Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Pyithu Hluttaw
Notification 1/2021
8th Waning of Nadaw, 1382 ME
(6 January 2021)
Summoning Third Pyithu Hluttaw
first regular session

In accord with Section 123, 124 (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Section 37 of the Pyithu Hluttaw Law 2012 and Rule 3 of the Pyithu Hluttaw Rule, it is hereby announced that the Third Pyithu Hluttaw’s first regular session is summoned at 10 am on the 5th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME (1 February 2021) (Monday).

Sd/ T Khun Myat
Speaker

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Amyotha Hluttaw
Notification 1/2021
8th Waning of Nadaw, 1382 ME
(6 January 2021)
Summoning Third Amyotha Hluttaw
first regular session

In accord with Section 155 of the Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Section 37 of the Amyotha Hluttaw Law 2012, it is hereby announced that the Third Amyotha Hluttaw’s first regular session is summoned at 10 am on the 5th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME (1 February 2021) (Monday).

Sd/ Mahn Win Khaing Than
Speaker

YANGON Region Transport Authority ran the 4th vessel between Yangon and Cocogyun Township yesterday, carrying materials and equipment for electrification and construction works.

The ship departed in the early morning from No. 3 Sule Wharf in Yangon.

“YRTA is running the vessel trips to Cocogyun Township under the arrangement of Yangon Region government. This trip is aimed at effectuation of development of the township. We have to take responsibility for transportation. Now, we can supply the electricity in Cocogyun Township. We have to conduct other processes such as regional development and transportation of the civil staff,” said U Hla Aung, the joint secretary of YRTA.

The passengers will have to stay one-week quarantine under COVID-19 preventive measures.

A total of 61 passengers including seamen, municipal staff, police officers, bank staff, Yangon Electricity Supply Corporation (YESC) staff and residents were on board the ship. The ship was loaded with some 350 tonnes of cargos. YRTA conducted this trip by renting MV Charites, which cost around K350 million.

Regarding the electricity supply in Cocogyun Township, U Maung Maung Latt, the YESC chair said, “We are supplying electricity to this area for 24 hours under the solar system. Now, we are finalizing the project. We also carried a 500 kV diesel engine and fuel oil to run the ship. However, we are providing the electricity under the solar system. If necessary, we will run the diesel engine. Now, YESC is supplying 1.5 megawatts under the solar system. To deliver more than 1.5 megawatts, the YESC engineering team will ride on the ship for field inspection.”

Not only YRTA but also the Ministry of Transport and Communications also assisted in delivering the goods to enable access to the electricity in Cocogyun Township. Out of the recent seven vessels to this township, four trips were organized by YRTA.

Cocogyun is one of the 45 townships in Yangon Region. It is located in the Bay of Bengal 257 nautical miles south of Yangon and its area is 20.54 square kilometres.

Cocogyun Township lagged in development due to its remote location. Now, the government is making an all-out effort for the development of this township.

—Myint Maung Kyaw

(Translated by Hay Mar)
Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to President U Win Myint

The following are messages of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State/Government sent to President of the Republic of Myanmar U Win Myint, on the occasion of the 73rd Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

His Majesty Preah Bat Samdech Preah Boromeath NORodom Sihamoni, King of Cambodia sends Congratulatory Message to the President

It gives me great pleasure to warmly congratulate Your Excellency and the people of Myanmar on the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I would also like to send my best wishes for Your Excellency good health and happiness as well as for the continuous prosperity and progress of your country.

The Kingdom of Cambodia is committed to maintaining a close relationship with the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and I express my confidence that these excellent ties of friendship and cooperation will continue to flourish in the years ahead.

With my highest consideration,

His Excellency Alexander Lukashenko, President of the Republic of Belarus sends Congratulatory Message to the President

On behalf of the people of the Republic of Belarus and my own I sincerely congratulate You on the national holiday - the Independence Day.

I am pleased to note success achieved by your country in ensuring the sustainable development.

I hope for the continuation of the constructive cooperation between Minsk and Nay Pyi Taw on the principles of equality and mutual respect.

