector if value-added products could be made from fishery products which cannot last long.

(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s discussions at videoconference regarding impact of COVID–19 on livestock and fisheries sector with stakeholders (7-7-2020))

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye provides CERP benefits to internally displaced persons in Kayin State

A relief flight of Myanmar Airways International (MAI) brought back 170 Myanmar migrant workers who work at garment factories in Penang of Malaysia, and it landed at Yangon International Airport yesterday evening.

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 a 21-day quarantine. To bring back the Myanmar citizens who are stranded in foreign countries by relief flights and chartered flights following the instructions of 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.

The Myanmar Embassy in Kuala Lumpur cooperates with the relevant organizations of Malaysia per the instructions of Ministry of Foreign Affairs to send back the undocumented Myanmar nationals and those detained at cells, by relief flights. —MNA □ (Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

170 Myanmar nationals fly back home from Malaysia

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye along with Kayin State Chief Minister Daw Nan Khin Ethee Myint, Kayin State Hluttaw Speaker, Deputy Minister U Soe Aung, Kayin State cabinet ministers, the director-general of Department of Disaster Management, the deputy director-general of Department of Social Welfare and officials comforted the internally displaced persons at Myaing Gyi Ngu region and provide the benefits of COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan.

The Union Minister and party paid homage to Bhantanda Ashin Nyanissa at Nan-Oo Taw-Ya Monastery and donated Waso robe and offertories.

The Union Minister and party met the IDPs in IDP camps. The Union Minister said the government had been fulfilling the needs of the civilians apart from the current support for short-term benefits; plans are being made for long-term benefits; the government was focusing on internal peace and National Level Strategy was being implemented to re-settle the internally displaced persons and to shut down the IDP camps so that the people could live again independently with safety and dignity; the two IDP camps in Kayin State has been implemented as per the Strategy and Kayin State is also included in the government-led Maternal & Child Cash Transfer (MCCT) Programme.

The Union Minister also said that the government was providing social pensions to the elderly aged 85 and over and implementing the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP) to give people with disability and senior citizens between the ages of 80 and 85, and to support the IDPs to buy food.

The Union Minister said that the cash assistance should be effectively used as those are public funds and the people will benefit the long-term plans on education, healthcare, social and economic sectors.

The Kayin State Chief Minister said the government was not only giving relief assistance but also carrying out the plans for professional works and discussed with the war victims on receiving aid.

The Union Minister and party donated K208.14 million for 6,938 disabled people, K28.96 million for 724 households to buy foods and the Department of Social Welfare donated K7.38 million for 246 senior citizens in 2 IDP camps, soap bars and lime powder bags to ethnic IDPs.—MNA (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)
69,000 fingerlings released into paddy fields in Kyonpyaw

Officials release fingerlings into the paddy fields to reduce the scarcity of the fish resources Kyonpyaw township on Pathein District on 14 August. PHOTO: NAY WIN MYINT (KYONPYAW)

ABOUT 69,000 fingerlings were reportedly released into the paddy fields to reduce the scarcity of the fish resources and ensure sufficiency of the local consumption.

The fingerling releasing ceremony was held in Kyonpyaw township in Pathein District on 14 August. The service was attended by U Aung Soe Moe, the township administrator; the officials and staff from the relevant departments and the officials from social organizations.

MR to reopen Yangon-Mawlamyine express train service on 22 August

A locomotive on the Yangon-Mawlamyine railway lines seen at the Central Railway Station in Yangon.

PHOTO: SOE MYINT AUNG

YANGON-Mawlamyine express train service will start to run on 22 August, according to Mawlamyine Railway Station under Myanmar Railway (MR).

The express train will stop at three stations including Paung, Thakton and Kyainko stations. The CCTVs will also be installed onboard the train for the safety of passengers, and the train will be clean and tidy because it is an express one.

Yangon-Mawlamyine express train run by Kova two new express coaches will take only nine hours. Fare for Yangon-Mawlamyine trip will be priced at K8,000 for the upper class and K4,000 for the ordinary class. The tickets will be sold one day ahead.

The train will include four upper coaches which can accommodate 33 passengers, five ordinary coaches, which can accommodate 44 passengers and one average coach which (manual brake coach), can accommodate 44 passengers.

No 83 up express train leaves Yangon Railway Station at 8 pm on 22 August and arrives at Mawlamyine railway station at 5:15 am the next day. On the same day of 23 August, No 84 down express train departs from Mawlamyine Railway Station at 9 pm and arrives at Yangon Railway Station at 6:00 am the next day. —Pwint Thit Sar (Translated by Hay Mar)

Total border trade using ITCs exceeds K37 bln in 10 months

At the ceremony, a total of 69,000 fingerlings were released including 15,000 Thal Barb us fingerlings and 50,000 golden fingerlings.

“By releasing the fingerlings, we can produce both paddy and fish at the same time. We are releasing about 69,000 fingerlings into 138 acres of paddy fields. Each acre of paddy field will get 500 fingerlings. It is aimed at ensuring the self-sufficiency of the local people. For sufficient of fisheries resources, the Fisheries Department is releasing the fingerlings into the ponds (fins) and creeks annually. The department is also taking legal action against illegal fishing to reduce the scarcity of the fish resources,” said Daw Khin Myo Naing, Head of Township Fisheries Department.

There are about 30 grant- ed inns in Kyonpyaw township, which earned the country K249 million in this financial year. —Nay Win Myint (Kyonpyaw)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

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

TOTAL border trade conducted by Individual Trading Cards (ITCs) exceeded K37.84 billion in ten months of the current financial year (FY) of 2019-2020 which started in October, according to the data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

From 1 October to 31 July this FY, the Ministry issued 61 ITCs and export using those cards through border gates earned the exporters over K2.6 billion while its imports exceed- ed K35.24 billion.

The Myawady border re- corded the highest trade at a value of K24.78 billion in the current FY, according to the Commerce Ministry.

Myanmar mainly exports agricultural products, animal products, marine products, minerals, forest products, manufac- turing goods and others to foreign trade partner countries. In contrast, capital goods, inter- mediate goods and consumer goods are imported.


The Ministry began issuing of ITCs in 2012. Traders can sell up to K15 million per week using ITCs, which must be ex- tended every year. The Trade Department issues ITCs to boost border trade. —Zwe

(Translated by Hay Mar)
UPDJC Secretariat holds 27th meeting

THE 27th meeting of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) Secretariat was held at the Myanmar International Convention Centre I (MICC-I) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Present at the meeting were Government officials, Peace Commission Secretary Retired Lt-Gen Khin Zaw Oo, Maj-Gen Soe Naing Oo and Brig-Gen Ye Aung Win, Pyithu Hluttaw MP U Pyone Cho (a) U Htay Win Aung, Peace Commission advisory board member U Hla Maung Shwe and U Moe Zaw Oo, Director-General U Zaw Htay of the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor, and Pado Saw Tar Do Moo (KNU), U Myo Win (ABSDF), Saw Mra Yazar Lin (ALP), Khun Myint Tun (PNLO) and Nai Aung Ma Ngay (NMSP) from the ethnic armed groups, and U Naing Ngin Lin (NLD), U Myint Soe (USDP), Sai Kyaw Nyunt (SNLD), Tar Hla Pe (Ta’ang – Palaung), and U Thein Tun (NUP) from the political parties.

