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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Announcement of National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19

10th Waxing of Wagaung, 1382 ME
28 August 2020

IT is announced that public statements, orders, notifications, and directives (excluding eased restrictions) of the Union-level organizations and the Union ministries effective until 31 August 2020 for protection, control and prevention of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) will be extended to 30 September 2020 as it is required to continue containment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

State Counsellor highlights importance of Union spirit during video-conference with COVID-19 frontline fighters in Rakhine State





State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi holds meeting online with Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and officials for prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 from the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on 28 August 2020. **PHOTO : MNA**

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi held a videoconference from the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday on COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment measures with Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, Public Health and Medical Services Officer Dr Sai Win Zaw Hlaing and Volunteer Saw Thaw Moe Al who is from Insein Township and now in Sittway Township.

First of all in making some introductory remarks, Chairperson of the National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said that no matter where an outbreak occurred, it concerned the whole Union; if there is a pain in any part of the country, it is a pain for the entire Union; that is the spirit in approaching COVID-related activities; there was no discrimination with regards to place; among those who returned from Thailand, the majority came back from Myawady; although it was in Kayin State,

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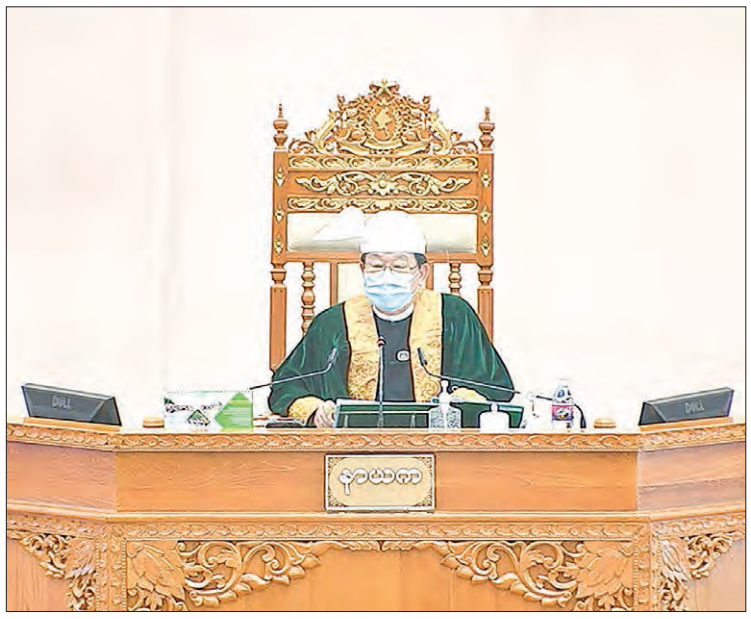
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PYIDAUNGSU HLUTTAW

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves bill, loan plan on final day meeting of 17th regular session

PYIDAUNGSU Hluttaw held its final meeting of the 17th regular session yesterday, with the approvals of Union Taxation Law 2020 and the 8.4 million euro zero-interest loan from UniCredit Bank of Austria.

The Hluttaw first announced taking record on appointment of Kachin State's Security and Border Affairs Minister Colonel Kyaw Lin Aung as per Article 21 (b) of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law to substitute his precursor Colonel Nay Lin Tun who have returned to his military duties.



Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Taxation Bill 2020

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Joint Bill Committee Secretary Dr Myat Nyana Soe reported each paragraph of the Union Taxation Bill 2020, and the provisions of bill were discussed by the MPs.

After Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry U Maung Maung Win submitted the bill, the Hluttaw announced approval for it.

Zero-interest loan from UniCredit Bank

The Hluttaw representatives then discussed a loan proposal sent by the President to get 8.4 million euro zero-interest loan from the UniCredit Bank of Austria for construction of a suspension bridge that will cross Thanlwin River.

MP U Aung Kyaw Oo from Mongton constituency supported the proposal as the bridge will shorten the distance between the southern and eastern parts of Shan State and it will be strategically useful for both civil and military purposes.

MP U Khin Cho from Hlaingbwe constituency also supported the proposal with some suggestions for strict adherence to the rules in loan agreements and the completion of bridge project in the 2-years fixed term, while preparations are needed for unexpected situations in the project.

MP Nang Khin Saw from Kunhing constituency agreed to get the loan as the new bridge could help commodity flows not only to eastern Shan State, but also to Thailand, Laos and China, development of socio-economic situations of local people, and 52-mile decrease in distance between Taunggyi and Tachileik to be able to make day trip between the two cities.

The loan proposal was also discussed by the four other Hluttaw representatives.

Deputy Minister for Construction Dr Kyaw Linn sought the approval of Hluttaw on the loan proposal, saying that the bridge with the load capacity of 75 tonnes will be useful for vehicles between Taunggyi and Thailand and helpful in development of Shan State.

Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry agreed on the loan proposal and explained the ministry's plan for preparing the loan agreement with the UniCredit Bank in line with the rules and regulations.

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker then announced the unanimously approval of Hluttaw on the loan.

Concluding Speech for 17th regular session

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat made a concluding speech to the 17th regular session of Hluttaw which approved the National Planning Bill, Union Budget Bill 2020 and the Union Taxation Bill 2020.

He also advised the MPs who will contest the upcoming November 8 elections to abide by the rules and regulations of the Union Election Commission, while the legislative, administrative and judiciary pillars need to cooperate with the UEC for ensuring the free and fair elections.

He also called for the return of remaining funds for Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's development budgets to the Treasury Department as only 103 townships have submitted the accomplishment report on using these budges and other townships are to present their report within the fixed date. — Aung Ye Thwin, Aye Aye Thant

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Deputy Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry U Maung Maung Win.

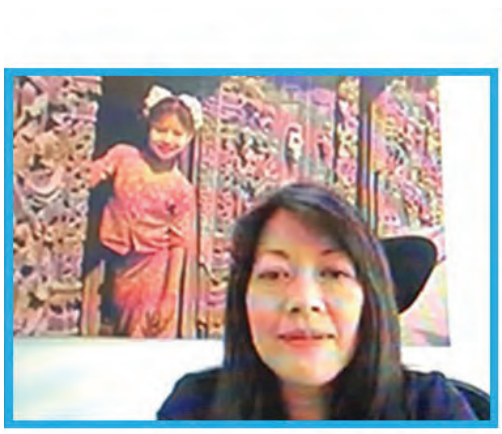


Joint Bill Committee Secretary Dr Myat Nyana Soe.



Deputy Minister for Construction Dr Kyaw Linn.

Union Minister U Kyaw Tin holds videoconference with UN Resident Coordinator and UNICEF Representative to Myanmar







Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin (C) meets UN Resident Coordinator to Myanmar Mr Ola Almgren (R) and UNICEF Representative to Myanmar Ms June Kunugi (L) via videoconference on 28 August 2020. **PHOTO : MNA**

UNION Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin held discussions with UN Resident Coordinator to Myanmar Mr Ola Almgren and UNICEF Representative to Myanmar Ms June Kunugi, in their capacities as co-chairs of the UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) in Myanmar for prevention of recruitment and use of children, on 28th August 2020 at 12:45 pm via videoconference.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on matters pertaining to sustainably preventing the recruitment and use of children following the delisting of the Tatmadaw from the list of parties that recruit and use children in the UN Secretary-General's Annul Report; possible avenues for cooperating with the United Nations for prevention of killing, maiming and sexual violence against children in armed conflicts; Myanmar's possible participation in the Safe Schools Declaration; and possibility of including provisions on protection of children, schools, education and advancing mine action in Myanmar's peace dialogues. —MNA

2020 MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY GENERAL ELECTION

UNION ELECTION COMMISSION MYANMAR

The General Election will be held on 8 November 2020.

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

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General Election
Sunday, 8 November 2020
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State Counsellor highlights importance of Union spirit ...

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the people in Kayin State did not practise discrimination; all the people there provided cooperation as much as possible with the belief that these were their own people; she believed that this was because they all had Union spirit and that they were able to overcome this problem although they had concerns to a certain extent.

She said at this time all of us need to work with Union spirit; the problems that exist in Rakhine State were many; in 2016 the ARSA terrorist group started their armed conflicts; because of this there were so many challenges in Rakhine State; more challenges had to be confronted because ARSA initiated attacks on 4th January 2019; the people suffered greatly; innocent people were harmed because of these armed conflicts; we had to protect peace and stability to protect our people; community security is related to peace and tranquillity; health is also included in this matter; if we are to have concerns and anxieties with respect to health, we have concerns all the time because there was no security in the community; we have issued health rules and regulations and reminded repeatedly with respect to COVID-19; in the first phase, we were able to contain COVID-19 effectively because of the comprehensive programmes of the Ministry of Health and Sports and the actions of the healthcare employees and the people.

Before the disease outbreak in Rakhine State, we could say that for a period of more than one month there was no infection spread; we were able to contain the disease; we had already drawn up emergency plans with respect to Rakhine State; these plans came into action immediately when the outbreak occurred; in taking such actions the most important thing was to prevent the spread of the infection; the reason we have to tell the people in Rakhine State not to go out of their homes is not to give them punishment; if the infection spread to the whole country it would be very difficult to provide effective treatment and care to everyone; it is easier to provide effective treatment and care in one place; we can provide effective treatment with the available resources; that is why the restrictions imposed on people not to leave Rakhine State is not to discriminate against those who have been infected; the reason is to provide healthcare services and for administrative purposes.



