MYANMAR nationals stranded in the United States and in the Republic of Korea were repatriated by relief flight yesterday.

The Myanmar Airways International-MAI’s flight carrying 94 nationals stranded in the US and 30 in the ROK totalling 124 departed from ROK’s Seoul, and landed at the Yangon International Airport yesterday evening.

The relief flight was arranged by the Myanmar embassies in Washington and Seoul.

At the Yangon International Airport, officials of Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, Ministry of Health and Sports and Yangon Region Government have provided them with arrangements for 21-day quarantine and medical check-ups in efforts to prevent the coronavirus infection.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is working in line with the directives from the National-Level Central Committee for Prevention, Control and Treatment on COVID-19 to bring back Myanmar nationals stranded abroad due to the suspension of international flights. Myanmar embassy in Seoul, the Republic of Korea, has arranged a relief flight service on every Tuesday for Myanmar nationals stranded in the US and in other countries. As a special programme, the embassy has also arranged relief flight services in coordination with the Myanmar Embassy in Washington to bring back Myanmar nationals in the US, and so far, three flights have been operated to date.—MNA

Nine new cases of COVID-19 reported on 23 August, total figure reaches 450

Updated at 8 pm, 23 August 2020

Total Cases 450

New Cases 9

Total Death Tally 6

New Recoveries 3

Discharged from Hospital 335

New PUIs 28

SEE PAGE-2

Myanmar citizens returned from foreign countries queue for immigration process at the Yangon International Airport on 23 August. PHOTO: MNA
**Upgradation work on Yangon-Pathein highway completes 98 per cent**

At the briefing hall of Mile 265 work site, Director (Civil) from Ayeyawady Region U Yon Naing Zaw reported on the up-grading works on the road section including improving bridges to four-lane bridges and installation of slope protection.

Bridge Department’s Director-General U Nay Aung Ye Myint detailed about the conditions of three routes to Pathein from Yangon.

Yangon-Pathein road No.1 is via Sarmalaung Junction; road No.2 is from the route of Kawhmu, Dedaye, Pyapon, Bogale, Mawgyun, and Wakema; and road No.3 is from Twantay, Maubin, Yelegale, Shwelaung, and Kyungon.

After hearing the reports, the Deputy Minister said the road No.1 is being used, the road No.2 is expected to open soon, while the road No.3 construction is underway.

He also chose the designs of sheet piles for slope protection, and designs for road furniture and road safety work.

The Union Minister and party viewed the works of placing sheet piles into the soil near the Mile Post 30/3 on the road No.1.

The upgrading of 36-mile road section between Mile Post 5/4 and Mile Post 41/4 on Yangon-Pathein road No.1 to a 30-feet wide concrete road is 98 per cent complete. — MNA (Translated by Kyaw Zin Tung)

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**492 Myanmar migrant workers return home through Myawady border**

A total of 492 Myanmar migrant workers returned home through the Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge No 2 in Myawady Border yesterday amidst COVID-19.

Kayin State Hluttaw Representative U Thant Zin Aung, Myawady District Administrator U Tay Zar Aung and local authorities helped the returnees with medical tests and other supplies. A total of 68,158 Myanmar citizens have returned home so far since 1 May. Local authorities are closely supervising the process of accepting the returnees in line with the COVID-19 fighting guidelines. The latest group of returnees included 317 males and 175 females from different regions and states.

—Htein Lin Aung (IPRD) (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

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**Nine new cases of COVID-19 reported on 23 August, total figure reaches 450**

FROM PAGE-1

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases reached 450 after 9 new cases were reported on 23 August according to Ministry of Health and Sports. Out of the 450 confirmed cases, six died, 341 have recovered, 335 have been discharged from hospitals and 28 were held under investigation.—MNA

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**Table: COVID-19 cases reported on 23 August, 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact with positive patient</th>
<th>Overseas travel history</th>
<th>Hospital for medical treatment</th>
<th>Lab result</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>442</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Tiddim Township, Chin State</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes (India)</td>
<td>People’s Hospital, Tiddim</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Held under quarantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Tonzang Township)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>443</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Thandwe Township, Rakhine State</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>District People’s Hospital, Thandwe</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Held under quarantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Thandwe Township)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>444</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Thandwe Township, Rakhine State</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>District People’s Hospital, Thandwe</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Held under quarantine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Thandwe Township)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>445</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Sittway Township, Rakhine State</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>People’s Hospital, Sittway</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>446</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Sittway Township, Rakhine State</td>
<td>Yes (Cases 396 and 417)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>People’s Hospital, Sittway</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Screening for high-risk group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>447</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Sittway Township, Rakhine State</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>People’s Hospital, Sittway</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>448</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Sittway Township, Rakhine State</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>People’s Hospital, Sittway</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>449</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Sittway Township, Rakhine State</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>People’s Hospital, Sittway</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>450</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Sittway Township, Rakhine State</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>People’s Hospital, Sittway</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Held under investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(People’s Hospital, Sittway)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ministry of Health and Sports
The General Election will be held on 8 November 2020.

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

UEHRD Healthcare Task Force to cooperate in Rakhine State’s COVID fight

The UEHRD Committee organized the meeting online with its healthcare task force calling on the taskforce’s cooperation in coronavirus fight in Rakhine State.

Speaking at the meeting, UEHRD Vice-Chairperson 1 and Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye said that the UEHRD was formed to help the victims of conflicts in Rakhine State.

The UEHRD has been undertaking the works of humanitarian assistances, development and establishment of peace and stability with long-term plans, he added.

He also said UEHRD Healthcare Task force to work together with the government and the Ministry of Health and Sports in providing assistances of hospital beds and healthcare works that need to be increased for healthcare process.

He called for the healthcare task force to coordinate with relevant departments to fulfill the requirements of volunteers and to cooperate with other UEHRD task forces.

The meeting discussed matters related to selecting in-charge of coordination for Rakhine State’s ground situation and planning for fast implementation, and that the healthcare task force will implement the works with separate funds.

They also detailed about fast assistance programmes for healthcare workers, coordination with Rakhine State Youth Affairs Committee members, recruiting trained volunteers, and conducting trainings for volunteers.