During the meeting, they discussed the Part III in the Union Accord to be signed in the fourth session of Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong, implementation framework for the NCA, step-by-step procedures in Table-1 of implementation plans for post-2020, guiding principles for establishing the Democratic Federal Union, the submission of UPDJC and JMC reports at the conference, programmes and system on each day of the conference, plans for the first day of the conference, patrons for the conference, distribution of work for UPDJC secretariat, substitute of UPDJC members and plans for 19th UPDJC meeting.

—Mya Naing Han (Translated by Khin Thazin Han)

311 Myanmar migrant workers return home via Myawady border

A total of 311 Myanmar migrant workers – 198 males and 113 females – came back home from Thailand through the Myawady Friendship Bridge (2) yesterday.

Myawady District Administrator U Tay Zar Aung and local authorities helped the returnees with medical tests and other supplies.

A total of 64,083 returnees including 11,680 in May, 25,338 in June and 18,597 in July and 9,068 returnees from 1 to 15 August so far have come back home through this border crossing.

Yesterday’s returnees were successfully kept in the respective quarantined centres in line with COVID-19 prevention measures, according to the local officials. —Htein Lin Aung (IPRD) (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

South Korea tightens curbs in capital to control virus surge

SOUTH Korea tightened coronavirus measures on Saturday in Seoul and its surrounding areas as the country reported the highest number of new daily infections in more than five months.

The stricter social distancing guidelines include restrictions on gatherings and activities including professional sports, which will be played behind closed doors in the capital area again.

The move came as South Korea reported 166 new cases on Saturday, the highest daily figure since early March, bringing the country’s total infections to 15,039 with 305 deaths.

South Korea stands at a “critical juncture” in the battle to control the coronavirus surge, Prime Minister Chung Sye-kyun said at a government response meeting.

“Our top priority is to contain the spread of the virus in the greater Seoul area.”

A majority of the new cases came from the greater Seoul region – home to half of the country’s 51 million people – raising fears about a major spike with a three-day weekend starting in South Korea from Saturday.

Despite the outbreak and calls to avoid large gatherings, thousands of right-wing protestors rallied against President Moon Jae-in’s centre-left government in the heart of Seoul on Saturday. Around 20,000 participated, according to the Yonhap news agency.

South Korea endured one of the worst early outbreaks outside mainland China but brought it broadly under control with extensive tracing and testing while never imposing the kind of lockdowns seen in much of Europe and other parts of the world.

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

It even started allowing limited numbers of spectators at sports games in July – which was reversed for the greater Seoul region on Saturday.

—Mya Naing Han (Translated by Khin Thazin Han)
Myanmar needs to sustain extraordinary efforts in COVID-19 containment

Solutions, solidarity needed to defeat COVID-19 pandemic

"Our best way forward is to stick with science, solutions and solidarity and together we can overcome this pandemic," World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus urged earlier this month.

In relaxing strict measures, which were a cause of concern for everyone, it is necessary to get back on track to stem the tide of COVID-19. The virus is still present and active, and the risk of another wave is very real.

A high number of COVID-19 cases and deaths have been reported in recent weeks, with a significant increase in the number of cases in some countries. This is a cause for concern and action.

In light of this, it is important to remember the importance of continuing to follow basic preventive measures such as wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, and practicing good hygiene.

In the past few months, the situation has improved, but we cannot relax our guard. We must continue to work together to defeat this pandemic and protect ourselves and our loved ones.

The WHO has emphasized the importance of continued vigilance and adherence to preventive measures. The pandemic is still a threat, and we must remain committed to defeating it.

In conclusion, the fight against COVID-19 is not over yet. We must remain vigilant and continue to follow preventive measures to ensure that we can overcome this pandemic and build a better future for all.

* * *

CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

New York museums, galleries to reopen after August 24

New York’s museums, art galleries and cultural institutions will be allowed to reopen starting August 24, state governor Andrew Cuomo said Friday after a five-month shutdown due to the coronavirus.

The Met’s reopening will be a major milestone for the cultural community in New York City and beyond. The museum, which has been closed since March, will welcome visitors with a host of new exhibits and programs.

The Whitney Museum of American Art will reopen on August 24 after a six-month closure.

The Metropolitan Opera is scheduled to return on December 11, while Broadway theatres will remain closed until at least January.

In New York’s famous Metropolitian Museum of Art, which normally welcomes seven million visitors a year, it said it would reopen on August 24.

The Met will be open for six months, The Met’s reopening will be a historic moment for the Museum and the City,” Met president Daniel H. Weiss said in a statement.

Throughout the recent months of uncertainty, isolation and grief, we have longed for the day when we can safely welcome everyone back to The Met, where all can find comfort, inspiration, and a sense of community,” said the museum.

The Whitney Museum of American Art will reopen on August 24 after a six-month closure due to the pandemic.

The Metropolitan Opera is scheduled to return on December 11, while Broadway theatres will remain closed until at least January.

New York State was initially hard hit by the coronavirus and has recorded 25,231 deaths and 424,176 infections so far. Cuomo said in an update Friday. He highlighted the state’s progress against the pandemic with under one percent of coronavirus tests proving positive over the past seven days.

SOURCE: AP Photo

NEW YORK, Aug. 14 (Xinhua) -- New York State’s museums, art galleries and cultural institutions will be allowed to reopen starting August 24, state governor Andrew Cuomo said Friday after a five-month shutdown due to the coronavirus.

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SOURCE: AP Photo

The Met is set to reopen on August 24 after a five-month shutdown due to the coronavirus pandemic.

PHOTO: AP File

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions from young people for its weekly Sunday Special feature. It is a platform for aspiring writers to showcase their talent and share their stories.

If you are a young writer or aspiring author, we want to hear from you. The Global New Light of Myanmar offers a unique opportunity to publish your work to a wide audience. Whether you are just starting out or have been writing for some time, we encourage you to submit your work.

We are looking for submissions of poetry, short stories, essays, and other creative writing. The only requirement is that your writing is original and not previously published.

You can submit your work by email to info@thenewlightofmyanmar.com, or by post to Global New Light of Myanmar, 1505 15th Street NW, Washington, DC 20005, USA.

For more information, please visit our website at www.thenewlightofmyanmar.com or contact us at info@thenewlightofmyanmar.com.

Our aim is to provide a platform for young writers to share their work and gain exposure. We are looking for writers who are passionate about writing and are interested in sharing their stories.