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and officials via videoconference for prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 from the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw on 28 August 2020. **PHOTO : MNA**

Discussions of Rakhine State Chief Minister

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Ny Pu expressed thanks for the nationwide assistance to any circumstance of the state, and his hope for further aid.

He added that peaceful co-existence of two social communities is important for Rakhine State, especially in the outbreak of COVID-19; conflicts and difficulties will be encountered as a challenging task; there are now some worries about the pandemic in fast transmission while the number of persons at IDP camps and shelters from armed conflicts; Rakhine State has only limited fund, but the local government has formed a COVID control committee that reaches rural levels and is conducting investigations on people coming in and out of the state; the market with high risks of disease transmission in Sittway has been put under the strict control.

The Chief Minister also requested the State Counsellor for urgent management on food security as restrictions on commodity flows from neighbouring regions of Magway, Bago and Ayeyawady to the Rakhine State have been posed in addition to lockdown order in the State to control the pandemic.

Financial assistance is also required for quarantine centres and common people, although 85.5 million kyats have been acquired for the fund and an additional 1 billion kyats has been requested for the emergency fund.

The Union Government has allocated 14.8 billion kyats, the State Government 1.566 billion kyats and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement 311.4 million kyats; a total of 16.7 billion kyats is being used for medical supplies and other requirements in control measures against COVID-19.

Discussions of Volunteer Saw Thaw Moe Al

Saw Thaw Moe Al said he made a decision to volunteer for Rakhine people as they are national brethren; he has experiences in serving at four quarantine centres; some challenges in Rakhine State include the persons under quarantine do not follow the rules strictly; the arrival of protective equipment is late sometimes; the volunteer groups are now serving at the 13 quarantine centres in Sittway; 95 per cent of volunteers are working with the civil service staff at the 6 facilities, and the only 5 per cent of volunteers are working separately; more volunteers are needed for Rakhine State; cooperation of local people are needed to overcome language barriers; 3,000 kyats is allocated for each PUI per day at the centres; this amount is not enough for the member of CSOs in their long-term works; it is required to get 5,000 kyats; more drinking water is also needed at the quarantine centres.

Discussions of Public Health and Medical Services officer in Rakhine State

Dr Sai Win Zaw Hlaing also discussed his department has conducted awareness campaigns about the outbreak of COVID-19;

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"People are the key"

State Counsellor highlights importance of Union spirit ...

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the directives of Ministry of Health and Sports are published in real-time through videoconferences, hand speakers; pamphlets are distributed to Rakhine people and IDP camps; medical supplies are provided to the respective areas.

He also explained sending the swabs of suspected patients to Yangon by flights after the polio project car in carrying the first batch of swabs was attacked; local authorities emphasized the public announcement when the first positive case was found in Rakhine State; although active cooperation of people in social distancing in March, April and May has gradually declined.

The local health officials have adopted the Rakhine State Health Sector Contingency Plan based on the Health Sector Contingency Plan of the Ministry of Health and Sports; the plan includes the route for carrying positive patients, the designated hospitals for patients from IDP camps, emergency reaction plans and further requirements for Rakhine State; this plan also has been distributed to the ministries and partner organizations.

In responding to the discussions, the State Counsellor said approval has already been given for donations to be used in Rakhine State and not to be sent to the central authorities; with respect to the submission made regarding food supplies, she guaranteed that there would not be any shortage of food supplies; the necessary food supplies would be sent with available means of transport; she also hoped that the respected States/Regions would provide necessary assistance; financial assistance would also be provided; although Myanmar is not a wealthy country, any part of the Union which needed assistance would always be provided with assistance.

She also believed that the people would all participate and cooperate; this was such a strength; although the country is not rich, our people are rich in generous spirit; because there is a sense unity in a time of need and a cooperative spirit, it would be possible to provide sufficient financial assistance; we would provide all necessary assistance for the health of a part of our Union.

She said it was important not to lose sight of the long term goals of the Union and the goals of all the children of the Union; there were conflicts based on race and religion in Rakhine State; there were those who were fanning the flames of hatred and those who were inciting conflicts among each other instead of promoting Metta; in the present fight against COVID in Rakhine State, we need to show in what way we can show goodwill to each other; at this time it would become clear who had genuine goodwill; it was very important to have the spirit of "the Union for Rakhine and Rakhine for the Union".

Those who make postings on the social media should have genuine goodwill and sense of duty in their postings; what is important is for the facts to be correct; some people make postings on social media without much thought or without caring whether their postings were correct or not; in posting on social media, the first thing was to be correct; then it should be considered whether the posting was beneficial for the public; she said everyone should be very careful not to make the present tasks more difficult by postings made on social media.

The State Counsellor added the government is striving for lesser impacts of COVID-19 on Rakhine people; this situation is an opportunity for making 'unity'; we all could breathe a sigh of relief when the pandemic becomes under control in next 3 or 4 weeks; it is required to strictly follow the rules during this period, and it is expected for public cooperation; this success would be a good step for all in the long term as empathy, loving-kindness and trust could be built from cooperation in this situation; it will become a potential strength to overcome common challenges and difficulties of the Union.

She also said that quality protective equipment will be sent in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Sports in time; some persons do not know that following rules and disciplines is the best protective equipment for every one; if the rules are regarded as the protection for all, it will not be difficult to follow them; the disciplines should not be seen as restrictions of others, but just as the protection for all; imposing rules and restrictions is intended for effective control measures; disciplines must be seen as protection; the volunteers need to convey this message to the PUI at the quarantine centres; these PUIs have more contacts with the volunteers than health workers; while health workers are responsible for medical services, the volunteers should make motivations; civil service staff members were criticized for deficient practices in the past half-decade; the government is trying to change this situation to serve for the people professionally; the shortage of drinking water must be solved in the first priority; the cost for daily meals will be reviewed if the existing amount 3,000 kyats is not enough; it is expected that more Rakhine youth would join the volunteer programmes if they see other persons outside the Rakhine State are helping them regardless of social and faith grounds; the works of these volunteers could persuade the participation of local people in civil services societies.

The challenge for the Ministry of Health and Sports is the common challenge for the entire country. Some are negligent due to a slight weakness in health knowledge; if the health education is announced two or three times a day at quarantine centres through speakers, the people will get health knowledge; my concern is that some people think that if they recovered from the infection, it will be over; as far as I understand according to the world's experts, there is no guarantee that COVID-19 will not reoccur; some do not know about that and therefore they are not serious about the disease; before the emergence of the COVID-19 vaccine and treatment, it cannot be concluded that disease that won't occur again; mindfulness is not excessive; we must be careful and I would like to remind this to the people again and again; some do not understand how the government has struggled to gain control the disease; it has been working properly for about four months until early August, especially health workers had to struggle a lot; we will find out what the public needs to know about COVID-19 disease; it is not easy to find so and we have to think about both short and long terms.

The requirements must be fulfilled as these are necessary for our people; it needs to think in advance for post-COVID-19 at the same time; it should have ability to fulfill the needs of the country in post-COVID-19 period; I do not want the country to turn into difficult situations and fail to do anything in post-COVID-19 period; so, we have to consider for both of the short-and long-term; public participation plays critical role in conducting such move; the main challenge and weakness of Rakhine State is the weakness in unity; it must be proved that the unity is strength during this period; it must be considered whether individuals or any groups damaging to the unity of people have genuine good volition for people; only the unity will help to overcome the problems and challenges that we face currently; it will fail to overcome these struggles without unity; we want them to understand that the lack of unity is not suitable for our country; the world is misunderstanding our country relating with Rakhine State; they do not see how hard we are trying and how we are working to find a solution; whether they want to see it or not, we have to show it through works.

Finally, the State Counsellor urged the people of Rakhine State and the people across the country to work together in unity to overcome the current challenges in Rakhine State.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Myaing, Aung Khin)

Public announcement for report on travel to/from townships of Rakhine State with positive cases to control COVID-19

28 August 2020

The Ministry of Health and Sports has recorded 628 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 6 deaths, in Myanmar until 08:00 hrs on 28-8-2020.

There are 216 COVID-19 positive patients who are living in Sittway, Rakhine State, and travelled to/from Sittway between 16-8-2020 and 28-8-2020 up to 08:00 hrs.

To be able to control the outbreak of disease without delay, people who travelled to/from Sittway and other townships in Rakhine State with positive cases since 10-8-2020 need to report about it immediately of their own volition.

The checklist of Ministry of Transport and Communications has shown the data of passengers who took local flights from Rakhine State to Yangon during this period. They need to inform to the nearest health centres, relevant departments and organizations for undergoing medical examinations.

Only then they could receive medical treatments if they have been infected with the disease and could prevent further transmission to the family members and nearby people. They are advised to undergo medical tests.

Actions will be taken against those who failed to report on it under the Natural Disaster Management Law.

Ministry of Health and Sports

We do not want the virus to spread

At this time, some people in Rakhine State wish to leave the state. They think they will have more safety outside of the state. Once you are infected, it does not matter where you go, the infection will be carried by you. If you remain in Rakhine State; remain within Sittway, and you remain in the infected area, if you are infected, it would be quicker to detect the virus. Treatment could be given. The COVID virus is not incurable. The earlier this virus is detected, the more effective is the treatment. At the present moment, the borders between states and regions have been closed. The reason we do not want people from Sittway and from Rakhine State to go out to other areas is that we do not want the virus to spread. All respective regions and states will have to participate effectively in these closures. Closures mean giving protection. We want you to think of this as protective measures.