The meeting was attended by UEHRD Vice-Chairperson 1 Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye, Secretary Deputy Minister U Soe Aung and members U Toe Aung and U Nyi Nyein Aye, UEHRD Healthcare Task-force members, UEHRD Office members, and directors-general. —MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Medical professionals arrive in Sittway to volunteer for COVID fight

MEDICAL professionals who will volunteer for fighting against COVID-19 arrived in Sittway, Rakhine State by a special flight of Myanmar National Airlines yesterday morning.

Those doctors and nurses were welcomed by Rakhine State Social Affairs Minister Dr Chan Tha, Head of State Public Health and Medical Services Department Dr Sai Win Zaw Hlaing, leader of medical team Director (Epidemiology) Dr Nyan Win Myint, Medical Superintendent of Sittway General Hospital Dr Zaw Lwin and officials.

The volunteer team included a Deputy Head of State Public Health and Medical Services Department, a specialist for Medicine, 19 assistant doctors and three nurses.

The special flight also brought medicine and medical equipment with volunteer medical team for prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19. —MNA

(Translated by TTN)
Health is the greatest of blessings.

I think our people already know that the number of COVID-19 positive cases found in Sittway have been high. Although I can imagine how much pain and anguish is being felt by anyone who has tested positive, let me say this, although I don't want to, so that all the people would know.

We had to issue home stay orders and other COVID related rules and regulations in Sittway because 3 or 4 government personnel went on a trip by contravening existing regulations. As a result there was an outbreak.

We now have to spend a great deal of financial and human resources to be able to contain the disease.

Health is the greatest of blessings. All the people, please be vigilant. People are the key.

(Extract from the Facebook posting of State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi of 21 August 2020)

New express train service launches on Yangon-Mawlamyine road

A train run on the Yangon-Mawlamyine railway lines seen at the Central Railway Station in Yangon. PHOTO: AUNG THU YA

A ceremony to unveil the operation of No 84 express train (down) from Mawlamyine to Yangon was held at the Platform 1 of Mawlamyine Railway Station at 9 pm on 22 August.

The event was attended by Union Minister for Transport and Communications U Thant Sin Maung, Mon State Chief Minister Dr Aye Zan and ministers, Myanmar Railways (MR)’s Managing Director U Ba Myint and officials. Speaking at the event, the Union Minister said that the trains were arranged so that passengers onboard can observe social distancing set by the Ministry of Health and Sports, and the railroads were renovated to reduce travel time.

The Union Minister, the Chief Minister and officials also met the passengers and presented them gifts. Similarly a ceremony to unveil the operation of No 83 express train (up) from Yangon to Mawlamyine was held at the Yangon Central Railway Station at 8 pm on 22 August.

Myanmar Railways (MR) purchased the express trains on Yangon-Mawlamyine road with the loans from Republic of Korea (ROK). The express trains are operating with a total of 16 coaches — four upper class coaches, five ordinary class coaches, and one passenger brake coach.

Ticket prices are K 8,000 for upper class and K 4,000 for ordinary class.

No 83 up train leaves Yangon Railway Station at 8 pm and arrives at Mawlamyine Station at 5:15 am of the following day. No 84 down train departs from Mawlamyine Station at 9 pm and arrives at the Yangon Station at 6 am the following day. — MNA

SWRR Union Minister hands over cash assistance for vulnerable people in Kyauktaga, Nyaunglebin

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye yesterday visited Bago Region to hand over cash assistance to relevant officials to use the money for vulnerable groups and to repair roads damaged by natural disasters.

The official ceremony held yesterday at Kyauktaga Township Department of Planning was attended by the Union Minister, regional Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Kyi Zin, regional government’s Kayin Ethnic Affairs Minister Daw Naw Pwai Hsaw, Directors General of relevant ministries, MPs, officials from General Administration Department and other relevant officials.

During the ceremony, the Union Minister said that his ministry is providing cash assistance to the vulnerable group members — elderly people, the disabled and pregnant women — in accordance with the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP). In addition to providing the cash assistance, his ministry is also carrying out projects related to natural disaster management, according to the Union Minister.

The Union Minister also called on the residents to strictly abide by the COVID-19 preventive guidelines set by the government.

He said that elderly people aged 85 and over across Myanmar are already entitled to regular social pension. He continued that in accordance with the CERP the government will provide one-time financial support for elderly people aged between 80 and 85, and the disabled. He also explained how his ministry is providing financial support to pregnant women and children under the age of 2 across Myanmar. He said that his ministry is also providing early childhood care and development services.

The Union Minister handed over a total of K9,690,000 for 323 disabled persons in Kyauktaga Township.

Under the National Disaster Management Fund, the Union Minister handed over K58.39 million to relevant officials for construction of Thahtaygon-Knywa-Yamtolar laterite road in Kyayyoe village-tract in Kyauktaga Township, K1 million for repairing Kyanisitha-Khalaung Road (in Pyousu village-tract) damaged by flood, and K5 million for repairing Thahtaygon-Harrybam inter-village road.

Afterwards, Department of Social Welfare Director General explained the project on measuring growth of the children under the age of 3 and prevention of disabilities in Kyauktaga and Nyaunglebin townships.

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye and his entourage yesterday afternoon visited Sittway, Mon State and arrived at Nyaunglebin Mon State on the morning of the following day. — MNA

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.

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)
Sesame prices possibly remain higher amidst China’s strong demand

The prices of sesame seeds are expected to remain higher on the back of strong demand from China even when the fresh sesame will be harvested in September, Mandalay traders said.

“The prevailing price of sesame is pegged at ¥100,000-210,000 per bag depending on quality. The price significantly rose as the sesame stockpile is expected to remain higher on the back of strong demand from China even when the fresh sesame will be harvested in September, Mandalay traders said.

As the sesame stockpile is thin, there is no way of the price drop in the coming weeks, he continued.

This year, high sesame producing regions of Myanmar (Magway, Mandalay and Sagaing regions) experienced low yield due to drought impacts. During the meantime, China high demand hiked the prices, according to Soe Win Myint depot in Mandalay.

“China increasingly sends sesame seeds to China market. The price fluctuates a bit. The gradual increase in sesame prices since last week of July has been attributed to high demand by China when the drought reduced crop yield in the country. The various varieties of sesame are priced good, especially black and white sesame varieties,” said the owner of Soe Win Myint Depot.