On this feast day I wish to Your Excellency sound health, longevity, fruitful work, as well as to the people of Myanmar Peace and prosperity.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

His Excellency David Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands sends Congratulatory Message to the President

On behalf of the People and the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, I wish to convey our sincere congratulations and best wishes to Your Excellency and the People and Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar as you celebrate your Independence Day.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands values its relationship with the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and looks forward to establishing closer ties through our mutual interests for the benefit of both our peoples.

Once again, I wish to congratulate the People and Government of the Republic of Myanmar as you celebrate this momentous occasion.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

His Excellency Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine sends Congratulatory Message to the President

On behalf of the Ukrainian nation and my own, I sincerely congratulate You on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Noting high level of trust of the people of Myanmar towards the chosen by You political course, aiming at democratization and national reconciliation of the country, which has been proved by the convincing results of the recent parliamentary election in Myanmar, I would like to confirm Ukraine’s readiness to actively build up the whole spectrum of our relations on the basis of mutual respect and pragmatic cooperation, including within the framework of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Availing myself of this opportunity, I wish to You, Your Excellency, strong health and success in the responsible statehood activity and to the friendly people of Myanmar peace, well-being and prosperity.

His Excellency János ADER, President of Hungary sends Congratulatory Message to the President

Allow me to extend my greetings to you and the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the occasion of your national holiday.

By establishing diplomatic relations between the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Republic of Hungary in 1956, we formed a strong base for the cooperation between our two nations. We could claim with great satisfaction that owning the democratic transition of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar our bilateral relationship has strengthened further during the previous years. I could assure you, that from the Hungarian side we are fully committed to deepen the mutually beneficial cooperation between our nations.

To your highly responsible duties I wish you great success and good health.

His Excellency Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan sends Congratulatory Message to the President

I would like to express my sincere congratulations to Your Excellency and people of Your country on the occasion of the National Holiday the Independence Day of the Republic of Ukraine.

Without a doubt, I am confident that, with our joint efforts, the relationship between our countries will continue to develop in all directions and will grow to a complementary level to the interests of both peoples and the potentials of our countries.

Taking this opportunity, I wish Your Excellency strong health, happiness and great successes in your responsible state activities as well as peace and continued prosperity to the friendly people of Myanmar.

His Excellency Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations sends Congratulatory Message to the President

I wish to extend to the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar my warmest congratulations on the occasion of your Independence Day.

In these challenging times, we are once again reminded of each country’s essential contribution to our global wellbeing.

As we work together to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic, we must use the recovery to build more resilient, sustainable and just societies. We must also take bold action to address the climate emergency and advance efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

On this national day, I count on the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to help strengthen the United Nations and build a better and more peaceful world for all.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Foreign Heads of State send felicitations to State Counsellor

The following is message of felicitations from Foreign Heads of State/Government sent to State Counsellor and Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, on the occasion of the 73rd Anniversary Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

His Excellency Viktor ORBÁN, Prime Minister of Hungary sends Congratulatory Message to the State Counsellor

Please allow me to extend my greetings to you on the occasion of the 73rd anniversary of the proclamation of independence of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

I would like to also express my sincere gratitude for Your Excellency’s visit to Budapest last year, which provided an opportunity for our traditionally friendly bilateral relationship to reach an even higher level, than ever before.

I can assure you, that my government is fully committed to continue our already comprehensive bilateral cooperation based on mutual respect and trust in spite of the hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Allow me to conclude by expressing my appreciation to the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for the excessively high number of participants during the recently organized general election.

To your highly responsible duties I wish you great success and good health.
MoC discusses promoting domestic fish consumption

THE Ministry of Commerce organized a videoconference yesterday to discuss a plan for promoting fish consumption in the country.

At the meeting, Union Minister for Commerce Dr Than Myint said that the Ministry would continue making great efforts to improve local fish consumption as fish exports are declining because of the COVID-19 crisis.

In the 2018-2019 financial year, the export of fishery products was US$732.156 million and in the financial year 2019-2020, the amount increased to $858.869 million, according to the Union Minister, who said that the meeting was aimed at discussing how to collaboratively work to increase fish consumption because the export of fishery products including fishes was declining in the entire year of 2020 because of COVID-19 pandemic.

He continued that there are issues and inconveniences related to transportation and sales of fishery products during the COVID-19 crisis, so all stakeholders need to work to encourage local fish consumption in Myanmar collaboratively. He added that if the fishery sector can be implemented, as usual, it could become a very developed sector in two or three years.