(Excerpt State Counsellor's report to people about latest situation regarding outbreak of COVID-19 in Rakhine State on 25 August 2020)

MoI strives to form Myanmar Digital Media Association





Union Minister Dr Pe Myint speaks at the meeting with media-related persons for the emergence of Myanmar Digital Media Association at the Printing and Publishing Department's Central Press building on Theinbyu Road in Yangon on 28 August 2020. **PHOTO : MNA**

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint met the persons related to media sector at the Central Press building of the Printing and Publishing Department (PPD) on Theinbyu Road in Yangon yesterday, and discussed the emergence of Myanmar Digital Media Association.

Spoke on occasion, the Union Minister stressed the meeting organized two weeks ago has discussed the formation of the Establishment Committee on Myanmar Digital Media Association.

Many people have been working in digital media businesses because of their development. Therefore, an association relevant to digital media should be founded, the Union Minister added.

He said as the attendees are the persons related to digital media, they should participate in the formation committee on establishing Myanmar Media Association, calling for discussions and implementations on the involvement of those who should participate in the committee.

Today's digital media are getting bigger and broader than traditional media, and all can see that they are not only reaching expansive such as news contents, entertainments, online shopping etc. but they are also growing economically. It is necessary to get more skills as well as to settle possible copyrights problems in this regard, he highlighted.

He added it is essential to have an organization that will operate with collective strength for developing digital media businesses and getting full rights in working with international organizations and institutions, calling for a round of discussions to emerge a digital media association.

Information and Public Relations Department Acting Director-General U Aye Kywe reported on the plan to form the Establishment Committee on Myanmar Digital Media Association.

The 17-member committee was set up and consisted of Chairman U Thaung Su Nyein, Vice-Chairperson 1 U Ko Ko (Ko Ko-RIT), Vice-Chairperson 2 Daw Nant Kalayar Win, Secretary U Min Swe Hlaing, Joint Secretary 1 U Kyaw Myo Min, Joint Secretary 2 IPRD Deputy Director U Aung Kyaw Htet.

The committee office is temporarily open at the second floor of IPRD Office at No 22/24 on Pansodan Road in Yangon.

The committee will be working on the formation of Myanmar Digital Media Association within its targeted six-month implementation period.

Present at the meeting were U Thaung Su Nyein of 7 Day Media, U Ko Ko (Ko Ko-RIT) of Yangon TV, Daw Nant Kalayar Win from Popular News Agency, U Kyaw Min Swe of The Voice, U Min Swe Hlaing of Global Innovation Media, U Thein Tun Pe of Cytron Computer, U Lin Htet Ko of We Media, U Aung Myo Myint of Myanmar Celebrity, U Khin Maung Soe of DVB, U Moe Aye of One News, U Kyaw Myo Min of A Kon Thi News Agency, U Han Thar Nyein of Kamayut Media, U Win Hlaing Oo of Wun Zinn Application, U Ko Ko Lay of San Daw Chain, U Thet Phyo Aung of Cele Gabar, and U Kyaw Soe Htet of The Myanmar Times. They discussed systematic development of digital media in line with changing technologies, protecting and promoting the interests of digital media users, the routine use of digital media following its media ethics, sharing knowledge and technologies, and the matters to form a Myanmar Digital Media Association.

U Aye Maung Kyaw (Aye Maung Kyaw) and U Than Ohn (Maung Zeyar) of Myanmar Affairs Study Group also attended the meeting.

In the morning, the Union Minister inspected the operations at PPD-owned office building at No 379/383 on Bo Aung Kyaw Road and the headquarters of News and Periodicals Enterprise (NPE) at No 212 on Theinbyu Road in Yangon.

While meeting with Forever Group CEO U Win Maw Tun and officials, the Union Minister listened to the report on preparations for the construction of infrastructure facilities including studios to shoot and broadcast MTV about environmental conservation and greening in Pindaya region of Danu Self-Administered Zone. The Union Minister discussed the assistance the Ministry of Information will provide in this regard.—MNA *(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)*

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe holds meeting on COVID-19 control measures in Rakhine State

UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe held meeting on COVID-19 control measures with health officials of Rakhine State and other regions and states via video conferencing yesterday morning.

During the meeting, the Union Minister said that Rakhine State has reported a total of 216 COVID-19 cases from 16 August to 28 August morning, while 6 cases from other regions and states had travel history to Sittway.

The virus spread rapidly in recent days and the ministry will also make efforts to control the disease in order to slow down it soon. The sudden increase in the numbers of case is that the infected persons made some trips without knowing that they have been infected.

According to the initial examination of Medical Research Department, the 9 lab tests of Rakhine State shows the gene of COVID-19 is mutated. The 79 per cent of COVID-19 patients diagnosed after 16 August in Rakhine did not show any symptoms and so the people need to be aware of their surroundings and should follow the health guidelines in avoiding mass gatherings, staying at home, wearing mask and face shields and washing the hands for 20 seconds frequently and to inform the authority if they found some returnees from Rakhine State. If so, it helps reduce the spread of virus.

The relevant departments should raise public health awareness by using loudspeakers at least five-time a day in the townships and more than 5,700 people arrived in other regions and states by air from Rakhine State and some of them are infected with COVID-19. Therefore, all those with recent travel history to Rakhine State after 10 August must inform to the nearest health department.



Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe holds meeting on COVID-19 control measures with health officials of Rakhine State and other regions and states on 28 August 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

The ministry will speed up the control measures to prevent the spread of infection from one person to another across the country and only the timely-response can stop the spread of disease in Rakhine State.

The preventive and control measures for Rakhine State will be different from other regions and states as the ministry has adopted new strategy and procedures in accordance with the changing situations by studying the nature of epidemic.

The currently practicing directives and procedures will be updated in line with the new findings on COVID-19 and way of infection and they should be timely informed to respective departments.

It also needs to take into account that the fact of human resources, time, budget and equipment in carrying out the control measures of COVID-19 in Rakhine State.

Those with travel history to Rakhine State can be seen in other regions and states and so the relevant officials need to supervise the factories and industries with the large numbers of employees.

The ministry will also provide the requirements for those who had close contact with infected person while tracing them and also raising public health awareness at IDP camps and reception centres.

The cooperation work of General Administration Department and development committees plays key role to prohibit people without wearing masks from entering the markets or from taking buses during this period.

The ministry accelerates its activities in conducting COVID-19 lab tests and buys the required medical equipment in advance and the GeneXpert machines were installed in Sittway, Kyaukpyu, Thandwe, MraukU and Maungtaw townships.

It will also provide beds and ventilators to Sittway General Hospital and the nurse training schools. Traditional medicine hospitals are currently used as temporary hospitals for patients in Sittway.

The Union Minister also said words of thanks for the concerted efforts of ministerial staff, voluntary medical staff, organizations and the people and urged the attendees to give suggestions regarding the spread of COVID-19.

Head of the Rakhine State Public Health and Medical Services Department Dr Soe Win Zaw Hlaing explained the current COVID-19 outbreak in the State, protection and control activities, swab tests from Sittway and Kyauktaw are being sent to the National Health Laboratory, strengthening hospital infection prevention and control in hospitals, using nursing training school and traditional hospital as temporary healthcare centres, analyzing the form of the disease infection by randomly selecting groups and locations in high-risk infections.

Director Dr Nyan Win Myint , the leader of central field survey team, explained the epidemiological findings from the visits to healthcare centres and temporary camps, protection and control activities and the difficulties in searching contact persons of the patient.

Deputy Director General of Yangon Region Public Health and Medical Services Department Dr Tun Myint discussed the difficulties in field survey of laboratory samples in Yangon, social distancing, and cooperating with the relevant organizations and departments in searching contact persons.

Deputy Director-General of the Central epidemiology Unit Dr Tun Tin explained the current outbreak and epidemiological analysis.

Director Dr Toe Thiri Aung discussed the analysis of the COVID-19 patients in Myanmar.

Deputy Director-General for Medical Services Dr Thidar Hla presented the treatment of the COVID-19 patients at various hospitals and that a total of 216 COVID-19 patients found in Rakhine State since August 26 were in good health and 16 of them were elderly and had other allergies.

The attendees participated in the discussion and gave suggestions accordingly.

The Union Minister concluded the meeting by saying that the specific assignment will be given as many organizations carry out in control measures of COVID-19 in Rakhine State under multiple sectors and timely performance will be also conducted.—MNA

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



Ayeyarwady Foundation provides assistance for Sittway General Hospital on 28 August.
PHOTO: YE YINT SHINE

Ayeyarwady Foundation provides medical supplies to Sittway hospital

OFFICIALS from Ayeyarwady Foundation donated protective gears of COVID-19 and financial assistance to Sittway General Hospital yesterday.

The foundation donated K16 million worth of emergency medical equipment and K28 million to the medical workers at the Sittway Hospital where over 100 COVID-19 infected patients are being treated.