Myanmar exports 90 per cent of sesame production to foreign markets. China is the leading buyer of Myanmar sesame, which is also shipped to markets in Japan, South Korea, China (Taipei), UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Greece, and Poland among the EU countries.

The EU markets prefer organic-farming sesame seeds from Myanmar, said an official from the Trade Promotion Department.

Japan prefers Myanmar black sesame seeds, cultivated under good agricultural practices (GAP), and purchases them after a quality assessment. Black sesame seeds from Myanmar are also exported to South Korea and Japan. Meanwhile, China buys various coloured sesame seeds from the country.

The number of sesame acreages has increased in the country. Sesame is cultivated in the country throughout the year. Magway Region, which has gained a reputation as the oil pot of Myanmar, is the primary producer of sesame seeds. The seeds are also grown in Mandalay and Sagaing regions.

Of the cooking oil crops grown in Myanmar, the acreage under sesame is the highest, accounting for 31.1 per cent of the overall oil crop plantation.

The volume of sesame exports was registered at over 96,000 tonnes, worth $130 million, in the 2015-2016 financial years, 180,000 tonnes, worth $145 million, in 2016-2017FY, and, 120,000 tonnes, worth $147 million, in 2017-2018FY.

The CMP industry has emerged as very promising in the export sector. The value of CMP exports was just $850 million in the 2015-2016 budget year, but it tripled within two years to reach $2.5 billion in the 2017-2018FY. During the last financial year 2018-2019, sesame oil exports alone reached $147 million.

Manufacturing sector attracts 169 foreign enterprises

Majority of foreign enterprises eye the manufacturing sector for investments in the current financial year 2019-2020, pulling in US$875 million from 169 projects, the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) stated.

Of 219 foreign enterprises permitted and endorsed by Myanmar Investment Commission and the respective investment committees between 1 October and 31 July of the current financial year, 169 enterprises pumped FDI into the manufacturing sector.

Other service sector stood at the second by attracting 16 businesses, while power sector got the third spot with eight projects.

The current COVID-19 consequences have not affected the foreign investment sector, said DICA Director-General U Thant Sin Lwin.

The proposals submitted to MIC include CMP businesses. At present, such kind of labour-intensive enterprises is facing financial hardship, disputes between the employers and employees and the closure of factories. However, those cases in the industry did not hinder new investments.

The manufacturing enterprises and businesses that need large labour force are prioritized. MIC is endeavouring to clear those kinds of projects so fast that they can start running in the post-COVID-19 period, he continued.

Moreover, MIC showed readiness to accept the projects regarding the production of mask, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment, in responding to the activities of prevention, control and treatment of coronavirus infection.

Myanmar has attracted foreign direct investment of more than US$5 billion between 1 October and 31 July in the 2019-2020 financial years, including the expansion of capital by existing enterprises and ventures in the Special Economic Zones, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

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PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

Nano technologies help improve the shelf life of fruits and vegetables. (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)
Illegal returnees held under quarantine in Kawthoung

A total of nine illegal returnees: six men, two women and one child in Kawthoung are helping under quarantine, according to the local authorities.

The Myanmar migrant workers came back home illegally from Malaysia on 22 August and they are from Mon State, Magway Region and Thanlwinthayi Region.

Currently, the illegal returnees are being kept under facility quarantine for 21 days and home quarantine for another seven days.

Officials from COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee in Kawthoung are helping them with medical tests and other supplies, local authorities said.

Swab test samples of the returnees will be sent to the National Health Laboratory for COVID-19 test.—Kyaw Soe (Kawthoung) (Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Methamphetamine seized in DHL parcel; Nigerian nationals arrested

POLICE seized 0.957 kg of methamphetamine (ICE), worth more than K76 million, in a DHL parcel intended to be sent to the Philippines on 19 August, according to the Myanmar Police Force. A Nigerian national has been arrested for the drug case and three other Nigerian nationals have been arrested for illegally remaining in Myanmar with expired visas.

After suspicious staff at the DHL office in Hlme Township, Yangon, on 19 August afternoon, informed the police about a parcel they suspected to consist of illegal drugs, the police went to the office and questioned three Myanmar nationals — Ma Myint Myint Nyein (a) Moe Moe (aged 38), Daw Myint Myint Nyein (aged 56), and Thein Tun (aged 34) — who came to the DHL office to send the parcel to Philippines. On the parcel, the name of the sender is Ma Cho Zin Htoo (Myanmar national) and the name of the receiver is TONABEL P-SAN.

When the police inspected the parcel, they found the 0.957 kg of methamphetamine in wheels of a car for kids.

After further investigations, the police, in Dagon Myothit Seikkan Township in Yangon, could arrest a Nigerian national named Mr Obumkaemere Kelchii Thankgod (aged 32) who commanded the Myanmar nationals to send the parcel.

Mr Obumkaemere testified that Mr Agu Chukwunonso Peter ordered him to send the parcel to Mr Agu’s wife in Philippines. Mr Obumkaemere has been charged in connection with the case.

Police also raided the house where Mr Obumkaemere stayed and found that three other Nigerian nationals — Mr Duru Tochukwu (aged 22), Mr Iziga Innocent and Mr Duru Tochukwu, Chinonso and Mr Oheferuna Benjamin Tochukwu (L-R). (Translated by Maung Maung Soe)
DNA nanoswitches rapidly detect emerging viruses including SARS-CoV-2: study

PROGRAMMABLE DNA nanoswitches that bind to viral RNA in human body fluids may provide an inexpensive platform to rapidly detect a wide variety of emerging viruses including SARS-CoV-2, according to a new study published on Friday.

Recent emerging viral threats highlight the cost and difficulty in responding rapidly. To address these challenges, the research team, led by Lifeng Zhou at the State University of New York, developed a platform for low-cost and rapid detection of viral RNA with DNA nanoswitches that mechanically reconfigure in response to specific viruses.

This approach may make testing more manageable in resource-limited areas, only costs about 1 penny per reaction, and can be performed within hours, according to the study published on Science Advances.

The researchers first tested this approach with DNA nanoswitches designed to target a sequence in the Zika virus genome and demonstrated its ability to detect clinically-relevant levels of Zika RNA in human urine.