He said that trade development activities must be carried out in the “New Normal” way during the period of COVID-19 pandemic.

The virtual meeting was participated by the Deputy Minister for Commerce; senior officials from the Ministry of Commerce; the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation; Taninthayi Region government; Yangon Region government; Mandalay Region government; Ayeyawady Region government; commercial attaches; Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Myanmar Fisheries Federation and other relevant organizations.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Swe)

Floating bike rental services debuted in Myitkyina

A private business has introduced floating bicycle rental services near the township development committee office at the bank of Ayeyawady River in Myitkyina Township, Kachin State.

“The services are aimed for fun and fitness of the youth to stay themselves away from the narcotic drug while schools are closed during the COVID-19 crisis,” said U Sai Khum, the owner of floating bike rental shop.

The rental of each bike for 30 minutes is K3,000 per person, and K5,000 for two persons.

The user has to wear a life jacket before riding the bike. When they feel exhausted and need any help, they can blow the whistle on the life jacket. Then, the rental shop will bring tired users by a motorboat.

The floating bike rental services will be available from 8 am to 5 pm, and the business will be expanded to Indawgyi area and Bitamo Township in Mohinnay district.—Sein Win (IPRD)

(Translated by Aung Khin)
UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe presided over a meeting via videoconferencing yesterday to introduce the e-learning platform in conducting the 3-year diploma course in nursing and midwifery and 2-year diploma course in midwifery.

At the meeting, the Union Minister highlighted the role of Myanmar nurses and midwives in the four major healthcare sectors of upgrading public health services, prevention of diseases, treatments and rehabilitation works.

He also expressed his appreciation for their works at the front line in COVID-19 measures and explained e-learning platforms for the healthcare professions.

The Union Minister recommended an interactive teaching-learning approach in conducting the courses, assistance of officials from the Department of Human Resources for Health and specialists from the relevant hospitals, the open-book exam system and the take-home exam as in developing countries.

The e-learning platform for the courses is supported by non-profit health organizations. Jhpiego affiliated with Johns Hopkins University.

The introduction of e-learning platform ceremony was attended by senior officials from Department of Human Resources for Health, rectors of the University of Nursing (Yangon) and the University of Nursing (Mandalay), professors, principals of nursing and midwifery training schools, trainee nurses and midwives, and representatives from UNFPA, UNICEF, Access to Health Fund and Jhpiego. —MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

The first session of the Union Peace Conference- 21st Century Panlong began in 2016. We encountered many difficulties during the peace talks in 2015, based on the provisions of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement signed between the previous government and some ethnic armed organizations. However, we continuously implemented the peacemaking process step-by-step. When official peace negotiations were suspended due to some disagreements, the NRPC and the Peace Commission were able to organize many informal discussions, and they finally managed to resume official peace talks.

(Excerpt from Chairperson of National Reconciliation and Peace Centre and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's speech on New Year, on 2 January 2021)

Myanmar nationals, seamen brought back home by relief flights

THE relief flight of Myanmar Airways International organized by Myanmar Embassy in Kuala Lumpur landed in Yangon yesterday evening with 174 citizens stranded in Malaysia including 61 from the detention centre due to the suspension of international flights.

Another relief flight of Myanmar National Airlines (MNA) organized by Myanmar Embassy in Singapore and Myanmar Seafarer Employment Service Federation (MSESFP) brought back 143 Myanmar seamen stranded in Singapore in the same evening. The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Yangon Region government arranged 7-day quarantine at specific places or designated hotels, followed by the 7-day home quarantine for them.

To bring back the Myanmar seamen and citizens in accordance with the instructions from National-Level Central Committee on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is working together with the relevant ministries, Myanmar embassies from respective countries, shipping companies and the relevant organizations.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)
Significant pagoda features artworks of Bagan era in Pakokku Township

PAKOKKU Township of Magway Region is recognized as the Western Ayeyar City. The well-known pagodas such as 900-year old Thilho Shin pagoda, Shwegu pagoda, Shwe Mu Htaw pagoda and Phaung Taw Oo pagoda are concentrated there.

Although the domestic tours are suspended across the country during COVID-19 pandemic, the well-wishers including those living in foreign countries donate money for the construction of pagoda called Aung Su Pyae Kyaung Shit-thaung-laythaung pagoda located about two miles from Pakokku.