The equipment included 4 suction devices, 5 units of oxygen concentrators, 10 blood pressure monitors, 5 infrared thermometres, 150 gown sterilize SMS, 2 patient monitors, 150 sets of PPE for intensive care unit, 20,000 surgical facemasks and 3M N95 masks.

The Ayeyarwady Foundation will also continue its supports to other townships in Rakhine State.—Ye Yint Shine *(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)*

Domestic gold price slumps below K1.3 mln per tical

By Nyein Nyein

THE gold price in the domestic market has decreased again to under K1.3 million per tical (0.578 ounces), according to the domestic gold market.

7 August saw the price of gold rising and standing up at K1,332,500 per tical, which hit the highest record in the domestic gold history. After three weeks, the gold price has dropped to K1,297,000 per tical, which is a drop by K35,000 per tical on 28 August.

Also, the global gold prices were record high with US$2,062 per ounce on 7 August and then, they fell to $1,939 per ounce on 28 August, a drop by over $120 per ounce in three weeks.

Similarly, the dollar versus kyat exchange rate was K1,371 per dollar on 7 August. After three weeks, the exchange rate was dropped to K1,340 per dollar, a drop by K30 per dollar on 28 August.

With the exchange rate sliding in the market, people are making more investment in gold. Although the price of domestic gold is slightly sliding, the domestic demand is rising, according to the gold market.

With slightly rising of domestic gold price together with the global gold price starting from 2019, the local gold price reached K1,000,000 per tical between 17 January and 21 February, K1,100,000 between 22 June and 5 August, K1,200,000 between 7 August and 4 September and, then earned an all-time high of K1,300,000 on 5 September 2019.

In April, the coronavirus risks caused the shutdown of the gold market, and the market was reopened on 18 May with a minimum rate of K1,214,100 (27 May) and a maximum rate of K1,236,000 (18 May). The price was moving in the range of K1,209,600 on 6 June and K1,219,500 on 1 June. The local gold reached the lowest level of K1,216,500 (1 July) and the highest level of K1,296,500 (27 July), according to the gold traders.

(Translated by Hay Mar)



(FILES) Saleswomen wait for customers at a gold and jewellery shop in Yangon on 15 February 2017. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

Visa extension won't be approved unless taxpayers' documents found accurate, says DICA

By Nyein Nyein

THE request for a visa extension of the expatriates in Myanmar will not be approved if the copies of the taxpayers' companies are found inaccurate or falsified, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

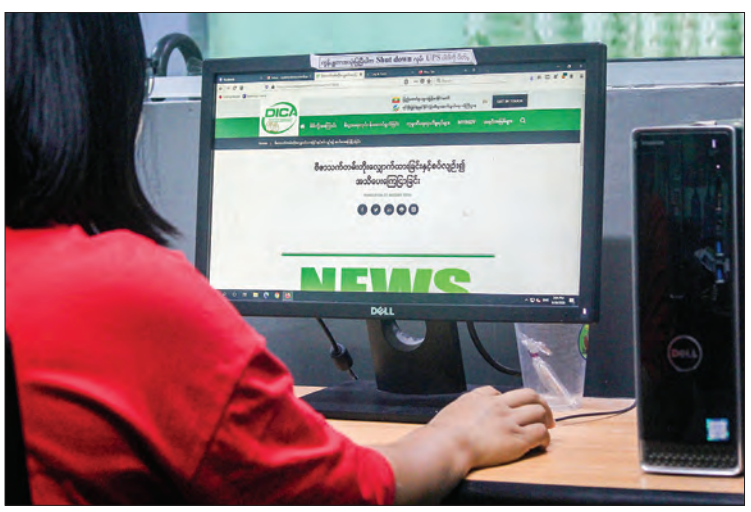
At present, the companies need to apply for the recommendations for visa extension via DICA's website_ https://visaonline.dica.gov.mm.

DICA found that some companies are showing false or falsified documents of tax payment with the Internal Revenue Department, according to DICA.

Therefore, DICA will not approve the recommendations for a visa extension of the expatriates in Myanmar if they found the false or falsified documents of the company.

The online platform aims to reduce opportunities for dishonesty in applying for the visa extension. It needs to check the lists of the recommended companies for the visa, enabling easy access to the data of the expatriates and stay period to reduce paperwork as well as to ensure social distancing and process facilitation, he stated.

(Translated by Hay Mar)



A woman visits DICA website on a computer screen at an office in Yangon on 28 August 2020. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

Myanmar earns $726 mln from nearly 2.4 mln tonnes of rice export

Myanmar exported nearly 2.4 million tonnes of rice and broken rice in 2019-2020 financial year (FY) from 1 October to 14 August, earning US$726 million, according to an announcement released by the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF). During the period, over 1.50 million tonnes of rice worth more than $485.5 million were exported to 66 countries while more than 891,830 tonnes of broken rice worth over $240.6 million were exported to 60 countries.

This financial year's rice and broken rice export surpassed that of the last budget year's figures by 327,683 tonnes when Myanmar exported over 2.06 million tonnes of rice and broken rice in the corresponding period of the previous financial year.

Myanmar exports rice through the land border and via maritime trade. During the period, 84 per cent of total rice export is done through sea route while 16 per cent through border checkpoints. Myanmar's rice goes to China through the Muse border and to EU and African markets through a maritime trade route.

From 1 October to 14 August, 29 per cent of Myanmar's rice and broken rice were exported to African countries, followed by China with 28 per cent, EU member states with 20 per cent, ASEAN countries with 18 per cent and other countries with 5 per cent respectively, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF). The targeted rice export for 2019-2020FY is 2.4 million tonnes, and the peak recorded export was 3.6 million tonnes in 2017-2018FY. —Zin Yaw Aye

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Local fuel prices rise K150-235 per litre over four months

LOCAL fuel prices go up by K150 to K235 per litre over the past four months as the global oil price stood around US$43 per barrel, according to the local filling stations.

From 3 May to 27 August 2020, the price of one litre of fuel oil has increased by K235 for Octane 92, K210 for Octane 95 and K150 each for diesel and premium diesel.

With the plunging of WTI oil price in the third week of April, the local fuel price has dropped to K550-605 per litre from 8 January to 1 May, according to the local fuel oil market.

On 27 August, the fuel oil station charged K585 per litre for diesel, K595 for premium diesel, K535 for Octane 92 and K645 for Octane 95.

Myanmar imports 90 per cent of fuel oil and produces the remaining 10 per cent locally.

Myanmar imports the fuel oil primarily from Singapore with a monthly volume touching 200,000 tonnes for petroleum and 400,000 tonnes for diesel.

There are 2,000 fuel stations and 50 oil importer companies in Myanmar. —Aye Maung

(Translated by Hay Mar)

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29 AUGUST 2020
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Pay heed to COVID-19 health protocols

WITH 216 positive cases in 13 days from 16 to 28 August, a second surge of infections struck Rakhine State, setting off alarm bells because of its faster infection rate than previous outbreak in other states and regions. Meanwhile, six people who travelled to Rakhine State recently have been found to be infected with the virus.

The outbreak in Rakhine State is easy to follow. People showing no symptoms and ignoring public health protocols appear to be able to spread the novel coronavirus that has caused the outbreak in Rakhine State. The people have paid the price of this. Epidemiologists have warned that the number of cases is expected to rise in the state due to the nature of the epidemic.

The Union Government has imposed the Stay-At-Home order on Rakhine State and is tracing the contacts of the people with travel history to Rakhine State in efforts to prevent spreading the coronavirus from Rakhine State to other parts of the country. From 10 to 27 August, over 5,700 people had travel history to Rakhine State by air, and out of them, some might have been infected with the coronavirus.

> The Ministry of Health and Sports would enforce stricter policies, which might be different from previous ones due to the new nature of the virus, by taking more aggressive action to combat the disease.

Therefore, those who travelled to Rakhine State after 10 August are highly encouraged to inform the nearest health department.

About 75 per cent of COVID-19 positive cases after 16 August in Rakhine State have no symptoms and no illness. Hence, we must follow the COVID-19 protocols such as wearing face masks in public and maintaining social distancing to avoid a wave of new cases Do everything possible to stop COVID-19. Every individual has a role play in the collective effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

The Ministry of Health and Sports would enforce stricter policies, which might be different from previous ones due to the new nature of the virus, by taking more aggressive action to combat the disease.

Since those who have travelled to Rakhine State are now in other parts of the country, authorities are also obliged to enforce the ministry's stricter policies and follow the ministry's directives to prevent new outbreaks of COVID-19, especially in crowded locations, such as IDP camps and factories.

Unfortunately, a Stay-At-Home alone order cannot contain a pandemic. We must support the government by following their health protocols to ensure authorities can scale up their surveillance system and medical infrastructure.

There's only one reasonable option to pursue: Stay safe and keep others safe. And remember, no one said this pandemic would be easy to defeat.

The COVID Comorbidity Crisis

By Dr Ifeanyi M Nsofor

GROWING evidence shows that COVID-19 survivors can suffer from long-term health effects, not least heart-related complications. New research published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) shows that many people who recover from the virus have heart inflammation (myocarditis). Of 100 survivors in the study, 78 had evidence of previous heart inflammation, and 60 showed ongoing inflammation at the time of observation.