We are interested in stories from people from all walks of life, including but not limited to:

- People of all ages and backgrounds
- People from different cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds
- People with diverse experiences and perspectives

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EU reserves 400 mln doses of potential J&J virus vaccine

THE European Union said Thursday it had reserved up to 400 million doses of a potential new coronavirus vaccine being developed by US giant Johnson & Johnson.

Preliminary talks concluded Friday for a first purchase of 200 million doses followed by an equal number later, a statement said.

“The envisaged contract with Johnson & Johnson would provide for the possibility for all EU Member States to purchase the vaccine, as well as to donate to lower and middle income countries,” it said.

The bloc said it was in “intensive discussions” with other manufacturers for potential vaccines.

According to the World Health Organization, nearly 3.7 million cases of Covid-19 have been recorded in Europe since the start of the pandemic, and 218,383 deaths.

On July 31, the European Commission said it had reserved 300 million doses of another potential vaccine being developed by French firm Sanofi.

“Our citizens’ lives and our economy need a safe and effective vaccine against the coronavirus. Today’s talks bring us closer to achieving this,” European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen said.

The EU is using about 2 billion euros ($2.4 billion) from an emergency fund to strike advance purchase deals with several vaccine makers in a bid to secure enough shots for its population of 450 million.

**Source:** AFP

COVID-19 vaccine will be free for Americans, say officials

THE US government announced that if proven effective, the US will ensure that it is distributed free to all Americans.

“We are not at all reducing the regulatory rigour with which we will evaluate and hopefully approve vaccines,” Paul Mango, a senior health department official, was quoted as saying.

The US has invested more than $10 billion in six vaccine projects and signed contracts guaranteeing the delivery of hundreds of millions of doses after they clear clinical trials.

The vaccine doses themselves will be paid for by the government.

Payments for the doctors and clinics that administer these doses will be covered by private and public insurers, officials have said.

“We are on track to deliver hundreds of millions of doses by January 2021,” he added.

Critics of President Donald Trump have expressed worries that in order to announce the availability of vaccine before elections on November 3, the administration may bypass safety precautions—Mango has denied the charge.

This week, Russia approved a vaccine even before it started the last phase of clinical trials. Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), compared Russia’s vaccine, dubbed as “Sputnik V” to a game of “Russian roulette.”

“I hope that the Russians have actually definitively proven that the vaccine is safe and effective, but I seriously doubt that they’ve done that,” top US infectious disease expert Anthony Fauci said.

**Source:** AFP

Australian government to cut university fee support for failing students

THE Australian government has announced that it will stop subsidizing university fees for first-year students who fail half their subjects.

Minister for Education Dan Tehan announced the changes on Thursday, saying that they would prevent students from taking on study loads they can’t handle.

Under the new measures, students who fail at least half of their first eight subjects in a degree will lose access to the Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP), through which Australian citizens and other eligible students receive zero-interest loans from the government to pay for their tertiary education.

However, universities will be able to maintain a students’ access to the scheme if their performance was affected by exceptional circumstances.

“These measures will ensure students not to take on a study load they won’t complete,” Tehan said.

The government held 66.6 billion Australian dollars (about 47.7 billion U.S. dollars) worth of HELP debt in financial year 2018-19.

According to the Department of Education, one student accrued 663,000 AUD (about 475,961 U.S. dollars) in HELP debt after enrolling in 44 courses at 26 institutions and attaining no qualifications.

“The lack of transparency of a student’s enrolment has allowed some non-genuine students to enrol and re-enrol at multiple providers at the same time,” Tehan said.

Andrew Norton, a higher education expert from Australian National University (ANU), said that approximately six percent of students fail every subject in their first year at university.

“Many fails are avoidable if disengaged students leave before the HELP census date or the usually later date to withdraw without academic penalty. The government’s legislation would put more pressure on universities to check that students are engaged, especially as they move from first to second semester,” he told Nine Entertainment newspapers.

**Source:** AFP

NEW MEASURES

VACCINE PROJECTS

**COVID-19 vaccine will be free for Americans, say officials**

**EU reserves 400 mln doses of potential J&J virus vaccine**

A sign is posted at the Johnson & Johnson campus on 26 August 2019 in Irvine, California. **PICTURE: AFP**

Dr Rhonda Flores looks at protein samples at Novavax labs in Rockville, Maryland on March 20, 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

A sign is posted at the Johnson & Johnson campus on 26 August 2019 in Irvine, California. **PICTURE: AFP**

A sign is posted at the Johnson & Johnson campus on 26 August 2019 in Irvine, California. **PICTURE: AFP**
**Putin calls for emergency Iran summit to decrease tensions**

**Belarus leader reaches out to Russia as pressure grows**

**UN to ramp up food aid in DR Congo to reach 9 million people**

**Israel-UAE deal a Trump coup, but his sights are set on Iran**

**WASHINGTON** — The Israel-UAE agreement gives the United States a rare diplomatic success in the Middle East — but it is Iran which President Donald Trump has in his sights, with a strategy that has already hit roadblocks at the United Nations.

The White House has lavished praise on a foreign policy coup which was sorely needed by a president seeking re-election in November who has little to show for his administration’s motivation has a consequence of escalating conflict and displacement, disease, extreme poverty, poor harvests and COVID-19,
Indonesia to close doors to foreign tourists until vaccine found

JAKARTA — Indonesia will continue not to open its doors to foreign tourists until a new coronavirus vaccine is found and immunity can be provided, a government official said Saturday, as the hard-hit country is conducting clinical testing for a vaccine.

“The reopening of tourist destinations to foreign tourists is something positive, but we need to do it at the right time,” Erick Thohir, chief of Indonesia's national economic and COVID-19 recovery team, told a virtual public discussion. Since Tuesday, Indonesia has been conducting the final, phase 3 clinical testing for a COVID-19 vaccine candidate in the West Java provincial capital of Bandung.

The clinical trial is taking place with the cooperation of Chinese-based drug maker Sinovac Biotech Ltd. and a team of Indonesian scientists and researchers, as well as Indonesian state-owned drug maker PT Bio Farma which have developed the vaccine candidate. Once clinical testing for about six and a half months is completed, vaccine production will immediately start and pave the way to offering immunity to the general public.

According to Thohir, who is also state-owned enterprises minister, the government did not want its efforts to mitigate the novel coronavirus pandemic undermined by the reopening of its borders to tourists to avoid creating new clusters.

Acknowledging that immunity may only start next year, Thohir said reopening the country’s borders to foreign travelers must go hand in hand with producing immunity so as not to start again from scratch.

“Therefore, for the time being, we are still reviewing the plan to reopen Indonesia for foreign tourists,” he said.

As of Friday noon, Indonesia reported 2,307 new confirmed cases of the coronavirus, bringing the total number of cases to 135,123 with 4,021 fatalities.