The pagoda was first called 31-bone (31 realms of existence) Kyaw Lon Aung and only 30 per cent of construction completed over 30 years. It was rebuilt in 2003 by Aggamahapandita Aggamahassamaddhammajotikadhaja Ahlehajamaratthagarav Sayadaw Baddhantavisara, Patron of Mahavithutarama Monastery of Pakokku Township and renamed as Su Pyae Kyaung Shit-thaung-laythaung pagoda. The famous architects were hired to restart the construction in 2017.

The pagoda with artworks of the Bagan era is 75ft in height and surrounded by 24 smaller zedis outside. There are 31 chambers inside the pagoda and all are depicted with the history of Buddha and picturesque wall paintings. The body whole of pagoda can be seen from a certain distance. The 89 years old Sayadaw Bhadanta Visara who leads the construction of pagoda is also Ovadacariya Sayadaw for Su Pyae Kyaung Shit-thaunglarythaung pagoda, who is to receive propitiation of Sasaana and provide in formation for the rural populace.

It will cost K1240,000 per small zedis and K5,400 per bud¬dha statue and K34,000 per sitting bud¬dha statue. The pagoda board of trustee receives between K2.5 million and K9 million of donation during COVID-19. Those wanting to donate cash distributions for construction of pagoda can also donate as much as they can. Currently, three construction works are being completed under the management of Sayadaw.

—Salai Ko Kee (IPRD)  
(Translated by Khin Thazin Han)

Ywangan (Virgin Land) promoted as global tourist destination

An aerial view of Ywangan (Virgin Land). PHOTO: U TUN TUN WIN (IPRD)

Ywangan (Virgin Land) Township and to generate more income from the sustainable natural economy as tourism with the preservation of local culture and traditions of the region.

With the cooperation of YTO, Hluttaw representatives, departmental officials, and local residents, the fund is providing tourism infrastructures such as constructing public toilets at the top of the mountain included in the Ashay Myin, Anaut Myin moun¬tain trekking tour, car parking and shops at the foot of the mountain as well as paving the road from Mya Zedi pagoda to the foot of the mountain.

The Ywangan Tourism De¬velopment Organization (YTO) is also conducting necessary arrangements for visitors in the post-COVID-19 period to the 300 feet tall Tatole Cha waterfall, lo¬cated in the north of the region, Sinsar Pyar Cave, Kyaw Ngat Win Twin Cave, Pyaya Lin Cave, the 7,752 feet tall Ashay Myin Anaut Myin mountain trekking tour; Springwater in the south, Blue Water Lagoon, Taung Kyau wa¬terfall, Alae Chaung eight-tiered waterfall, Main Mya Ye Thakhin Ma Mountain, Eucalyptus-lines lane, Alwe Taung View Point, Myin Myu Viewpoint and the world standard Ywangan Coffee.—Tun Tun Win (IPRD)  
(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyoe Aung)

Tourism promotion of Ywangan is underway. PHOTO: U TUN TUN WIN (IPRD)

NATIONAL
7 JANUARY 2021
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Resumption of supplementary medical classes scheduled for third week of this month

Plans are underway to reopen supplementary classes for the examinations of the final year part 2 at Universities of Medicine across Myanmar in the third week of this month, said Dr Zaw Wai Soe, Rector of University of Medicine 1, Yangon.

He said that the supplementary classes will be reopened with the permission of the Ministry of Health and Sports, and the students must undergo COVID-19 tests.

“The course work of our Universities of Medicine includes Final Year Part I and Part II. In fact, the duration of Final Year Part II is one-and-half years. But, there is a supple¬mentary exam, too,” he said. Supplementary examinations are ones conducted after the students failed their previous examination.

“There are 27 students (who will sit the supplementary examination) at our university. We are informing each of them. Some students are travelling, and we are informing them. When they arrive, they must receive COVID-19 tests. We will teach them for two weeks, and then they will have an a-week break before the exam,” he said.

“In fact, they had already attended the classes,” said Dr Zaw Wai Soe. “Human resources, especially for the health sector, are important. So, the classes will be reopened one by one.”