This medical complication should worry us all. As of 25 August, 2020, there were more than 23 million cases of the disease worldwide, 16 million recoveries, and more than 800,000 deaths. Using the JAMA study as a benchmark, we could conjecture that around 10 million of those survivors have heart inflammation, implying a massive increase in the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

NCDs were already killing far too many people before the pandemic arrived. In 2016, 54 per cent of 56.9 million total deaths were due to at least one of the 10 leading causes of death, starting with ischemic heart disease (the narrowing of blood vessels) and then stroke – both of which are NCDs of the heart.

Myocarditis is a serious condition with life-threatening consequences. When the heart is inflamed, its ability to pump blood is reduced, and it may beat irregularly. In either case, the supply of blood reaching other parts of the body is reduced, raising the likelihood of stroke and other conditions.



In Nigeria, the health-tech platform GeroCare provides affordable care to the elderly in the comfort of their homes through regular doctor visits. Its least expensive plan offers three home visits per month for just US$50. **PHOTO COURTESY: GEROCARE**

Moreover, several NCDs are themselves risk factors for COVID-19. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the elderly and people with pre-existing medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, obesity, cancer, sickle cell disease, and coronary artery disease appear to be more prone to severe illness as a result of the virus.

Obesity is a major public-health problem globally, and tends to increase the risk for many other NCDs. Based on 2016 estimates, in 140 of 192 countries, at least 10 per cent of the population is considered obese (compared to 36 per cent in the United States (US), 28 per cent in South Africa and the United Kingdom (UK), 22 per cent in France, 20 per cent in Italy, and nine per cent in Nigeria). These obesity statistics may be a factor in the relative severity of COVID-19 across countries, helping to explain why some high-income countries have higher COVID morbidity rates than low- and middle-income countries.

The interplay between the leading NCDs and COVID-19 constitutes its own health emergency, and requires urgent attention. First, there needs to be an even greater focus on preventing community transmission in higher-risk populations. As the JAMA study shows, reducing the number of COVID-19 cases will also reduce the number of people with myocarditis after the pandemic has passed.

Governments and their partners in civil society must step up their efforts to prevent the virus from spreading in the first place. Public-health officials and media outlets should continue to emphasise the importance of wearing face masks, washing hands frequently with soap and running water, using hand sanitiser in the absence of clean water, and practicing social distancing of at least six feet (two metres) in public. If everyone were to adopt these practices, the number of new COVID-19 cases would likely fall dramatically, as would the number of people facing heart complications in the near future.

Furthermore, public-health authorities need to start devising interventions to provide lifelong cardiovascular support to COVID-19 survivors. Given the new data on heart-related complications, the broader pandemic response must include provisions for continuing care. Although such interventions may require the reallocation or reprioritization of existing resources, they would almost certainly be cost-effective when weighed against the costs of not addressing the additional NCD burden.

In fact, more attention should be focused on reducing the impact of NCDs more generally. The UK's experience offers lessons here. In 2018, the Scottish Shetlands authorised doctors to prescribe interactions with nature (hiking, bird watching, and so forth) as a means of preventing and managing NCDs. Similarly, the British government has pushed physicians to prescribe cycling as a way to address obesity.

And through its Better Health Campaign, public service announcements encouraging weight loss, healthier eating, and physical activity will be running on television, radio, social media, and other channels. All countries with high rates of obesity should be considering similar programs.

Finally, the latest science points to the need for better geriatric care.

The elderly are at increased risk of both, NCDs and more severe complications from COVID-19. An analysis in July by the Kaiser Family Foundation shows that 80 per cent of those who had died of COVID-19 in the US up to that point were 65 or older. Applying that rate to the US death toll as of 21 August, it follows that around 139,500 of the 174,442 deceased have been elderly.

Meanwhile, more than three million Americans have now recovered from the virus, and among them are elderly survivors and other high-risk individuals who will need additional care, including home services. In Nigeria, the health-tech platform GeroCare provides affordable care to the elderly in the comfort of their homes through regular doctor visits. Its least expensive plan offers three home visits per month for just US$50.

This approach to care needs to be scaled up significantly. The more we can reduce the heart-related and other complications of COVID-19, the more lives we will save.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ifeanyi M. Nsofor, a medical doctor and Senior Atlantic Fellow for Health Equity at George Washington University, is CEO of EpiAFRIC and Director of Policy and Advocacy at Nigeria Health Watch.

SOURCE: THE ASEAN POST

CALLS GROWING TO TIGHTEN SOCIAL DISTANCING RULES

S.Korea to tighten social-distancing measures on COVID-19 resurgence

SOUTH Korea on Friday announced a plan to tighten social-distancing measures, including the restriction on running practices of coffee shops and restaurants, in the Seoul metropolitan area amid a growing worry here about the COVID-19 resurgence.

South Korean Health Minister Park Neung-hoo told a press briefing that tighter quarantine measures would be taken towards cafes and restaurants in Seoul and its surrounding metropolitan area from Aug. 30 to Sept. 6 while keeping the Level 2 social-distancing guidelines in place.

Under the tighter scheme, only takeout and delivery will be permitted in franchise coffee chains, where people will be required to wait in line for orders at an interval of at least one meter, wear masks and report identification.

Restaurants and bakeries will be allowed to do normal businesses, but only takeaway and delivery will be permitted from 9 pm to 5 am local time for eight days through Sept. 6.

The tighter measures will affect around 380,000 restaurants and bakeries in the Seoul metropolitan area, a home to about half of the country's 51 million population.

South Korean Prime Minister Chung Sye-kyun told a government meeting to contain the virus that the strengthened quarantine measures were considered because people most frequently visit restaurants and cafes during daily life.

Chung said the Level 2 social-distancing guidelines will be maintained for one more week until Sept. 6 in Seoul and its adjacent area, noting that the Level 3 campaign will remain a choice of last resort given its economic and social ripple effect.

In the latest tally, the country reported 371 more cases of the COVID-19 for the past 24 hours, raising the combined number to 19,077.

The daily caseload was down from the previous day's six-month high of 441, but it kept growing in triple digits for 15 straight days due to church services and a massive rally in central Seoul, held on Aug. 15 by conservative voters, politicians and church members.



People have meals with a safe distance at a restaurant in Daegu, South Korea. **PHOTO: NEWSIS/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA**

SOURCE: Xinhua

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 4:00 pm Friday 28th August, 2020)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 29th August, 2020: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway Regions and Northern Shan, Kayah States, scattered in Naypyitaw, Upper Sagaing Region and (Southern and Eastern) Shan State, fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region and Chin, Rakhine States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with regionally heavyfalls in Mon State and isolated heavyfalls in Kachin and Kayin States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of rain in Kachin and Northern Shan States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 29th August, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 29th August, 2020: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 29th August, 2020: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay Region and widespread in Yangon Region.

Flood Bulletin

(Issued at 11:00 hrs M.S.T on28-8-2020)

Flood condition of Ayeyarwady River

According to the (10:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Ayeyarwady River at Nyaung Oo has exceeded by about (1½) feet above its danger level. It may fall below its danger level during the next (3) days.

According to the (10:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Ayeyarwady River at Chauk has exceeded by about (2) inches above its danger level. It may fall below its danger level during the next (1) day.

According to the (10:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Ayeyarwady River at Seiktha has exceeded by about (1½) feet above its danger level. It may continue to rise from the present water level by about (1) footduring the next (3) days and may remain above its danger level.

According to the (10:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Ayeyarwady River at Hinthada has exceeded by about (½) foot above its danger level. It may continue to rise from the present water level by about (1) foot during the next (3) days and may remain above its danger level.

According to the (10:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Ayeyarwady River at Zalun has exceeded by about (½) foot above its danger level. It may continue to rise from the present water level by about (1) foot during the next (3) days and may remain above its danger level.

Advisory

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

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UNICEF delivers medical assistance for Myanmar's COVID-19 fight



Officials from the Minsitry of Health and Sports and UNICEF Myanmar pose for a picture at the Yangon International Airport on 28 August 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) donated US$ 2.8 million worth medical equipment to help Myanmar in its fight against COVID-19 with a handover ceremony at the Yangon International Airport yesterday.

Officials from the Ministry of Health and Sport and UNICEF welcomed the medical supplies that were transported by a special cargo flight at the airport.

UNICEF Representative to Myanmar Mrs June Kunugi-handed over the $2.8 million worth of medical supplies,including personal protective equipment PPEs, that arrived in Myanmar in three separate batches during the week. Medical Research Department's Director-General Professor Dr Zaw Than Tun accepted them.

The UNICEF delivered the three-batches of medical assistance in cooperation with the World Food Programme (WFP).

Additional $224,284 worth of PPEs and related items from Thailand via Myawady and from China via Muse will be received soon.

A shipment of 30,000 COVID-19 Specimen carriers and 370 oxygen tanks will arrive in Myanmar in early September, according to a UNICEF statement.

Upon the assistance, the UNICEF Representative said that despite logistics challenges, UNICEF was stepping up its efforts to deliver the essential medical supplies that were internationally in high demand to Myanmar on time.

We must fight COVID-19 by joining our hands to protect children and most vulnerable people from the disease, she added.

UNICEF has delivered medical equipment including test kits, lab equipment and medicines as well as has sent medical experts to help Myanmar's fight against COVID-19.—MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Thailand transfers 36 Myanmar citizens from anti-human trafficking camps, juvenile rehabilitation schools

THAI authorities transferred a total of 36 Myanmar citizens via the border friendship bridge (2) in Myawady Township, Kayin State, yesterday.