They later developed nanoswitches to target SARS-CoV-2 RNA in human saliva, finding that they could successfully detect the virus' presence within about two hours.

The nanoswitches also successfully differentiated between Zika virus and Dengue virus, which occur in overlapping geographical regions and cause similar symptoms, demonstrating the nanoswitches' potential to avoid misdiagnoses, said the study.

SOURCE: Xinhua

Rave Culture

The party goes on for French ravers, despite pandemic and police

SUMMER time is rave time in France but this year battle lines have been drawn between authorities alarmed at the risk of coronavirus and serious party-goers determined to dance on. Ravers, called "teufeurs" in French back slang, speak of "reistance" against a crackdown by security forces encouraged by police to restore order.

"Because of the pandemic there have been fewer events this year than previous years," free party organiser Robin told AFP, asking not to use his full name.

"But a lot of attention has been focused on those events and the crackdown has been much tougher."

"We cannot allow 5,000, 6,000 people to get together, without shirts, masks or any respect for virus rules," said junior interior minister Marlene Schiappa in July at the site of a rave that drew 4,000 people to the Nievre department in central France. For now, no virus outbreak has been linked to a free party by any of France's regional health authorities.

SOURCE: AFP

The Rock and R-Pat

Noir ‘The Batman’ footage thrills fans at DC virtual event


The virtual “DC FanDome” from Warner Bros comes after real-world extravaganzas belovved by comic-book fans — such as Comic-Con — were canceled this year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Headline billing went to “The Batman,” a dark, detective-style mystery take on the Caped Crusader which star Robert Pattinson said had to shut down midway through production in March due to Covid-19.

Director Matt Reeves said his version — still due next year — is inspired by classic noirs like “Chinatown” and “Taxi Driver,” and will meet a “very human and very flawed” Bruce Wayne in his second year as Batman, trying to solve a series of crimes.

First-ever footage from the much-hyped movie left fans drooling online, with a mysterious villain leaving notes for Batman at crime scenes across Gotham — and the film’s hero pummeling a street thug before growling: “I’m vengeance.”

Like the rival, record-breaking Marvel films, several movies featuring DC characters including Superman are inter-connected, with shared storylines and crossover cameos.

Saturday’s all-day event premiered footage and panels for low-ups to blockbusters “Wonder Woman,” “Suicide Squad” and “Shazam!” — despite uncertainty over release dates, with many US theaters closed.

SOURCE: AFP

Italy reports largest rise in cases since lockdown

ITALY recorded more than 1,000 new cases of the novel coronavirus in the last 24 hours, the worst daily figure since lockdown was lifted in May, the health ministry reported on Saturday.

Officials in Rome said the capital region recorded 215 new coronavirus infections in the same period mainly because of people returning from holiday, the biggest such rise since lockdown in March.

The health ministry said Italy recorded 1,071 new cases of the novel coronavirus in the last day and three deaths, for the first time crossing the threshold of 1,000 infections since May 12.

It marks a relentless uptick in cases in the last few days, from 947 on Friday, 845 on Thursday and 842 on Wednesday.

The figure of 215 for Rome is a record, more than the 208 people were infected in a one-day period on March 28, when Rome had come to a virtual standstill to stop the coronavirus spreading, the capital’s health official Alessio D’Amato said.

SOURCE: AFP
Volunteers are our angels of hope during ongoing COVID-19 crisis

In this time of COVID-19 crisis in Bhakaine's Sittwe, health professionals and local caregivers, who arrived Sittwe yesterday to provide their voluntary services to fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, look forward to you, the volunteer doctors, sharing the burden with health care backgrounds.

Union Government has maintained a friendly and cooperative relationship since World War II. In particular, Japan never forget the gratitude to Myanmar for providing Japan with plenty of rice during times of food shortage immediately after the war. Myanmar is a key member of the ASEAN and the Mekong region, and the longstanding friendship between Japan and Myanmar has been the cornerstones for building the multilateral relationship in politics, economy, and people-to-people exchange.

Under the leadership of State Counsellor Daw Aung San Su Kyi, the efforts for democratization, national reconciliation, and economic development are currently underway in Myanmar. Japan will continue to provide support to our dear friend Myanmar. Primarily, Japan is providing the assistance to improve living standards of the people in Myanmar.

We are facing an all-hands-on-deck moment unprecendented in our history. To win this pandemic, we need replacements — volunteers — so many of us.

We encourage everyone who can to volunteer. Volunteers include recent retirees, health care professionals who can take a break from their regular jobs and individuals with health care backgrounds.

Japanese Foreign Minister Mr. Motegi's promotion of Japan-Myanmar Friendship

Japanese Foreign Minister Motegi's message for promotion of Japan-Myanmar Friendship.

JAPAN GETS READY TO LIFT COVID-19 RE-ENTRY BAN ON FOREIGNERS

The restrictions for foreign students will first be eased for those sponsored by the Japanese government...
Virus curbs see elephant idols shrunk for major Indian festival

NEW DELHI — Indian authorities have imposed tough anti-coronavirus restrictions on gatherings and the size of Ganesha elephant god idols for one of the biggest religious festivals of the year that started Saturday.

The 10 days of prayers and family gatherings for Ganesh Chaturthi started under a pandemic cloud with the country closing on three million infections and 56,000 deaths.

Most major cities have ordered that effigies of the popular elephant-headed god Ganesha, which can draw thousands of Hindu devotees onto the streets, be shrunk back.

Traditionally, the idols can tower 10 metres (30 feet) high or more and need dozens of people to carry them but this year authorities said they can be no more than 1.1 metres tall in a bid to cut crowds.

In New Delhi, no Ganesha idols will be shown in public while hard-hit Mumbai has cut back access to the seafront to immerse Ganesha figures, usually the highlight of the festival.

Tens of thousands traditionally flock to the beaches on the final day of the festival to immerse elaborately decorated figurines of the deity in the Arabian Sea.

This year, authorities in India’s financial capital have constructed hundreds of artificial immersion ponds across the city to stop borders crowding the waterfront.

Devotees will also be able to leave their elephant idols at collection centres and volunteers will immerse them in the sea.