“Teaching will be conducted only in areas where there is no case of COVID-19. We have prepared to use videoconferencing to teach them. Courses will be taught in a combination of online learning and face to face learning.”

There are about 100 students who will sit the supplementary examinations of the Final Year Part II in Universities of Medicine across Myanmar.

Through the Department of Human Resources for Health, permission has been sought from the Ministry of Health and Sports to allow the universities to reopen the regular classes of the Final Year Part II.—Htet Hlyan  
(Translated by Maung Maung Sue)
KYOBO Life Insurance donates COVID-19 test kits to MoHS

KYOBO Life Insurance based in the Republic of Korea donated the COVID-19 Antigen Test Kits to the Ministry of Health and Sports yesterday afternoon in Yangon.

At the donation ceremony, Director-General for the Department of Medical Research Professor Dr Zaw Than Tun and Deputy Chief of Mission/Minister Counsellor Mr Hahm Jeonghan from the Embassy of the ROK to Myanmar delivered opening speech and Mr Song Chul Yoon from KYOBO Life Insurance explained the reason of donation.

The Director-General received 5,000 COVID-19 Antigen Test Kits worth of US$37,000 from the Deputy Chief of Mission/Minister Counsellor and returned the certificates of honour.—Min Thit (MNA)

(Hindu Families group is seen donating rice boxes to one of the COVID quarantine centres in Yangon yesterday. YE YE)

The COVID-19 Hindu Families Relief Group, organized by the Sanatan Dharma Swayamsevak Sangh (SDSS), donated 570 rice boxes to the COVID-19 quarantine centres on Mindhamma Road, Shwepyitha and Mayangone townships yesterday afternoon. Under the three major objectives, the group has offered rice boxes to the quarantine centres in Yangon, Mandalay, Bago, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi and Mon, medicines and medical supplies to the hospitals and fundamental food supplies to the needy families since March 2020.

The donation of this group has amounted to over K73.8 million until now.—Ye Ye

Hindu well-wishers donate 570 rice boxes to COVID quarantine centres

AYEYARWADY Foundation contributes K2 bln to COVID vaccine national fund

AYEYARWADY Foundation has contributed K2 billion to the COVID-19 vaccine fund raised by the National Committee on COVID-19 Prevention, Control and Treatment.

The foundation is actively taking part in the fight against the pandemic, with a wide range of assistance since March, establishing 1,000-bedded and 375-bedded field hospitals in Yangon and Mandalay and providing the front-line health workers and volunteers with accommodation. The centres have already provided medical treatments to over 10,000 COVID-19 positive cases and conducted medical tests to over 20,000 persons by spending K21.2 billion in total—K15.5 billion from U Zaw Zaw and K5.7 billion from other donors.—Ye Yint Shine

(Myanmar’s COVID-19 positive cases rose to 128,178 after 596 new cases were reported on 6 January 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 128,178 confirmed cases, 2,785 died, 111,401 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA)

596 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 6 January, total figure rises to 128,178

Updated at 8 pm, 6 January 2021

| Total Cases | 128,178 |
| New Cases   | 596     |
| Total Death Tally | 2,785    |
| Discharged from Hospital | 111,401 |

Daily death toll until 8 pm 6-1-2021

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Ministry of Health and Sports
Domestic palm oil prices up as global production down

By Nyein Nyein

ACCORDING to the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers Association, the domestic palm oil price on the rise as it tracks the imported oil price.

“The domestic edible oil price is related to the international price. It has risen because of the rise in the global market,” Chair U San Lin of the association.

Myanmar yearly imports 700,000 tonnes of palm oil from Malaysia and Indonesia to meet local demand. Those countries faced unpredictable weather conditions and the production declined. Consequently, the edible oil price has risen.

“The reasons for rising edible oil price is production slump caused by erratic weather conditions, such as flood and La Nina, coupled with the COVID-19 impacts,” he continued.

Additionally, the temporary storage of palm oil in those countries and tax hike caused other price rise reasons, the association stated.

The palm oil fetches up to US$1,035 per tonne in the international market, while it is priced K2,400 per viss (a viss equals to 1 kg) in the retail market of Myanmar.

During the early outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, palm oil price stood at only US$600-800 per tonne, and the price in the domestic retail market was only at K1,500-1,600 per viss.