The 36 persons included 32 victims of trafficking in person and 4 boys who need protection under the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The officials of Thailand's Ministry of Social Development and Human Security led by Tak Province Administrator Mr Waranon Yimmongkong handed over these human trafficking victims and young boys together with Thai government's cash assistance and their salary 173,183 baht to the officials of Myanmar.

Kayin State Hluttaw MP U Thant Zin Aung, Director U Khin Tun of Rehabilitation Department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Township Administrator U Phyo Zaw Ko Ko, Deputy Director for District Social Welfare U Kyaw Naing Thu, officials of Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force (Myawady), Labour Department, Immigration Department, National Registration and Citizenship Department, Information and Public Relations Department, Public Health Department and General Hospital accepted these returnees.

The authorities have made arrangements for 21 days of quarantine at Thabawa Medication Centre in Thin Gan Nyi Naung Village of Myawady Township and the returnees will have to undergo swab tests.

Cash assistance and their wages from Thailand will be given out to them while they are repatriated to their homes.

The Rehabilitation Department under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement will also provide K200,000 to each of them from the national COVID-19 relief fund.

Thailand has repatriated a total of 188 trafficked victims to Myanmar this year.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



Thailand transfers 36 Myanmar citizens from anti-human trafficking camps and juvenile rehabilitation schools on 28 August 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

Huawei Video Conferencing System Connects Myanmar's Office of the President and Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the 3rd Lancang-Mekong Corporation Leaders' Meeting



Huawei contributes $4000 worth three sets of its video conferencing system and technological services to Myanmar's President's Office and Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 3rd Lancaung-Mekong Cooperation Leaders' Meeting. **PHOTO : SUPPLIED**

THE world's leading information and communications technology (ICT) provider Huawei contributed $4000 worth three sets of its video conferencing system and technological services to Myanmar's President's Office and Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Lancang-Mekong 5+1 virtual meeting on 24th August, 2020, attended by leaders from China, Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam, participating countries of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Mechanism (LMC).

The leaders who attended the 3rd LMC meeting, friendly discussed about the corporation projects, analyzed the development of the process, and drew the roadmap for the future businesses. During the online virtual event, the attendees also discussed COVID-19 developments and ways to promote post pandemic socio-economic recovery.

U Win Myint, the President of Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Mr Li Keqiang, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China, Mr Thongloun Sisoulith, Prime Minister of Lao, Mr. Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia, Mr Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister of Thailand and Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of Vietnam attended the meeting.

"We are honoured to be supporting the Lancang-Mekong 5+1 virtual meeting through the provision of HUAWEI CloudLink Room video conferencing system sets. This integrated multifunctional collaborative telepresence system is the ideal platform for collaborative discussions, as it comes with features such as dual-screen functionality, high quality audio and ultra HD video camera capabilities, all accessible through an intuitive touch panel control, for an enhanced online meeting experience. Efficient and effective communications are essential for cross-border summits, with the need for an integrated online conferencing solution especially heightened due to the current COVID-19 climate. We hope that the system facilitated a productive meeting environment at the landmark virtual event, as the leaders from Myanmar and their international counterparts chart the way forward for this fast-developing region, " said Mr Ding Zhaoyi, CEO of Huawei Myanmar.

Based on HUAWEI RP Series Room Telepresence Systems, it turns conference rooms into video conferencing facilities with up to two HD displays. For the version provided to Myanmar's representatives, Huawei incorporated advanced video processing and error-correction technologies for a smooth, lifelike experience. These features ensured a smooth and seamless experience for the country's delegates while they convened online with participants from the other five LMC member states.

Myanmar President Office and Ministry of Foreign Affairs appreciated the contribution and awarded Honour Certificates to Huawei Myanmar. "They are (Huawei video conferencing system and technologies) very helpful and thank you very much for donation," said U Tint Swe, Deputy Director-General of Myanmar President Office.

In June, Huawei donated their Telemedicine Video Conference Solution to Myanmar's COVID-19 Treatment Centre (Phaunggyi), and University of Medicine (1) Yangon. The ICT provider also contributed the HUAWEI CLOUD AI assisted diagnosis and treatment system to the Phaunggyi Medical Centre, which came equipped with reliable high speed connection and very low latency to significantly improve the country's efficiency in fighting the pandemic and assist medical experts by reducing diagnosis times for patient Computed Tomography (CT) scan results.—GNLM

Myanmar brings 139 nationals back home by relief flight

A relief flight of Myanmar National Airlines (MNA) bringing back 139 Myanmar nationals stranded in the Philippines landed at Yangon International Airport yesterday evening.

As they arrived in Yangon, officials from the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports, and the Yangon Region government helped for their 21-day quarantine period in line with the regulations of immigration and medical checks.

For the repatriation of Myanmar citizens who were stranded in foreign countries by relief flights and chartered flights in accordance with the instructions from National-Level Central Committee for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cooperated with the relevant ministries and Myanmar embassies from respective countries, and has organized 8 relief flights to pick up Myanmar nationals stuck in the Philippines to date.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



Myanmar citizens returned from the Phillipines line up for immigration service at the Yangon International Airport on 28 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

41 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 28 August, total figure reaches 643

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases reach 643 after 41 new cases were reported on 28 August according to Ministry of Health and Sports. Case-629 and case-630 returned from UAE. Case-631returned from Korea, case-632 from Singapore and case-641 from China. 17 cases had no contact with positive cases and no overseas travel history. 19 had contact with positive cases. Out of the 41 cases, 35 are from Rakhine State, 5 from Yangon Region and Case-606 from Bago Region. Among these 643 confirmed cases, six died, 349 have recovered, 339 have been discharged from hospitals and 61 were held under investigation.—MNA ■

Updated at 8 pm, 28 August 2020

Total Cases	New Cases	Total Death Tally
643	41	6

Recovery Update on 28 August 2020 after two consecutive tests

Total Recovery	New Recovery	Discharged from Hospital
349	0	339

New PUIs
61

New Cases in State/Region
28 August 2020

Rakhine	35
Yangon	5
Bago	1

Ministry of Health and Sports

Leaders, gov'ts around world express concern about Abe's health

TOKYO — Leaders and governments in the Asia-Pacific region expressed concern over Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's health on Friday after the 65-year-old offered to resign for health reasons. Some also praised his leadership during nearly eight years in office.

After news reports that Abe expressed his intention to resign, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian declined to comment, citing Japan's internal affairs. But he told reporters that China, along with Japan, "wants to continue to promote improvement and development of ties" between the two countries.

South Korean President Moon Jae In's office said Abe's offer to resign was "regrettable" as the prime minister "played multiple roles in improving relations between South Korea and Japan."

"Our government will continue to work together with a new prime minister and Cabinet to improve South Korea-Japan ties," presidential spokesman Kang Min Seok said. "We hope he gets well as soon as possible."



A large screen in Osaka's Dotonbori commercial district shows the news on Aug. 28, 2020 that Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced his intention to resign, citing a health problem. **PHOTO: KYODO**

There was no immediate reaction from the North Korean government via the country's state media.

In Singapore, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong issued a statement on Facebook saying he is "sorry" to learn Abe is resigning for health reasons. Saying he had worked well with the Japanese leader over the years, Lee said, "Under his leadership, our bilateral relations have deepened."

Lee also credited Abe with playing a "critical role" in concluding an 11-member Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade pact, after the United States withdrew from its original framework in 2017 under President Donald Trump.

Thai Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai told reporters that Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha expressed concern about the Japanese prime minister's health and wished his quick recovery.

The foreign minister said a coming leadership change in Japan would not shake Bangkok's confidence in Tokyo as the latter has a stable political system.

Philippine Foreign Secretary Teddy Locsin said on Twitter that Abe is a "very good friend of the Philippines" and a "close personal friend" of President Rodrigo Duterte.

He called him "an imposing political presence in person."

Perhaps one of the most personal and sympathetic reactions came from Australia.

"On behalf of the people of Australia, I would like to thank" Abe "for his enduring commitment to Australia-Japan relations over his long and successful career," Prime Minister Scott Morrison said in a statement. —Kyodo ■

Philippines to join China int'l services trade fair online next month

MANILA — The Philippine' Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) said on Friday that the Philippines will participate online in the China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) to be held in early September in Beijing.

In a statement, the DTI said its Export Marketing Bureau (EMB), in partnership with the Philippine Trade and Investment Center in Beijing, will showcase Philippine service exporters in the first and the largest comprehensive exhibition in the service trade field both in China and globally.

The DTI said the online Philippine pavilion will feature the country's competitive advantages and offerings in the services industry through exhibiting photos and videos from the different industries such as the information technology (IT)-business process management, software development, animation, game development, film, digital creative original intellectual property, construction, and engineering.

The DTI added that Philippine exhibitors include 18 companies, five private sector associations, and three government agencies from the following sectors: construction and engineering outsourcing; IT-enabled services such as software development, digital marketing, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO); Customer Relationship Management; animation, and game development; e-learning and training; film production and visual effects; and higher education services.—Xinhua ■

Singapore sets higher pay to tighten entry of foreign workers



More experienced foreign applicants -- for example, those in their 40s -- might be required to have a higher salary to apply for an employment pass, which could even be double of the minimum requirement of S$4,500, the ministry said. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

SINGAPORE — Singapore said Thursday it will increase the minimum salary requirement for foreigners applying to work in professional and other higher-paying jobs, in a move aimed at encouraging companies to employ more Singaporeans for such jobs.