The government has slowly reopened some tourist destinations for domestic tourists despite the continued high risk of the new coronavirus spreading.

Recovery of domestic tourism has been the first target before the country reopens to tourists from abroad.

Indonesia is also in negotiations with some countries to set up travel corridors for business travelers. Indonesia has reached agreements with South Korea and the United Arab Emirates for such travel bubbles.

Vietnam’s southern bourse up slightly amid hopes on COVID-19 vaccines

HCM CITY — VN-Index, the benchmark index of the Ho Chi Minh City Stock Exchange, inched up from last week’s closure of 851.46 points to close at 850.74 points on Friday.

The index posted three up and two down this week. It started Monday on a positive note, cutting early gains of gaining 1.74 points, or 0.21 per cent.

The market is forecast to maintain official said Saturday, as the hard-hit country is conducting clinical testing for a vaccine.

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The residents are concerned that tunnel work by the operator in a mountainous area could cut off groundwater flow and lower the water level of the Oi River, which passes through the central part of the prefecture known for its tea and oranges, the officials said.

Shizuoka Gov. Heita Kawakatsu has refused to give approval for the maglev train work in the prefecture, citing potential environmental damage.

Netherlands economy sees unprecedented drop due to coronavirus

AMSTERDAM — The Dutch economy took its biggest-ever hit from the global coronavirus pandemic as lockdowns brought activity in the country to a standstill, data showed on Friday.

The EU’s fifth-biggest economy shrank by 8.5 per cent in the period from April to June compared with the preceding three months, the central statistics office CBS said. “Never before has such a shrinkage been measured,” CBS said in a statement.

More than half of the contraction was due to a sharp fall in household consumption, the statisticians explained. But falling investment and a sharp decline in the trade balance also played a role.

Central Japan residents to seek injunction to stop maglev train work

A prototype of a Central Japan Railway Co. maglev train is unveiled to the media at the railway operator’s experimental laboratory in Touru, Yamanashi Prefecture, eastern Japan, on Oct. 3, 2019. PHOTOS: KYODO

Central Japan Railway Co. is already facing opposition from the local government over the construction work and gave up on its original plan to open the new line between Tokyo and Nagoya in 2027.

The residents are concerned that tunnel work by the operator in a mountainous area could cut off groundwater flow and lower the water level of the Oi River, which passes through the central part of the prefecture known for its tea and oranges, the officials said.

Shizuoka Gov. Heita Kawakatsu has refused to give approval for the maglev train work in the prefecture, citing potential environmental damage.

The maglev trains, with a top speed of 500 kilometers per hour, would connect the two major cities located 286 kilometers apart in 46 minutes, less than half the travel time for existing shinkansen train services.

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Frankfurt mayor invites TikTok to set up headquarters: German media

FRANKFURT — The mayor of Frankfurt Peter Feldmann has recently invited popular Chinese video-sharing app TikTok to set up its new global headquarters in the German metropolis, several German media outlets reported.

Feldmann’s letter of invitation to ByteDance, a Chinese tech firm and owner of TikTok, was first reported by Journal Frankfurt on Wednesday, and later also by Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and Der Spiegel.

Frankfurt boasts one of the world’s busiest internet hubs and a large number of data centres, as well as many well-trained professionals in the region, Feldmann was quoted as saying in the letter, who also noted the city’s central location in Europe and excellent connections with China through partner city Guangzhou.

Frankfurt is an ideal location for IT companies and especially for TikTok’s international headquarters, Feldmann was quoted as saying.

Venice anti-cruise activists cheer as port workers protest

VENICE — A Venice citizen's group is cheering a temporary victory as cruise lines pull out of the lagoon city this year due to coronavirus logistical challenges, even as pressure rises from furloughed port workers.

MSC Cruises and Costa Cruises announced this week that their first Mediterranean cruises this year, due to coronavirus logistical challenges, will be skipping Venice as part of social distancing, easier scheduling and itineraries.

Many big cruise ships will also be skipping Venice as a port of call.

"This isn’t the final victory. But it’s an important step and we believe it opens a new phase of negotiations in which the game has changed," No Grandi Navi committee member Marta Sottoriva told AFP.

China’s ride-hailing giant pledges 200 mln yuan in creating jobs

BEIJING — Chinese ride-hailing giant Didi Chuxing (Didi) has announced that it will invest 200 million yuan (about 28.8 million U.S. dollars) to promote employment for those affected by the COVID-19 epidemic, unemployed and poor family members based on its platform.

The company plans to give subsidies of car rentals, income and insurance purchases for beginners who join Didi’s ride-hailing fleets. Drivers in poor areas can enjoy special poverty-relief funds, and freelancers can participate in skill training courses for free.

Didi has also been creating jobs for poverty-stricken counties and donated shared bikes to poor areas, with the operation revenue used to set up public welfare posts for locals.

Japan braces for further damage by crop-hungry fall armyworm

TOKYO — Japan is sounding the alarm against the inexorable march of the fall armyworm, as reports of damage by the pest in Asia following its spread in Africa are increasing, threatening Japan with infestation.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries has warned of significant damage to farm products unless authorities and farmers take appropriate measures to remove the insect in a timely fashion. First detected in Kagoshima Prefecture, southwestern Japan, in July last year, the fall armyworm has caused damage in about 30 of the nation’s 47 prefectures.

Trump orders Chinese firm to divest from TikTok’s U.S. operations

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Donald Trump on Friday ordered Chinese company ByteDance Ltd. to divest its interest in the U.S. operations of its popular video-sharing app TikTok within 90 days.

In the executive order issued the same day, Trump said there is “credible evidence” that leads him to believe that ByteDance “might take action that threatens to impair the national security of the United States.”

Amid a widening U.S.-China rivalry, the Trump administration has stepped up pressure on TikTok and Chinese messaging app WeChat due to concern the platforms are both a privacy risk and susceptible to Beijing’s censorship activities.

News in Brief

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Yangon govt set to protect nearly 40,000 acres of mangroves

By Thant Zin Win

A coordination meeting at the Yangon Region Chief Minister’s office on 5 August agreed to convert 39,977.52 acres in Thongwa, Kyauktan and Kungyangon townships into protected mangroves.

Director U Thein Toe of the Yangon Region Forest Department said their department would need to work together with the farmland management department, statistical department, fisheries department, general administration department and affiliated organizations to implement the mangrove process. He said some of the area is already converted into mangroves while the rest are either untouched or illegally exploited. He said they will have to apply to reclaim some of the land from the Central Committee for Vacant, Fallow, and Virgin Land Management. He said some of the land had been issued for other uses but he fears this may destroy the land. He said mangroves will benefit the people and can protect the area from natural disasters.