To ensure the self-sufficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic, the government purchased over 12,000 tonnes of palm oil for reserves and distributed to the oil tanks in the respective regions and states, the association stated.

“The import volume of palm oil during the pandemic is adequate for the domestic market’s needs. The association urged its member to have an adequate supply of oil during the pandemic. Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers Association and the government cooperated to import 12,000 tonnes of oil for reserves in May 2020. The association has urged the members to store oil in tanks for the needs. We have enough oil to meet the requirements for sure, the association chair affirmed. The domestic consumption of edible oil is estimated at 1 million tonnes per year. The local cooking oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. About 600,000-700,000 tonnes of cooking oil are imported annually to meet the domestic market’s self-sufficiency.”

YSX stock trading dives in 2020

ACCORDING to the annual report released by the exchange, a total of K12.6 billion worth of 1.87 million shares by six listed companies were traded on the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) in 2020, a significant drop compared to 2019.

Over 2.4 million shares from five listed companies, valued K33.29 billion, were traded on the exchange in 2019.

Both continuous trading and block trading on YSX fell in 2020 despite Ever Flow River Group Public Co’s (EFPR) debut, on the exchange on 28 May 2020.

Amid the COVID-19 crisis, Myanmar’s securities market has been able to continue operating without stopping trading.

At present, shares of six listed companies — First Myanmar Investment (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB), First Private Bank (FPB), TMH Telecom Public Co Ltd (TMFB) and the EFPR are being traded on the exchange.

In 2020, the value of stocks traded on the exchange peaked at K1.48 billion in February. In contrast, trading on the exchange registered an all-time low of K552.9 million in November due to the COVID-19 resurgence in Myanmar.

In January 2020, 196,836 shares worth K1.25 billion were traded on the exchange while 188,919 shares, with an estimated value of K1.48 billion, were traded on the exchange in February and K1.42 billion worth 228,913 shares were traded in March respectively. It touched the lowest of K902 million with 173,808 shares in April. It rose to K1.22 billion with 200,416 shares being traded in May. The share volumes traded on the exchange surged to 221,682 in June, with estimated value K1.53 billion and then, it fell to K1 billion with 125,137 shares in July.

In August, the exchange witnessed a low stock trading value at K747.5 million, with 118,859 shares traded. The value slightly rose to K831.67 million, with 85,237 shares on the exchange in September. It continued to drop in October with K6,630 shares worth K657.5 million. The value of shares traded on the exchange sank to the lowest level of K552.9 million in November, with 107,028 shares. The trading value rose to K1.14 billion with 195,519,513 shares in December, the exchange’s monthly report showed.

The price per share of FMI decreased from K1,500 in January 2020 to K9,000 on 30 December 2020. The share price of MTSH remained unchanged at K2,850 last year. MCB’s stock price also dipped to K8,000 from K8,200. The cost of FPB showed a slight drop from K23,000 to K22,500, while TMH slightly fell to K2,800 from K2,850. Nevertheless, the share price of EFPR rose to K2,700 in December.

The exchange has reported its largest declines in both stock trading value at K747.5 million and the number of shares traded at 118,859.

The exchange’s annual report of the YSX.

Furthermore, YSX launched pre-listing board (PLB) on 28 September 2020 to provide unlisted public companies with fund-raising opportunities and build a bridge toward listing on YSX, YSX stated.

The YSX was launched three years ago to improve the private business sector. It disseminates rules and regulations regarding the stock exchange and knowledge of share trading through stock investment seminars. The stock exchange has also sought the government’s support to get more public companies to participate in the stock market and help more institutional investors, such as financing companies, investment banks, and insurance companies, to emerge. — Ko Htet

Domestic gold price rises to K1,336,000 per tical on global cues

FOLLOWING a robust global market trend, the domestic gold price has risen to K1,336,000 per tical (0.578 ounces, or 0.016 kilograms) in early 2021 according to the gold traders.

The gold price rallied to US$1,944 per ounce on 6 January 2021, whereas it stood at US$1,893 per ounce on 31 December 2020, with a rise of $50 within one week.

In Dec-end, yellow metal fetched K1,325,000 per tical in the domestic market. Then, the price showed up tick this year, with K1,316,000 per tical on 6 January 2021.