Authorities want devotees to mark the festival at home, dampening enthusiasm among pandemic-weary locals. Even the idols worshipped at home must be no more than 33 centimetres (13 inches).

“Every year I looked forward to Ganesha celebrations and visited a nearby lake to watch idol immersions. But this year, we are not even inviting friends home for traditional prayers,” Mumbai-based analyst Ruta Amin told AFP.

Pak’s ISI using crime syndicates in France, Thailand to further its agenda

According to investigations, Jafary and his Pakistani contacts were supplying forged passports that were being sold to people from Gulf countries for travel to Australia and Europe. During the probe, it was found that Gohar Zamani, one of the five Pakistanis in custody, had close links to Shah.

As the Thai security agency put Shah under close surveillance, they discovered that he maintained regular contact with officials from Pakistan Embassy in Bangkok and his restaurant was being used as a meeting point for Pakistani officials.

“Shah’s main job appeared to be spotting potential assets for Pakistan in the local police, immigration, customs and airlines and to develop contacts within the Muslim community in Chiang Mai and Mae Sot region,” according to the report.

Shah was blacklisted by the Thai immigration for five years and deported to Pakistan in 2018. However, he managed to sneak back into Thailand under the guise of ISI mentors on a fresh passport in the name of Syed Baqar Ahmed Jaffri. How ever, Thailand Police tracked him down again and he is currently in custody.

China sees 210,000 new AI-related enterprises

BEIJING — China isSeeing a surge in the number of enterprises related to artificial intelligence (AI) as entrepreneurs flock to capture growth in the area, data showed.

As of Thursday, the country saw more than 210,000 newly registered AI-related enterprises this year, surging by 45.27 percent year on year, according to data from database query platform Tianyancha.com.

Nearly 150,000 companies in China have business in the areas of artificial intelligence, robots, data processing, cloud computing, voice and image recognition, and natural language processing, showed the data.

The size of China’s AI software and application market is expected to reach 12.75 billion U.S. dollars by 2024, according to global market intelligence firm International Data Corporation.

Chinese inactivated COVID-19 vaccine starts phase-3 clinical trials in Argentina

BEIJING — An inactivated COVID-19 vaccine developed by China has started phase-3 clinical trials in Argentina, according to its developer China National Biotec Group (CNBG), which is affiliated to Sinopharm.

The launch ceremony of the phase-3clinical trials was held in Beijing Friday after the CNBG obtained the certificate of approval for the process.

This is an achievement brought about by CNBG’s international cooperation in a bid to develop a COVID-19 vaccine.

The inactivated vaccine received approval for phase-3 clinical trials in the United Arab Emirates on June 23, and in Peru and Morocco on Thursday.

The CNBG will work together with a company in Argentina to promote research and development related to the inactivated vaccine.

Liu Jingzhen, chairman of Sinopharm, said the phase-3 clinical trials will help fight the epidemic and contribute to the building of a community of health for all.

Photo: AFP

BANGKOK — Pakistan’s intelligence agency, ISI, has been using the services of Pakistani crime syndicates operating in several countries, including France and Thailand, to further its agenda, according to a report in the Global Watch Analysis.

Recently, Thai police arrested a Pakistani national named Baqar Shah for his involvement in multiple illegal activities in the country including money laundering for the ISI.

He was first noticed by Thai authorities due to his involvement in organising an anti-American protest outside the US Consulate in Chiang Mai in September 2012.

In February 2016, his name again surfaced when Thailand Police busted a major fake passport syndicate in the country and an Iranian national, Hamid Reza Jafari, and five Pakistanis were arrested.

The six of them were found to be involved in the supply of fake travel documents and human trafficking. It is to be noted that Jafari was on the wanted list of security agencies in several countries including the UK, France, Australia and New Zealand.

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Tens of thousands in Belarus protests demand Lukashenko’s resignation

MINSK — Demonstrators flooded Independence Square and marched through the capital chanting “freedom” and “we will not forget, we will not forgive” as passing cars honked in support.

“We have just two demands: fair elections and stop the violence,” 32-year-old Igor told AFP.

Officials issued a warning to Belarusians against participating in “illegals demonstrations” and local news outlets published videos on social media showing water cannon and riot police with shields moving towards Independence Square.

The defence ministry said it would intervene to protect “sacred” World War II memorials and several metro stations in Minsk were closed.—AFP

West African delegation ‘very hopeful’ after meeting Mali junta

BAMAKO — A West African delegation visiting Mali on Sunday after opposition leaders called for a huge rally to demand the resignation of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita was doing relatively well.

“We saw him, he’s very fine,” said Jonathan, who had earlier met for half an hour with the soldiers who seized power on Tuesday, including new strongman Colonel Assimi Goita.

Jonathan told AFP that negotiations were going well and he was “very hopeful”.

Rebel soldiers seized Keita and other leaders after a mutiny on Tuesday, dealing another deep blow to a country already struggling with a brutal Islamist insurgency and widespread public discontent over its government.

Mali’s neighbours have called for Keita to be reinstated, saying the purpose of the delegation’s visit was to help “ensure the immediate return of constitutional order”.

—AFP

US House approves $25 bn for postal service amid voting dispute

WASHINGTON — The US House of Representatives passed a bill Saturday to give the postal service a $25 billion infusion and halt changes Democrats said threatened the millions of mail-in ballots expected in November’s presidential election.

The 257-to-150 vote, largely along party lines in the Democratic-led chamber, came as US President Donald Trump called the legislation “another HOAX by the Democrats... without talking about the Universal Mail-In Ballot Scam that they are trying to pull off.”

The bill is expected to die in the Republican-led Senate, with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell calling it a “partisan stunt.”

Americans are expected to vote by mail in massive numbers due to the coronavirus pandemic, but Trump has opposed more funding for the cash-strapped US Postal Service (USPS), acknowledging the money would be used to help process ballots.

Trump, who is trailing challenger Joe Biden in polls, also has repeatedly and baselessly linked mail-in voting to election fraud.

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, a Republican fundraiser who Trump appointed to head the postal service in May, has presided over the removal of mail collection boxes and processing equipment.

He has also overseen a cut in overtime pay for mail carriers, which a union leader told AFP has slowed delivery times nationwide, and reshuffled senior management.