The director of Forest Department also said since the region is close to the sea, there are many areas that the central committee has granted that have remain untouched. He said they will reclaim those areas and return lands that have regrown forests to a collective ownership. He said the local residents are hoping for this as well. He said they will discuss with all relevant villages to divide the forests and are aiming to complete this within

Inadequate mangrove conservation has caused the tide to erode the interior compound of the Mee Pya Pagoda, once located in the middle of the namesake village, forcing them to relocate further inland. PHOTO: THANT ZIN WIN
“ConceptX Application: a portal for every Grade 10 subject from both the old and new curriculum in one place”

CONCEPTX has looked into opportunities to support Myanmar’s education sector and research has shown that the price of attaining a well-rounded education for children of working-class parents was exceptionally high. We realized from this that technology and education had to be combined to achieve our intended goal.

Our motto, “May all Myanmar citizens have access to education”, aligns with our aim to provide comprehensive education at an affordable price to all students across the nation with the minimum requirement of owning a smartphone or a tablet.

The nation can only develop when the number of educated citizens increases and in that regard U Soe Htet, an experienced mathematician, developed the ConceptX application to take advantage of the abundance of mobile devices in present times. The application has Grade 10 lessons from the curriculum in addition to old math questions all categorized neatly into chapters and years for the student’s convenience.

After being active for 2 years, the ConceptX application has been upgraded once again. Version 2.0 now contains all lessons for mathematics, chemistry, physics and biology from both the old and new Grade 10 curriculum. All this content is readily available in one place with a payment of MMK 19,900.

The instructors have specialized degrees from international universities and teaching experience of over 40 years.

Ko Zaw Min Thu said the locals will conserve the mangroves as it helps multiply fish and prawns and boosts ecotourism. He said they have given awareness training to all concerned villages and have formed supervising groups as well. He said all the local residents have signed and petitioned for this project and only hope it will take action before the changeover to the next government administration.

The forest department said they will keep the existing and petitioned prawn breeding farms untouched but take legal action towards trespassers.

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(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

ConceptX leader U Soe Htet will be heading mathematics. He received his Bachelor’s Degree from the University of Minnesota, USA, and his Master’s from the Southeast Missouri State University with both specializing in mathematics.

U Soe Htet was a graduate assistant during his time studying for his degrees and spent about 2 years helping university professors teach first year students. He has also given training courses in mathematics to a hundred teachers from international schools and private high schools in Myanmar and to about 50 public school teachers in Mon State.

In addition, lessons for mathematics will be supported by those who won an Honourable Mention award representing Myanmar in the 2017 International Mathematical Olympiad, those majoring in math at Yangon University, and those pursuing Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at UC Berkeley, one of the global top 10 institutes.

ConceptX will have U Aung Myint teaching physics and he brings with him more than 47 years of teaching experience solely teaching chemistry to the subject on ConceptX.

20 years of teaching experience, will be in charge of biology while U Ba Thein will be employing his 40 years of experience solely teaching chemistry to the subject on ConceptX.

There are arrangements for lectures on English by U Nay Oke (St. Paul) to be available for free on the application.

There are also preparations to distribute ConceptX tablets for students in regions without efficient internet connectivity. The tablets will have the lessons from the old and new curriculum in video format preinstalled. Their 10-inch size screen will also reduce straining effects on the eyes.

The ConceptX tablets will be available at the price of MMK 250,000 with free delivery for students in any of Yangon’s townships. Purchases from out of town will only have to pay an additional delivery charge for their region as ConceptX will take responsibility for delivering it to the bus terminal.

The lessons are designed according to the marking rules and the video files will explain each step of the lessons in detail so that students can easily understand the concepts.

The ConceptX application also has a new ‘sharing’ programme. Anyone can join in the programme by simply opening an account first and clicking on the ‘share’ button under the ‘sharing’ title. They can then copy the code number and share it through Facebook, Viber or SMS.

For each person using the code number to purchase the ConceptX application, both the buyer and code owner will receive MMK 5,000 and can earn a maximum of MMK 250,000 from sharing the code. This can be withdrawn using the ‘cash withdrawal’ button and will be available within two days after verification by the ConceptX Team.

ConceptX is an organization working together with the government to make good education accessible at an affordable price for everyone. The ConceptX application and its services are available at a minimal price and the application is introduced and donated at monastic education schools and public high schools to ensure widespread usage.

The instructors have specialized degrees from international universities and teaching experience of over 40 years.
MFF president inspects team camps, stadium for restarting MNL

Myanmar Football Federation President U Zaw Zaw and football authorities inspect the condition of Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on 15 August 2020. PHOTO: MFF

Myanmar Football Federation President U Zaw Zaw inspected team camps of Myanmar National League football clubs and Thuwunna Stadium yesterday morning in Yangon, according to an official statement with the MFF.

Myanmar National League Committee Vice-Chairman De Sai San Htun, Myanmar Football Federation working committee member and Chairman of Shan United U Khan Naung Myint Wai also participated in the tour of inspection.

During the inspection tour, MFF President U Zaw Zaw urged officials from MFF and MNL to obey health guidelines to prevent COVID-19, to have clean and tidy team camp quarantines, to have systematic support of clean water plus purified drinking water for footballers and coaches during their camping, and football teams to obey strict standard operating procedures set up by the Ministry of Health and Sports, stated the source with the MFF.

Later, MFF president and officials went to the Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon and inspected conditions of training grounds and maintenance of the stadium. The MFF president also urged football authorities to handle particular matters for restarting the MNL tourney, according to the MFF. Currently, MFF authorities are strictly following the COVID-19 rules and regulations set up by the Ministry of Health and Sports for restarting the MNL matches on 22 August. —Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Bayern thrashing end of an era for Barca, no easy cure at Camp Nou

MADRID—Very rarely does one single result bring the curtain down on an era, but that is what FC Barcelona’s 8-2 thrashing in the quarter-final of the Champions League did on Friday night.

Barca’s worst ever European defeat was a “historically ridiculous” according to the pro-Barca ‘El Mundo Deportivo’ newspaper and veteran defender Gerard Pique told TV cameras directly after the final whistle that it was “embarrassing.”

“We have touched bottom and it’s unacceptable,” added Pique after Barca had been outplayed, outrun and outflown in every area of the park by a Bayern side that looked, fitter, faster and hungrier than the Catalans.

The immediate consequence of the defeat will be to bring the curtain down on the brief spell at the Camp Nou of coach Quique Setien, who was brought in to replace Ernesto Valverde with Barca top of the league in January, only to see his side finish five points behind Real Madrid and now to crash dismally out of Europe.

“We are going to take decisions,” said Barca president, Josep Maria Bartomeu shortly after the final whistle, probably aware that his own future is now up in the air as well with elections for the presidency on the horizon. —Xinhua

Liverpool great Fowler hits out at ‘gangster’ Brisbane Roar

LONDON—Former England and Liverpool striker Robbie Fowler claims he was wrongfully dismissed by Brisbane Roar, saying the Australian club “turned gangster” on him and assistant Tony Grant.