The Manpower Ministry said it will raise the minimum salary required for those applying for an "employment pass" -- the highest category of pass in terms of salary that is issued to those applying for professional jobs in the wealthy city-state -- by S$600 (US$446) to S$4,500.

More experienced foreign applicants -- for example, those in their 40s -- might be required to have a higher salary to apply for an employment pass, which could even be double of the minimum requirement of S$4,500, the ministry said.

The new requirement, which will come into effect from Sept. 1 for new applicants and May 1 next year for those renewing their passes, comes amid rising unemployment due to the economic impact of COVID-19, with the unemployment rate among Singaporeans creeping up from 3.5 per cent to 4 per cent and nearly 80,000 Singaporeans unemployed as of June. —Kyodo ■

Chinese online teaching platforms provide over 500 courses to global students: ministry

BEIJING — The international versions of two Chinese online teaching platforms have provided 505 free courses in English to students in more than 100 countries, the Ministry of Education (MOE) said Thursday.

The international versions of xuetangX and iCourse, launched by the MOE in the first half of this year, have also provided educational solutions to international university students facing the suspension of classes during the COVID-19 pandemic, said Wu Yan, an official with the ministry.

Wu added that over 1 million Chinese teachers have provided about 1.1 million online courses, attracting nearly 22.6 million university students during the spring semester this year.

He also noted that China will hold the first global conference on massive open online courses in November this year, contributing its online teaching experience on a larger scale and at a higher level.—Xinhua ■

Tokyo stocks drop sharply on news PM Abe will resign

TOKYO — Tokyo stocks fell and the yen strengthened Friday after media reports on Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's resignation shocked markets, with the Nikkei briefly diving more than 2 percent.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average ended down 326.21 points, or 1.41 per cent, from Thursday at 22,882.65. The broader Topix index of all First Section issues on the Tokyo Stock Exchange finished 11.02 points, or 0.68 per cent, lower at 1,604.87.

Decliners were led by information and communication, electric appliance and retail issues.

The yen drew buying after the reports rattled Japan's financial markets, with the US dollar falling to the 106 yen line after rising to 106.94 at one point early in the afternoon.

At 5 pm, the dollar fetched 106.06-08 yen with the dollar briefly traded at 106.00 yen, compared with 106.52-62 yen in New York and 106.00-02 yen in Tokyo at 5 pm Thursday.

The euro was quoted at $1.1891-1892 and 126.12-16 yen against $1.1817-1827 and 125.95-126.05 yen in New York, and $1.1834-1836 and 125.44-48 yen in Tokyo late Thursday afternoon.

The yield on the benchmark 10-year Japanese government bond rose 0.015 percentage point from Thursday's close to 0.055 per cent as investors sold the debt amid concern that Abe's resignation would affect the Bank of Japan's monetary easing policy. —Kyodo ■



Tokyo stocks fell and the yen strengthened Friday after media reports on Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's resignation shocked markets. **PHOTO: KYODO**

SoftBank to sell $12.5 bln shares of its Japan telecoms unit

TOKYO — SoftBank Group said Friday it will sell shares of its Japan telecoms unit SoftBank Group Corp worth approximately $12.5 billion as it pursues a push to increase cash reserves.

The sale, which was announced after Friday's trading close, is expected to take place in late September and involves more than 927 million shares in the Japanese telecoms unit.

SoftBank Group Corp ended Friday's session at 1,431.5 yen.

The stock sale comes as part of a massive fundraising programme by SoftBank Group that was initially expected to raise 4.5 trillion yen ($41 billion).

In a statement, SoftBank Group cited "the ongoing uncertainty in the market environment due to concerns about a potential second or even third wave of COVID-19."

In light of those fears it said it was "necessary to expand cash reserves beyond the JPY 4.5 Trillion Programme to ensure flexible options to respond to changes in the market environment."

It said the offering replaced no change in its relationship with SoftBank Group Corp and that the firm's "strategic importance to the entire SoftBank Group remains unchanged."—AFP ■



SoftBank Group is selling shares of its Japan telecoms unit SoftBank Group Corp worth about $12.5 billion as part of a massive fundraising programme. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Chinese consumers could boycott Apple if US bans WeChat: ministry warns

BEIJING — Chinese consumers could boycott Apple if the United States bans WeChat, China's foreign ministry spokesman warned Friday, as the clock ticks down on a US order to block the popular social app.

US President Donald Trump this month announced a ban from mid-September on WeChat and another Chinese-owned app, TikTok, accusing them of threatening national security, further stoking tensions between Beijing and Washington. But foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian tweeted Friday that "If WeChat is banned, then there will be no reason why Chinese shall keep iPhone and apple products".

Zhao had already on Thursday said "many Chinese people are saying they may stop using iPhones if WeChat is banned in the US", and accused the US of "systematic economic bullying of non-US companies" by targeting the Chinese app. The comments mark a rare direct reference by Beijing to boycotting an American product and come as the superpowers spar on multiple fronts including military activity in the South China Sea, Hong Kong and blame for the coronavirus.—AFP ■



A consumer shows a WeChat Pay receipt on her smartphone after purchasing at Yorkdale Shopping Centre in Toronto, Canada, May 11, 2017. Tourism Toronto and OTT Financial Group have introduced the Chinese mobile payment service, WeChat Pay, into local tourism to boost travel and shopping consumption by Chinese travellers. **PHOTO: XINHUA/ZOU ZHENG/FILE**

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY. NO. (197 W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY. NO. (197 W/E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **29-8-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPPING

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V YANGTZE DIGNITY

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V YANGTZE DIGNITY VOY. NO. (20125)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **29-8-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT-3** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S GLOBAL MARS SHIPPING

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
TUG: ANGGUN SARI & BARGE:EWIN 31

Consignees of cargo carried on **TUG: ANGGUN SARI & BARGE:EWIN 31** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **27-8-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301191/2301178**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CEA PROJECT LOGISTICS (MALAYSIA)

Relief plaques from Thagyar Pagoda

By Maung Tha (Archaeology)



Relief at Thagyar Pagoda. **PHOTO: MAUNG THA**

THE statistics collected by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2017 showed 442 stupas and temples in Thaton Township of Mon State comprised the most eminent Shwesayan Pagoda, Myathabeik Pagoda, Bronze Buddha image, Nemindara Pagoda, lacquerware Buddha image and Shwehsandaw Pagoda in Pawdawmu Village. Likewise, Kalyani ordination and Pitakat treatise chamber are historic buildings. The stone inscription chamber in the precinct of Shwesayan Pagoda is being maintained by the Department of Archaeology and National Museum.

Ancient Thaton City

Thaton, 42.6 kilometres south of Bilin on Yangon-Mawlamyine motor road, is an ancient city.

Thaton, the name derived from Gohzwegaton in Mon language, which means the cave under banyan tree with thick foliage. The book with the title of Yamanya, the residences of Mon ethnics, mentioned a spirit chamber was built under a large banyan tree by villagers in the place of current Thaton. It was named Gohzwegaton. In the long time, it was renamed Gaton, and then, changed to Thaton.

According to the data released in October 2017, Thaton Township was home to 233,867 people, 74,296 people of whom resided in eight wards. Thaton Township, the residences of Bamar, Kayin, Mon and Shan ethnics, is on seven square miles of area. 93.56 per cent of township's total population believe in Buddhism.

Development of Thaton was undertaken by Thaton town municipal committee formed in 1887 and its district administrative council constituted in 1923.

Ancient Thaton city was found by Sir Saint Andrew Johnson, the assistant commissioner of Thaton District, in 1865. He wrote a report on finding of the ancient city in volume II of British Burma Gazette. According to the findings of Sir Saint Andrew Johnson, the ancient city was on 700 acres of land, and its stakes of the walls were in square shape to rectangular shape but it was not accurate corner of rectangular. Moreover, the second wall, 150 feet from the first wall, was 7,700 feet long from the east to the west and 4,000 feet wide from the north to the south rounded by a moat. One each of gate was built at the southern and northern walls. But, anyone could not guess the eastern and western walls might be built with gates. All the walls were of earthen works.

According to the Thaton history, the ancient city was built with six walls in the northern side. But, the satellite photos showed the city was rounded by five walls only, mentioned in the book on Suvannabhumi research. The satellite photos clearly depicted the eastern and northern walls of the city but unclearly showed the western and southern walls included in the public residences.

Sir Saint Andrew Johnson wrote that a mound of royal palace with 1,150 feet in length from the east to the west and 1,000 feet in width from the south to the north was located in the centre of the city and that there was no building on the venue.





Kalyani Ordination Hall. **PHOTO: MAUNG THA**

Myanmar encyclopaedia mentioned the mound of royal palace was located in the centre of the city with 1,122 feet by 1,122 feet. At present, the Department of Agriculture, Sasana Yeiktha and Nandawya Monastery take positions on the mound.

It was also mentioned that Thaton was an infamous fishery village in the past resided by Wa ethnics and then Mon and Pa-O ethnics.