The postal service has warned most states that it could not guarantee on-time delivery of mail-in ballots.—AFP

PHOTO:  RICH FURY/AFP

Demonstrators were draped in the red-and-white flags of the opposition. PHOTO:  AFP

PHOTO:  AFP

13 dead in Peru nightclub raided over virus restrictions

LIMA — At least 13 people suffocated in a crush during a raid on a nightclub in Peru’s capital where a party was being held despite a coronavirus ban on such gatherings, police said.

Latin America has been badly hit by the pandemic, and this month Peru reimposed stricter restrictions on movement.

The illegal birthday party on Saturday was organized on social media and drew a crowd of around 120 at the Thomas Restobar, the interior ministry said in a statement confirming the 13 deaths.

“Faced with the police operation, which did not use any type of weapon or tear gas, those attending the party tried to escape through the single exit, trampling each other and getting trapped in the stairway,” the ministry said.—AFP

Mexican reporter’s killer jailed for 50 years in rare judgment

MEXICO CITY — A Mexican judge has sentenced the man convicted of ordering the 2017 murder of prominent journalist Miroslava Breach to 50 years imprisonment, a singular judgment in one of the deadliest countries globally for media.

The sentence of Juan Carlos Moreno, also known as “El Larry,” was announced by the state prosecutor’s office Saturday.

He had been convicted of being the “intellectual author” of Breach’s murder, one of the few such media killings to be solved in the country. Mexico is regularly rated by journalism watchdog Reporters Without Borders as one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists.

Breach, who covered the country’s drug war, was one of 11 journalists murdered in 2017. More than 100 have killed since 2000, but 90 percent of the murders remain unresolved. Prosecutors said in a statement that the 50-year sentence set a precedent in cases involving crimes against free expression, adding it was the longest sentence to date for such crimes.—AFP

PHOTO:  RICH FURY/AFP

PHOTO:  AFP

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Tens of thousands in Belarus protests demand Lukashenko’s resignation

MINSK — Demonstrators massed in central Minsk on Sunday after opposition leaders called for a huge rally to demand the resignation of Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, the latest in a wave of protests against his disputed re-election.

The authoritarian leader dispatched his notorious riot police to disperse spontaneous rallies that erupted after he claimed a sixth presidential term in an election two weeks ago that critics say was rigged.

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It would intervene to protect "sacred" World War II memorials and several metro stations in Minsk were closed.—AFP

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Demonstrators were draped in the red-and-white flags of the opposition. PHOTO:  AFP

West African delegation ‘very hopeful’ after meeting Mali junta

BAMAKO — A West African delegation visiting Mali to push for a speedy return to civilian rule following a coup said it was “very hopeful” on Saturday after meeting with the country’s military junta and the president it ousted.

The head of the delegation from the regional ECOWAS bloc, former Nigerian president Goodluck Jonathan, said that detained Malian president Ibrahim Boubacar Keita was doing relatively well.

“We saw him, he’s very fine,” said Jonathan, who had earlier met for half an hour with the soldiers who seized power on Tuesday, including new strongman Colonel Assimi Goita.

Jonathan told AFP that negotiations were going well and he was “very hopeful”.

Rebel soldiers seized Keita and other leaders after a mutiny on Tuesday, dealing another deep blow to a country already struggling with a brutal Islamist insurgency and widespread public discontent over its government.

Mali’s neighbours have called for Keita to be reinstated, saying the purpose of the delegation’s visit was to help “ensure the immediate return of constitutional order”.

—AFP
It’s not the economy: stock markets soar to record highs

WASHINGTON — The record highs attained by Wall Street last week might come as welcome news for US President Donald Trump.

But the booming stock markets will offer little solace to the many millions of people who have lost their jobs and livelihoods as the coronavirus pandemic pushes economies around the globe even deeper into recession. “This is the great American comeback!” tweeted Trump’s deputy Mike Pence last Tuesday. But the S&P 500 stock index soared to a fresh historic high and the tech-rich Nasdaq notched up one record after the other in recent weeks.

However, the disconnect between the financial markets and the real economy could not be starker as coronavirus lockdowns destroy untold numbers of jobs and push even traditional economic powerhouses such as the US, Britain and Germany into unprecedented contractions.—AFP

Japan, Laos agree to relax coronavirus travel restrictions

TOKYO — Japan and Laos agreed Sunday to allow expatriates to resume traveling as early as September provided they stay home for 14 days after entering their respective countries as part of measures to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus.

The deal risks unravelling as political and business leaders in the North African country warn it will undermine economic sovereignty.

Laos, with a relatively low number of confirmed coronavirus cases, is among the 16 countries and regions with which Japan is discussing ways to ease entry restrictions. Japan currently bans entries by foreign nationals from 146 countries and regions in principle. It is Motegi’s third stop on a four-nation tour that also includes Papua New Guinea, Cambodia and Myanmar.—Kyodo

UAE deal puts Israel’s economic reach on Iran’s doorstep

LONDON — Israel’s landmark deal with the UAE to normalise ties could see businesses from the Jewish state operating on arch-rival Iran’s doorstep, but are unlikely to disturb Emirati economic ties to Iran.

It could also pave the way for direct economic engagement between Israeli and UAE-based Iranian business people that would reap benefits from policies originally meant to screen businesses from the Islamic republic were either expelled or moved away in the past years, she said.

Iranian business people now in ‘Dubai or the UAE in general are the ultra-pragmatic kind, says research fellow Cinzia Bianco. People swimming at Jumeirah Beach residence in Dubai on March 20, 2020. PHOTO: AFP / GIUSEPPE CACACE / FILE

Portuguese in 2005, the EU had only 15 members, while now it is 27 strong. —Kyodo

Algeria chafes against EU trade deal as deadline looms

ALGIERS — Days ahead of a final deadline, activation of a long-planned Algeria-EU trade deal risks unravelling as political and business leaders in the North African country warn it will undermine economic sovereignty.

The deal is meant to come into effect on September 1, a decade and a half after the two sides initially agreed their Free Trade Agreement as part of a wider pact setting out economic, social, cultural and judicial cooperation.

But as the clock ticks, concern has grown in Algiers about the coronavirus-hobbled economy’s ability to cope without tariffs on steel, textiles, electronics and vehicles – protective measures originally meant to end three years ago.