Fowler was appointed coach last year and overruled the squad, lifting them to fourth in the A-League before the season was suspended in March due to the coronavirus pandemic.

He and ex-Everton midfielder Grant returned to England and the club announced in late June they had parted ways, citing “the current and ongoing coronavirus situation”, while noting that “family comes first”.

But the Liverpool legend told the Sydney Morning Herald his contract was abruptly terminated over comments made in a television interview, where he said he felt his return was “not a priority” for the club. The 45-year-old insisted he wanted to see out his two-year contract and did not walk away. “They just suddenly turned gangster on us,” he told the newspaper. “Lots of people have opinions about me but one thing I’m not is selfish. I had a job to do and I wanted to finish that job.” —AFP

Horschel, Kim among leaders at log-jammed Wyndham Championship

GREENSBORO—Billy Horschel fired a six-under par 66 on Friday to join a four-way tie atop a jammed leaderboard at the US PGA Tour’s Wyndham Championship. Horschel, chasing a sixth tour title and his first since the 2018 Zurich Classic of New Orleans, hit 13 of 14 fairways and 16 of 18 greens in regulation to finish 36 holes on 10-under par 130 — tied with former Wyndham champion Kim Si-woo of South Korea and Americans Tom Hoge and Talor Gooch. Kim, who notched the first of his two tour titles at the 2016 Wyndham, had six birdies in his five-under 65. Gooch also posted a 65 while Hoge followed up a first-round 62 with a 68. Harold Varner, who shared the overnight lead with Hoge and Canadian Roger Sloan, carded a 69 to join a group on 131 that also included Ireland’s Shane Lowry (68), Harris English (67), Andrew Landry (65) and Doc Redman (64). Sloan was among another seven players a further stroke back on 132 — with a total of 25 players within three strokes of the lead at Sedgefield Country Club in Greensboro, North Carolina. —AFP

Bayern Munich’s Polish forward Robert Lewandowski (9) celebrates after scoring his team’s sixth goal during the UEFA Champions League quarter-final football match between Barcelona and Bayern Munich at the Luz stadium in Lisbon on August 14, 2020. MANU FERNANDEZ / POOL / AFP
Despite being very selective in choosing friends, I have got a social circle of moderate size. Some friends are of the same mind, whilst others are of different mindsets. Whatever, I tend to cherish everyone and keep up the chemistry between us. In a way, they also have certain effects on me; some give me pleasure; some give me something to learn; and some even inspire me to do something great. Of course, there are a few friends that I usually meet with to kill the boredom or to do random stuff together as an outlet. And, I must confess that each and every one of them has, at least, a talent which is different from mine, and from one another. Not long before I was determined to write this essay, I just found three of my friends endowed with the talents, so wonderful that I have always admired them.

Firstly, I have a friend whose name is Min Htike. He is from the Ayeyarwaddy region. I have known him for half a decade. He has been a volunteer teacher at a monastic school in Dala. I first met him when I got there to volunteer teaching English. Since then, it has been evident that he is a resourceful, energetic, dynamic and productive person. Additionally, he is super good at cooking; it is a win-win situation, isn’t it? Although I do not have a clue about cooking, the sense of mine to feel the quality of the taste is great and appreciated by every friend of mine. He can not only make a delicious meal himself but also make others’ work taste better. I ever heard him saying he tends to hone the talent in order that something like magical feats will come to exist particularly in his hands, which will help him cook excellent meals. He has surely excelled himself to the wonderful cooking. Always, his cooking has great appeal for every one of us. Any other friend is in no position to be compared with Min Htike when it comes to cooking. That way, he has become a friend that I am very much envious of as a good cook.

Another friend is Zeya from Mawlamyine. He is not my childhood friend, but of my friend Aung Lay. I first met Zeya during a short visit to Mawlamyine, where I was introduced to him by Aung Lay. Eventually, we became more and more friendly with each other. He became more frank to me than he was to Aung Lay. Our friendship grew with time; there was nothing like grudge or jealousy between us; when I felt displeased with something about him, I would not take long to get it off my chest. I am thick enough with him to do that! It never sparked off any hostility from his side. We have also been of the same minds; we always share our sentimental values. He is so broad-minded that he is rarely found to cross with another. In addition, he is such a staunch friend that it is out of the question for anyone to create bad blood between us; never is he convinced with anyone’s cunning made-up story that would ridicule my dignity. Also, he is very much interested in commerce and works so hard. He once told me that he had opened a clothes shop and could buy a car in two years’ time. Let me say that he is the most successful businessman among us. You would never see him complaining about the heavy load of running the business. It ever occurred to me that he just as soon choose his work rather than his friends. What a workaholic! He is good at financial management, too; the moment his business began to gain momentum, he made a point of investing his money in extending its size by opening more local branches. I knew all along that he had it in him. I idolize him when it comes to making money. The significant thing that I learned from him is to spend my young days meaningfully, make good use of time and effort, work as hard as I can, save as much money as can be, and award myself after every success as he always does. He, too, inspires me a lot to make myself grow financially.

Every time we talk on the phone, he shares me how to earn a tidy sum of money. Every time I feel belittled, depressed or hopeless, he
HOMESCHOOLING is when children’s education is based at home with their parents’ guidance rather than through enrollment in a public school or private school. The term has caught the attention of parents and educators, especially during Covid-19 crisis. It is an alternative way of educating children by the parents or other house-holds with the responsibilities as teachers and administrators, having complete control over the direction of what their children learn, how they learn it and when. It carries its own pros and cons just as public and private schools do.

One major advantage of homeschooling is flexibility. In homeschooling, there are no fixed curriculum and learning materials assigned for each grade like in public schools. Parents can manage the teaching and learning materials according to their children’s interests and needs. Moreover, children obtain chances of learning at their own pace. This means that unlike public schools, where in a room of 20 or 30 students, the fast learners, who are eager to take more challenging tasks, however, have to wait for the slower ones and on the other hand, the slower ones have to keep up with the faster ones, leading to stressful learning situation. Homeschooling solves this problem by giving children individual attention. Furthermore, homeschooling avoids the potential risk of peer pressure and bullying. This does not mean that homeschoolers do not have access to their peers. In fact, homeschooled children often have more lessons outside of the home and participate more in their community. In addition, homeschooling creates strong bonds between parents and their children. Parents, performing both roles as teachers and administrators, devote more time to their children, resulting in stronger relationships than as usual.

On the other hand, homeschooling possesses some drawbacks. One defect is that financial costs may arise as a problem as parents and the households have to take care of everything for their children’s learning such as textbooks, books, papers, computers, smartphones and many other teaching and learning aids. This does not seem quite apparent in the short term but in the long term, the issue can put a threat on the family’s income. Additionally, homeschooling causes parents under pressure and stress by having to find out the suitable teaching methods and materials and spend time reviewing numerous curriculum programs up to their standards and best suiting their children’s learning needs. What is more, homeschoolers can become restless and tiresome unless appropriate management plan of parents is implemented. This means that some parents expect too much of their children and motivate too often than required, leading children to become bored and frustrated.