Shwesayan Pagoda

The findings proved stu-





PHOTO: MAUNG THA

pas and temples in ancient Thaton city were built between Nandawya mound and southern wall. There were three pagodas based on square shape foundations were located near the most eminent Shwesayan Pagoda. These pagodas were Pitakat Pagoda, Thagyar Pagoda in the southeast and Shwechaykhan Pagoda.

Currently, Shwesayan Pagoda was renovated in present era. In its history, the pagoda was 240 feet high and from the foot to the diamond orb 360 feet high, flanked by 37 encircled Cetis. Objects of Buddhism were found in Thaton Township.

The walls of the pagoda were built of laterite. The pagoda takes a position in Theingon Ward, southern part of Thaton.

Thagyar Pagoda

Located in southeast of Shwesayan Pagoda, Thagyar Pagoda was built of laterite with 104 square feet of circumference based on three terraces.

Circumference of the pagoda to the first terrace was 18 feet high, from the first terrace to the second 34 feet high and from the second to the third 46 feet high, totalling 85 feet. Each ladder was built at west, south and north sides of the pagoda. The first terrace was 104 square feet wide, the second 70 square feet and the third 48 square feet.

More than 60 baked earthen reliefs were installed on the two square feet arches on the first terrace. A total of 13 plots of Jataka mentioned on the reliefs cannot be clearly depicted.

Reliefs at Thagyar Pagoda

The plots bore 10 major Jataka on lives of the Gotama Buddha on relief plaques from the first terrace at Thagyar Pagoda, mentioned by Sir Saint Andrew Johnson. Meanings of Jataka plots from Temiya, Mahosadha, Bhuridatta, Vidhura and Vessantara could be exposed but broken relief plaques could not be defined.

The plot of Temiya Jataka depicted carrying of Prince Temiya by pony cart to kill him outside the town. With regard to Mahosadha Jataka, the plot bore Mahosadha who brought his wife to be Amara Devi by palanquin after taking gifts. Moreover, other moves of plots illustrated Mahosadha at the pottery industry. Another one portrayed Amara Devi and a minister in form of white monkey in the presence of King Bramadatta and his queen.

The plot of Bhuridatta Jataka carried discussions among King Dragon, hunter and son of Bhuridatta after Bhuridatta brought hunter and his son to the country of dragons.

Two plots of Vidhura Jataka mentioned the ogre meeting with female celestial being in the jungle and the play of Punnaka ogre and the king. The plot of Vessantara Jataka portrayed people throwing gravels at the Ponnas who took white elephant from King Vessantara.

A relief kept in the stone plaque chamber from Thagyar Pagoda was carved to create a plot of Nemiya Jataka.

Sir Saint Andrew Johnson defined the backgrounds of reliefs from Thagyar Pagoda by observing glaze terracotta plaques from Shwezigon, Ananda, Mingala and Phatleik edifices in Bagan. But, stone inscription officer Mr Taw Sein Kho assumed these reliefs were not related to Buddhism but Ramayana Jataka plots from Hinduism.

Other reliefs

Other reliefs bore a statue in royal regalia of the king holding a fork in addition to plots of 10 major Jataka. Such kind of object took a position at southwest corner on the first terrace of Thagyar Pagoda. Some assumed such statue might be Shiva statue.



PHOTO: MAUNG THA

However, stone inscription officer U Mya made a field trip to Thaton. He did not support assumption of above-mentioned concept and submitted a report that reliefs from Thagyar Pagoda were excerptions from Buddhology.

Some experts assumed the styles of reliefs mentioned the plots of Buddhism but some scholars, the statues related to Hinduism. As such, a conclusion came out that Buddhism and Hinduism might contemporarily flourish in Thaton area.

The education department of the Indian government released the list of ancient buildings in Thaton District in February 1919, comprising Shwesayan, Zingyaik, Kawgungu, Zwekabin and Kyaikhtiyoe pagodas as well as Thagyar Pagoda. Currently, reliefs from Thagyar Pagoda were painted with lime, so their original colours could not be seen.

Historic Kalyani ordination hall was located outside the southern wall of Shwesayan Pagoda. Border posts of the ordination hall were made of shale stone. These posts bore the plots of Jataka from the Nipata of the Lord Buddha. The reliefs from Thagyar Pagoda can be compared with that of the border posts of ordination hall.

Paintings, sculptural statues, glaze terracotta plaques and votive tablets depicting plots of Buddhology can be seen at various areas of the country. Among them, reliefs from Thagyar Pagoda in Thaton are cultural heritages of Buddhism, so it needs to properly preserve them.

(Translated by Than Tun Aung)



PHOTO: MAUNG THA

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U Min Tun Lin appointed as YUFC new head coach

YANGON United appointed new head coach U Min Tun Lin in a place of former head coach U Tin Maung Tun on 27 August, according to the team statement.

The contract with the new head coach will go on until end of the 2021 MNL season, said the official statement.

U Min Tun Lin, formerly served as an assistant coach for Myanmar National Football Team, and he has got tremendous experiences in Myanmar football world and currently acting as a head coach and giving training to the team's players starting on 28 August, said the source with the Yangon United.

U Min Tun Lin also served as Zwekapin United head coach in 2018, and he did a brilliant job as he could raise Zwekapin United to the third place of the Myanmar National League standing within a year.

"I'm overwhelmed to be a head coach of Yangon United. It was an amazing offer for me. I'll try my best with the team to receive all the challenges that are waiting for," said U Min Tun Lin.

Yangon United terminated the contract with former head coach U Tin Maung Tun on 27 August, and consequently, he was assigned at Yangon United Football Academy for youth football development.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)



Yangon United new head coach U Min Tun Lin showing tactics to his team in yesterday's training session. **PHOTO: YUFC**

Manchester United's Paul Pogba tests positive for COVID-19



Manchester United midfielder Paul Pogba vies for the ball against Tottenham Hotspur's Eric Dier. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

PARIS—Manchester United midfielder Paul Pogba was omitted from the France squad announced Thursday (Aug 27) for next month's Nations League matches against Sweden and Croatia after testing positive for COVID-19, coach Didier Deschamps said.

World Cup winner Pogba has been replaced by teenager Eduardo Camavinga, who was called up for the first time alongside Lyon midfielder Houssem Aouar and RB Leipzig defender Dayot Upamecano.

"Unfortunately he underwent a test yesterday (Wednesday) which was revealed to be positive this morning," Deschamps said of Pogba's absence from the group.

Juventus midfielder Adrien Rabiot was also recalled for the first time in over two years after he refused to go on the standby list for the 2018 World Cup.

"He's found a very good level again. We can't go back, I'm not someone who likes to take radical decisions. He remained selectable," explained Deschamps.

Blaise Matuidi, 33, was overlooked following his recent move to David Beckham's Inter Miami in Major League Soccer as Deschamps decided to give a chance to some younger players in midfield.

Kylian Mbappe was one of two Paris Saint-Germain players included alongside defender Presnel Kimpembe, both starters in last weekend's Champions League final defeat by Bayern Munich in Lisbon.

France will travel to Sweden for their opening Nations League game on Sep 5 before returning home to play Croatia three days later. Their last international was the 2-0 victory over Albania on Nov 17.—AFP ■

Eze does it as Palace boss Hodgson signs forward

LONDON—Eberechi Eze became Roy Hodgson's most expensive signing in his time as Crystal Palace manager on Friday, joining for a reported £20 million ($26.5 million) from second-tier Queens Park Rangers.

Hodgson saw off rivals West Bromwich Albion and West Ham to secure the signature of the 22-year-old forward, who penned a five year contract.

Eze, who scored 20 goals in 112 appearances for QPR and has been capped at Under-20 and Under-21 level by England, said Palace offered the chance for him to develop as a player. he

"As a football club, I feel like there are great players here and it's a brilliant opportunity for me to come and be with these players, to link up with them and to really push on," he said in a club statement.

Palace succeeded at the third time of asking after having bids of £8 million and £12 million rejected. "Eberechi is a player whose development we have followed closely," said Palace chairman Steve Parish.

"We are delighted he has chosen to sign for us over the other clubs that were interested and we feel that this is the right club for him to continue his development." —AFP ■

Henderson expects Liverpool to make statement against Arsenal

LONDON—Jordan Henderson has urged Liverpool to show their hunger to retain the Premier League title when they face Arsenal in the Community Shield on Saturday.

Just five weeks after Liverpool captain Henderson lifted the Premier League trophy, Jurgen Klopp's side kick off the new season in the glamour friendly at Wembley.

While their Premier League title defence doesn't get underway until September 12, the Reds are keen to lay down an early marker to their title rivals.

Henderson knows FA Cup winners Arsenal will pose a good test of Liverpool's desire for more silverware after beating the champions 2-1 at the Emirates Stadium late last season.

Liverpool have been getting back to business at a training camp in Austria and England midfielder Henderson is pleased with the attitude he has seen from his team-mates so far.

"We've been cracking on, really working hard. New season, new start and a lot more things we want to go on and achieve," Henderson told Liverpool's website.

"I'm really excited to see what we can do this season, another big season for us. Hopefully we can take confidence from the last year or two but we need to stay hungry and need to keep the desire to go and want more.

"I can certainly see that from the first days that I've watched training in pre-season."—AFP ■



Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson wants his team to lay down a marker against Arsenal. **PHOTO: AFP/PAUL CHILDS**