Prime Minister Abdelaziz Djerad told the media that the EU’s hydrocarbon-dependent economy is in an extremely fragile state, as the effects of policies around the world to contain the coronavirus pandemic have hit already diminished oil and gas revenues. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasts that Algeria’s economy will shrink 5.2 per cent this year.—AFP

Mounting pressure

Algeria’s hydrocarbon-dependent economy is in an extremely fragile state, as the effects of policies around the world to contain the coronavirus pandemic have hit already diminished oil and gas revenues. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasts that Algeria’s economy will shrink 5.2 per cent this year.—AFP

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China’s booming duty-free market spurs luxury consumption

SHANGHAI/HAIKOU: Inspired by a duty-free shop in downtown Haikou, capital of south China’s island province of Hainan, SuYangqin was selecting a watch for herself.

“I had decided to buy a watch before I came here,” said Su, a tourist from Xiamen, east China’s Fujian Province. “The price in the duty-free shop is definitely lower than in ordinary shopping malls.”

Besides picking a watch worth about 10,000 yuan (about 1,447 U.S. dollars), she also planned to buy cosmetics and skincare products.

From July 1, Hainan has increased its annual tax-free shopping quota from 30,000 yuan to 100,000 yuan per person. The number of duty-free goods categories has also expanded from 38 to 45, with products such as mobile phones and laptops added to the list.

James Liang in a recent interview via videolink with Kyodo News.

“I hope this kind of agreement can be reached later this year,” Liang said from Trip.com’s Shanghai office. “Once the border opens, there will be a spike of outbound travel. There would be pent-up demand.”—Kyodo

TikTok parent firm to sue Trump govt for banning service in U.S.

BELING — Beijing-based ByteDance Ltd., the parent company of popular video-sharing app TikTok, has decided to sue the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump for banning its service in the United States, local media reported Sunday.

The lawsuit, which China Global Television Network says would be filed on Monday, comes as Trump has stepped up pressure on TikTok against the backdrop of concern that the platform is both a privacy risk and susceptible to Beijing’s censorship activities.

On Aug. 6, Trump issued orders prohibiting any transactions in the United States with TikTok and popular Chinese messaging app WeChat, owned by Chinese IT giant Tencent Holdings Ltd., in 45 days. Also on Aug. 14, Trump ordered ByteDance to divest its interest in the U.S. operations of TikTok within 90 days.

TikTok, which lets users upload short videos set to music, is a hit among young people and has grown popular as a way to pass the time amid the coronavirus pandemic. The Chinese app is believed to have surpassed 2 billion downloads earlier this year.—Kyodo

Customers pay their check at a duty-free shopping mall in east China’s Shanghai, Aug. 21, 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA/DING TING

Trip.com chairman wants Japan-China tourist travel to resume this year

TOKYO — The executive chairman of Trip.com Group Ltd., Asia’s biggest online travel agency, has said he wants to see Japan and China reopen their borders to each other for leisure travel “later this year,” projecting a strong recovery in tourism demand despite the coronavirus pandemic.

A recovery in domestic travel would come first once the spread of cases starts to ease and the “next question” is when Japan and China can reach an agreement about reciprocal travel, said Trip.com Co-founder and Executive Chairman James Liang in a recent interview via videolink with Kyodo News.

“Once the border opens, there will be a spike of outbound travel. There would be pent-up demand.”—Kyodo

Notice to whom it may concern

U Bilal, authorized representative of the Mohamed Ebrahim Munny Family Waqf, has filed a case, Civil Regular Case No. 50/2019 of Yangon Regional High Court in regard of land and premises being No. 77/91 (Former Tourist Burma) Sule Pagoda Road, Kyauktada Township, Yangon, against Yangon Metropolitan Development Public Co., Ltd. U Bilal had also filed an Appeal Case against the judgement and decree of Yangon Regional High Court on (5-8-2020) and the Appeal Case has already been admitted being Appeal Case No. 492/2020. Thus it is informed that, the case is not finally decided and it is under process and U Bilal as a citizen, is searching legal rights in accordance with existing laws.

Under instruction,

U KWAY NYEE (Sr.3262)
DAW KHIN MAY THAN (Sr.3228)
Authorized representative of the Mohamed Ebrahim Munny Family Waqf

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V SINAR BANDA VOY. NO. (194/N/S)

Agent For:
M/S SAMUDEERA SHIPPING LINE

Shipping Agency Department
Myanmar Port Authority
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V YANTRA BHUM VOY. NO. (723/W)

Agent For:
M/S GOLD STAR LINES

Shipping Agency Department
Myanmar Port Authority
Phone No: 2301185

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V CHERRY VOY. NO. (003/N/S)

Agent For:
M/S INTER ASIA LINES

Shipping Agency Department
Myanmar Port Authority
Phone No: 2301185
Pa-O land with true natural beauties

By Thiha, the Traveller

PA-O land or Pa-O region’s Pinlaung Town was said to be very beautiful by those who were there. Those who had visited many regions of Myanmar would say that Myanmar is beautiful with its natural beauties. However the beauty of Pinlaung is somewhat in a majestic and peaceful way.

Pinlaung

It was a region once governed by saophas (local rulers or royalties) and the region was known as Loilon region. Now it is Pa-O Self-Administered Zone. It was in southern Shan State and was about 50 miles away from Taunggyi. Sao Moe Kyaw was Pinlaung (formerly Loilon) region’s last saopha and relinquished his powers in 29 April 1959.

Weather

Situated 4,620 ft. above sea level, weather in Pinlaung Town is cool. It also rain considerably in the raining season. For a person like me who came up from hot and humid delta area, the Pinlaung weather was very nice. Sometimes water became frozen during the winter time.

How to go to Pinlaung

Pinlaung was a town midway between major cities so it is quite an awkward destination. From Yangon, most will take an overnight express bus to Loikaw reaching Pinlaung at an unearthly hour of 2:30 or 3 am. From Nay Pyi Taw, it can be reached via Kintha. By air, you’ll land at Heho and then drive down to Pinlaung for about two hour.