To conclude, homeschooling is of assistance to parents and educators and some forms of homeschooling are done with a blend of parents and tutors. For children to obtain successful outcomes, parents’ management skills, their intelligence, patience and careful budgeting become vital. Therefore, being aware of the positive and negative attributes of homeschooling, it should be carried out in a sensible way so that effective learning of children will take place.

Friends and role models

FROM PAGE-5-1 knows how to help me survive the adversities, revise the motivations, and resume moving forwards. With these points in mind, I am greatly indebted to him for his inspiration and my aspirations.

Thirdly, another typical friend of mine in Mawlamyine is Ko Ko. He is a fun seeker; he does not look serious about anything. He ever admitted that he prefers to live a free and easy life. His action is in keeping with the admission in that he is always hunting for freedom. As an only son born into a rich family, he is living in a care-free way. His father is always there for him in case his son faces with hardship at times in a way that he ensures all the delicacies and luxuries available for Ko Ko, who but takes everything for granted. Travelling is his cup of tea; he is into touring around that I often ask him if he quarreled with the guardian spirit of his home! Then, he usually replies to it with an immediate sarcasm, full of witty repartee and humoristic skits. I did not like him at first, but he grew on me when I came to realize that one thing about him, which is by all means worth a lot of admiration. Little does he speak ill of others! Even when he is told about a person's downside, he just listens and ends up, at most, nodding his head to it, which always disappoints those gossiping machines. He has such kind of wonderful personality that only a few possess. 90 out of 100 people delight in spending their time gossiping about another person's unpleasant failures. Ko Ko is not at all among them! As his motto goes: 'A heart dipped in negativities is that of a loser'. Also, he does not reply to any rude comments or insulting remarks. When I asked him if he was afraid, he said and quoted Marilyn vos Savant's saying, 'I've never found an interesting person with a foul mouth.' I learned to keep the quotes in mind ever since, and thanks to him, I am getting more resistant to most of the insults than before.

We have many quotes and sayings as well as certain doctrine about friends. The Lord Buddha preached: "An individual's friends have a tremendous effect on him" and "The genuine friends can help him achieve his dreams". Furthermore, we have another saying: "A person is judged by the company he keeps". As luck would have it, I could have the ideal opportunity to meet such wonderful friends. They are supportive, encouraging, generous, men of heart-winning personality, constructive suggestions and positive attitudes towards the things around them. And, my intuition constantly tells me that they are the best obtainable friends and role models to me, and will in no way give me any trouble – but food, fun and fortune, indeed.
Here, I would like to express my feelings and experiences concerned with teaching, which I am choosing as my career. After I had passed the matriculation exam, I started teaching Grade-10 students. Thus, I am now a 5-year experienced teacher and teach all subjects but Biology in one-to-one tuitions, which mean home schooling. During these 5 years, I met many kinds of students and their parents. In accordance with my bitter-sweet experiences, I want to share some thoughts with you.

As I teach for one-to-one tuition, I always first discuss the situations of the students with their parents before accepting their request for teaching. Although they are different in background situation, that is, some are rich and some are not, they have the same mind to support the needs of their children in education. Sometimes their supporting wrongly turns out to be a kind of insult to the teacher. The thing that always annoys me is that some rich parents do not understand about the nature of one-to-one teaching. I would like to mention some of its natures. It is a part-time job. Based on the subjects they offered, I usually request honorarium from them. The job of teaching in one-to-one tuitions is not like other jobs such as private company, civil servants, selling something and so on. The money earned from these jobs is normally called ‘fee’, ‘salary’ or something like that. But, it is called ‘honorarium’ in teaching society because people consider that it is the job of wisdom and they value it.

Last week, I had a little bit confusing case. The student who I taught English was sent to the boarding school by his parents. His father came to tell me about that case while I was teaching him. No sooner did his father explain why he sent his son to the boarding school than I understood that he had no time to study with me and I was sure to stop teaching his son. What he wanted to tell me was: “You do not need to come any more”, but he did not say like that and he used the indirect ways of speaking. I frankly replied to his father like that “I have no problem even though if you move your son to other places. You can think nothing of my schedule for your son and do as you are okay.” Two days later, his father phoned me. “Hello, sorry Saya, my son starts attending the boarding school today. I just inform you to know it.” And then, I replied, “It is okay and it is my pleasure.” On the following day, while I was teaching other students in the evening, he made a call me again. When I saw his phone call, I was a little bit angry because it seemed like annoying me. “Saya, frankly speaking, can you give me money back?” My temper rose after hearing his words. I have now the reason why I was angry with him. In my article, what I do want to emphasize is the ethical standards of one-to-one teaching. The date that he phoned was July 13. It was nearly the middle of the month. We, private teachers, have a rule. For instance, the students must pay honorarium to us in the beginning of the month when they invite to start teaching at their home. Some parents think that paying money in the beginning of the month is just pre-giving. Actually, it was wrong. If we miss our responsibility from our side due to some cases, we have to pay back the money to them even though they do not request for it. We must not pay it back if the students stop learning in the middle of the month. Finally, he apologized to me for his wrong words.

Based on that event, I want you all to think about teaching. Some business-minded people think that teaching is like selling something. They only look at their side, thinking: The less they pay, the better. Frankly speaking, as far I have observed, it is only some rich people who usually adopt such a mean, money-minded attitude. We are not sellers and teaching is not selling something as they might suppose. I wish they had a good attitude and view towards our noble profession.

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Kayah (Karenni)

Kayah-Htoe-Boe Traditional Festival (Or) Sacred Totem Pole Festival

By Tommy Pauk

Kayah (Karenni) is a Kayah term. The word ‘Kay’ means a state, ‘Htoe’ means flourishing, and ‘Boe’ means sacred pole. The festival is celebrated with ethno-ethnic dance composition, a costume contest, and other entertainment programs. When the Kay Htoe Boe pole is erected, participants dance around the pole. This festival is celebrated by all Kayah people of Christianity, Buddhism, and Animism.

The Kayah people use to predict their life, anger, weather condition, all the needs and wants by reading at the holes of the chicken thighs bones. They use male chicken for this reading. They take out the thigh bones of the male chicken and look at the holes in the thigh bone. The male chicken has bones two or three holes. Every chicken has holes in thighs bone. According to their traditional belief, if the bones in the right thigh bone are found to be higher than the ones on the left, it is considered good for the coming year of the village and villagers’ health, harvest, weather conditions. In the opposite, if the words, it is a bad omen. It is learnt that this reading at the bones of the chicken thigh bones is done just before holding the any occasions in Kayah community. Now, the readers have learnt that whenever they hold their traditional ceremonies or festivals, the Kayah people make use of predictions for the good or bad results with the reference of reading chicken thighs bones. The description of the Kay Htoe-Boe (or) Sacred Totem Pole Festival is also accompanied by reading of the chicken thighs bones for prediction makes the readers interested.