Places to go in and near Pinlaung

There were some places to visit in Pinlaung but most drive out of town to visit villages, hike into forests or up a hill. Pinlaung was surrounded by natural greenery and there were many natural waterfalls and caves that are of interest. There were even places to go trekking or hiking or even rock climbing! As I’m not that sporty type of person, I’ll only mention places that I went to.

Pinlaung Haw or palace

The front end of Pinlaung Haw (palace) had collapsed while the back end was in a dilapidated condition looking at though it was hit recently by a strong earthquake and was on the verge of collapsing. Relatives of the saopha still lived in nearby houses and visitors can pay a visit but be sure to be respectful toward the host. Comparing the sad state at the present with its glorious past could bring tears to those who tend to be sad.

Saopha tombs

The tombs of saophas and families are in the town center near Mway Daw Pagoda. Their ancient titles and names can be examined from the cemetery record.

Mway Daw Pagoda

Mway Daw Pagoda can be seen from afar across Kan Tha Nam Hoo pagoda Hill.
Ya Lake as you enter Pinlaung Town. The lake itself was always crowded with local and foreign visitors.

**Pinlaung Myoma Market**

Although it is right smack in the middle of the town, it is usually busy only on the market days that were held once every five days. The market days are when exotic traditional Shan foods that were not readily available everyday even in other towns and villages were offered. Restaurants and eateries near the market also offer special dishes on the market days. It is advisable to check out when the next market day will be and time it to coincide with your visit in order to taste local Shan delicacies.

**Loi Maung Taung or Loi Maung Mountain**

The road beside the Mway Daw Pagoda will take you to Loi Maung Taung or Loi Maung Mountain. This is the highest peak near Pinlaung rising up to a height of 6,124 ft.

At such height, the weather at the top of the mountain is severe and changes drastically in a moment. It might be misty but can become sunny and hot within a moment or the other way round. At the summit is a monastery, a pagoda and a communication tower. The mountain is very attractive for active sports persons, mountaineers and hikers alike. As the summit can also be reached by cars or motorcycles, even non-sporty person like me can enjoy the view up there. Inle Lake as well as other peaks can be seen from the summit. Most went up to enjoy the sunset view and timed the ascent to coincide with the sunset.

**Edible earth**

There’s a strange habit of eating earth in this region. The edible earth pits were right beside the road or trek up Loi Maung Mountain. For a visitor like me, the ordinary and edible earths were undistinguishable. It is best to check out with locals. Villagers roast the edible earth and eat it as a snack.

**Nam Hoo Pagoda Hill**

Nam Hoo Pagoda Hill near Pinlaung Town is a place where the town can be seen closely from above. Pintale Kyaik Hti Yo Pagoda is yet another place rising up above the town and yet near the town offering a close up view of the town from above.

Lone Naga Pat Pagoda is a must visit place if you were ever in Pinlaung. The views along the way to the pagoda were breathtakingly beautiful. The history of the pagoda was too mythical and I’ll leave it for visitors to learn about it in their visit and to believe it or not! Near this pagoda is a small pond called Thitsa Khayu (snail) pond with many snails in it.

**Sa Ma Kyauk Sar Pagoda**

Sa Ma Stone Inscription Pagoda is right beside the path that’ll take you to Lone Naga Pat Pagoda. In my mind the stone inscriptions looks more like a fossil remains of the snails!
Hantharwady United stands atop in MNL Week-10

HANTHARWADY United is currently standing in the first place after eight matches played with just one loss in the Week-10 games of the Myanmar National League, according to the statement with the MNL yesterday.

Following Hantharwady United, Ayeyawady United is standing in the second place with six wins, two draws and no loss from eight matches played.

In the third place of the table former champion team, Yangon United has garnered 17 points after playing eight matches of five wins, two draws and one loss.

Next defending champions Shan United FC is sitting in the fourth place with earning 14 points off four wins, two draws and two losses from eight matches.

Sprinters likewise rushed to the finish line but there were no cheers of excited fans and no collective sighs greeted the failed jumps of the pole vaulters.

A handful of male javelin throwers took matters into their own hands and offered slow claps in unison for each other as they took their turns.

"It's great to be back at my place of work," javelin thrower Genki Dean told reporters. "It's so fun to compete."

The event was held as Japan takes cautious steps to reopen its economy, with professional baseball, football and sumo resuming in front of limited number of fans. But the nation is also seeing a rebound in new infection figures, particularly in urban areas including Tokyo and Osaka.—AFP

Japan athletes give Tokyo Olympic stadium a test run

TOKYO — Japan's top athletes put the new Tokyo Olympic stadium through its paces at a track meet Sunday, one year ahead of the Games which have been postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The televised competition was held behind closed doors, with only athletes and a few hundred journalists and officials in attendance at the 60,000-seat facility, which is still undergoing construction work on its exterior.

High jumpers got the Golden Grand Prix 2020 meet underway as up-tempo music and the lively voices of stadium announcers filled the air.

The jumpers however had no spectators to ask for slow hand claps to find their rhythm as they sped down the runway.

Bayern boss Flick on par with club legends Heynckes, Hitzfeld - Lahm

BERLIN — Philipp Lahm, who captained Bayern Munich to their last European title in 2013, put current head coach Hansi Flick on a par with the club's legendary Champions League-winning bosses Jupp Heynckes and Ottmar Hitzfeld.

"All Myanmar National League matches are very important to us as they make us strong enough to face our opponents." says Yangon United’s Yan Naing Oo

YANGON United midfielder Yan Naing Oo expressed his feeling this week that he is so excited to make his first debut with his team Yangon United in the upcoming Myanmar National League start.

The midfielder said I'd try my best to collect points in our Myanmar National League restart matches, and all our coaches make us strong enough to face our opponents”.

Myanmar National League has postponed since 24 March now the Yangon player said he is confident to play.

“I am not worried about my performance and believe in playing against my opponent as I am well trained”, he added.

“Al Myanmar National League teams have many talented players, and the teams’ players have pretty understanding. Thus, we need to focus on every match. Yangon United beat Magwe FC 6-0 on 22 August at Yangon United Sports Complex at the restart of Myanmar National League 2020. Thus, Yangon United collected 17 points from 8 plays, and standing at the third place while Magwe FC is currently standing at the eighth place from eight matches played.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)