Credit: Xinhua (Kay-Htoe-Boe Festival or Sacred Totem Pole Festival)
You’re only one dancing ‘Dnyain’ < group folk dance of Kayin >. What an interested person you are! Hahah!

You’re going to divorce, aren’t you?

We aren’t on the same term and can’t go on together.

Husband and wife may often have no similar attitude.

I’ve decided to divorce because I can’t be patient any more.

Think about what you’ll suffer consequent problem after divorce.

Don’t worry about that. My wife’s divorced three times already.

I’ve also divorced three times already.

You used to tell me to eat carrot whenever you saw me.

Do you know carrot prevents poor eyesight?

I say, man, what is the primary food for a rabbit?

It’s a carrot it eats.

So, are they wearing glasses? Do you see it?

Oh, I see!
HE Universities’ Dhammayon stands majestically in a wide compound sheltered by big, shady perennial trees at the corner of Pyi Road and University Avenue. It is adjoined by the Diamond Jubilee Hall on the south and the Yangon University Post-office on the east. The word ‘Dhammayon’ is the corruption of the Pali word ‘Dhammaramana’ meaning ‘The support of the Dhamma’. But, in the context of the universities’ Dhammayon, it is a spacious hall surmounted by a multi-tiered roof where religious affairs of the universities within the limits of Yangon city are undertaken. This year, the universities’ Dhammayon has entered its 83rd anniversary. So it should be hailed as an important landmark in the campus of the Yangon University on the occasion of its centenary.

The Universities’ Dhammayon was the outcome of the endeavours made by the Rangoon University Buddhist Association (RUBA) founded in 1929. It is said that it sprouted up from the Rangoon College Buddhist Association (RCBA) established in 1906. In the 1918-19 academic year, Chairman of the RCBA was Sayagyi U Ba, a lecture from the Chemistry Department and warden of the Bago Hostel, was elected Chairman of the RUBA. He suggested to his executive members to endeavor for the emergence of a university Dhammayon on the estate of Yangon University.

To realize the idea of Sayagyi U Ba, the members of the RUBA introduced a fund-rising programme that year. Accordingly, the students who returned home during Thadingyat holidays collected money from their parents and relatives. When the university was re-opened for the second semester, the money collected totaled about 5,000 kyats. Moreover, some students raised funds by staging theatrical shows at the Jubilee Hall on 19 and 20 December, 1931. They got more 3,000 kyats from these shows. The funds raised amounted to 40,000 kyats in total. But as the total construction cost for the Dhammayon would incur 57,250 kyats, the Wealthy Man U Nyo contributed to the RUBA 1,123 kyats left over after his donation to the construction of the Student’s Union Building.

It is said that, among the theatrical shows staged at the Jubilee Hall, the one named “Kutha Jataka” performed by Maung Toe Aung drew the attention of a large number of spectators. So, after the show, he was branded as Kutha by the students. He, under the pen-name of Kutha, wrote many articles, short stories, poems, etc. both in Myanmar and in English. He was among the pioneering writers of Khit-san-sar-pay (Age-testing literature). (Later, he became a teacher at the Myanmar-sar Department and retired as Principal of Mawlamyine College.)

The plan of construction of the Dhammayon took shape in the 1933-34 academic year. That year, Chairman of the RUBA was U Ba Sein, Vice-Chairmen Sayagyi U Pwar and Aggamahapandita Sayagyi U Lin, executive members Maung Thant Tin and Maung Wun (Min Thuwun), treasurers U Bo Thone and Daw Mya Than and Patrons U Set, Sir U Thwin, U Maung Gyi, U Thein Maung and Sayagyi U Ba respectively. By the courtesy of U Set and U Thein Maung, permission to build the Dhammayon in the current site was granted by the government. Thus, the foundation brick-laying ceremony for the Dhammayon was held on Sunday, 25 February, 1934. It was graced by the presence of a chapter of nine monks headed by Aletawya Sayadaw Aggamahapandita Kosalabhidhaja. At the ceremony, Sayagyi U Pwar first gave a welcoming speech to the audience present. Then, Aggamahapandita Sayagyi U Lin reported on the details of the construction programme of the Dhammayon. After that, Sayadaw Kosalabhidhaja preached the Dhamma on the elation over the donation and nine monks recited the Parittas Sutta to ward off the forth-coming dangers. The engineer who supervised the construction of the
A Precious Gift

A gift is a thing that we give to somebody, especially on a special occasion or to say thank you. We give one another gifts on our everyday life. It may be a birthday gift or a wedding gift. Parents also give us birthday gifts or wishes on our birthday to show their love on us. In fact, parents always try to provide us with everything we need. This is because they love us very much. I got many presents from my parents, grandparents, and uncles and aunts because I am the only son of my family. When I passed my eighth standard, my grandmother bought me a bicycle. When I passed the tenth standard, my parents, and uncles and aunts because I am the only son of my family. When I passed my eighth standard, my grandmother bought me a bicycle. When I passed the ninth standard, my parents gave me a motorbike by my mother. But I like most the present given by my father.

As I am the only son, I love my friends as my own brothers and want to visit my friends’ houses all the time. But my father does not want me to do so and he has trained me to have the habit of reading books during my free time instead of visiting my friends’ houses. When I was young, he bought me journals like “Shwe Thwe”, and “Pa Loak Toak” to get interested in reading. He provides me with the right kind of books. He guides me to acquire the habit of reading whenever I have free time. Now, I become interested in reading and I never feel bored when I read books. It gives me the highest kind of pleasure. When I am tired and fed up with my study, reading is a healthy recreation to lose myself in books. First of all, my father selects some good books for me to read. Now I can choose which book gives me not only pleasure or which gives me not only pleasure but also knowledge.

Now whenever I am free and whenever I find a book, I look for a nook and read it. Most of the books I read are old classical novels, modern novels, magazines and educational books. All the books I read give me one kind of benefit or the other. Some give me knowledge and some give different kinds of feeling. They at least tell us about people and their various nature, the places, what people do and how they lead their lives. Some books make us think of things seriously and some lighten our heart when we are in sorrow. After reading a good book, I feel like enjoying delicious food. As the saying goes “Reading makes a full man”. I believe I will become more learned and get matured by reading all kinds of books. So, I am very happy and satisfied with my pastime. I thank my father for nurturing a love of reading in me from my early age.

Now I realize that books are faithful to friends. They are also storehouses of knowledge. If we make a practice of reading good books with care and attention, that is to say, really studying them, we shall lay up for ourselves a store and treasure of knowledge. This will be a source of pleasure and profit to us in every day of our lives, as long as we live. Therefore, I am very grateful to my father for training me to have the habit of reading. The present that my father gave me is very precious for me throughout my life.

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