“Nevertheless, local market relying on international gold prices did not shake up as it is supposed to be, due to the shortage of raw material,” said Chair U Myo Myint of Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YEGA).

At present, the old gold scrap and jewellery are refined into the pure gold bar. The raw material has not come from gold mining as the transportation restriction halted gold mining, the YEGA stated.

The gold market has become sluggish as the pandemic shut down the events like wedding and traditional festivals, gold traders pointed out.

The daily transaction of 50 vises (a viss equals to 1.1kg) of gold was earlier seen. Now, about 5-10 viss are rarely traded per day, according to YGAE.

According to gold traders, the domestic gold was priced with the minimum rate of K1,216,500 (1 July) and the maximum rate of K1,296,500 (27 July). The price moved in the range of K1,286,500 on 13 August and K1,322,500 on 7 August. The local gold reached the lowest level of K1,310,500 (2 September) and the highest level of K1,314,000 (6 September). In October, the rate ranged between K1,307,000 (30 October) and K1,316,500 (21 October). The rate fluctuated between the highest of K1,312,000 (16 November) and the lowest of K1,278,000 (28 November). In December, the pure yellow metal priced moved in the range of K1,275,000 (1 December) and K1,332,000 (28 December). —GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)
Now it’s time to redouble our efforts for aquaculture development

The good old days at the Rangoon University

By Khin Maung Myint

The RUC or Rangoon University is one of the oldest universities in Asia. It was founded in 1857 and is one of the top universities in the region. The RUC has played an important role in the development of Myanmar’s higher education system.

The RUC was one of the first universities in the country to offer programs in science and technology. It has a strong reputation for research and has produced many well-known scientists and engineers.

The RUC has a long tradition of academic excellence and has produced many Nobel Prize winners, including Dr. Aung San Suu Kyi, the former Prime Minister of Myanmar.

The RUC is also known for its beautiful campus, set in the heart of Yangon.

The RUC has a long tradition of academic excellence and has produced many Nobel Prize winners, including Dr. Aung San Suu Kyi, the former Prime Minister of Myanmar.
About 350 acres of special cotton yarn will be grown in mid-February, in this financial year for the local farmers from Mandalay region to produce and use the high-quality cotton seeds, according to the Mandalay Region Agriculture Department.

"About 350 acres of cotton yarn will be grown to produce and use good quality cotton seeds per the water and soil conditions in the region. It will also be grown for the local cotton growers to reduce the production costs and increase the yield and promote the quality of cotton," said Daw Si Si Phone, Assistant Director of Mandalay Region Agriculture Department.

"Our Agriculture Department is working to increase the rural farmers’ income and ensure the production of high-quality products. The cotton yarn is widely used in the region. It was grown as the special zone for yielding the excellent quality products. The cotton yarns are planted with irrigated water; and it is convenient to supply the water in the same compound of the plantation.

The cotton yarn will be cultivated in four townships. Also, the agriculture technologies will be provided to the local growers to promote high-quality cotton yield.

A total of 350 acres of cotton yarn special zone will be grown in the Mandalay region’s four townships, including 50 acres in Meiktila and 100 acres in Wuntho townships of Wuntho district and 100 acres each in Yamethin and Pyaywwe townships of Yamethin District. Only Shwe Taung 8 and Shwe Taung 10 cotton species will be grown in a special cotton zone. — Ko Thwin (Mandalay)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Only new membership cardholders allowed to enter commodity depot beginning from 1 April

ONLY the new membership cardholders will be allowed to enter the commodity depot for trading beginning from 1 April, according to a statement of the Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (YRCCI). The commodity depot was opened in 2020 and pay in the annual fees for 2021.

Those who have already paid in for 2020 do not need to pay in for the annual fees for 2021.

"The exchange ground can accommodate only 300 or 400 lorries," said Vice-Chair U Aung Thet Oo.

"Due to the limited space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorial, analysis or reports please email aunghan@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

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The good old days at the Rangoon University

FROM PAGE-9

I remembered two very rare opportunities we received. Many famous foreign entertainment groups used to visit our country in those days. They used to entertain at the Jubilee Hall on the Shwe Dagon Pagoda Road. The entrance fees were exorbitant and out of reach for most of us. However, on one occasion the famous American Ballet Dance group, the Martha Graham Ballet Group from the US entertained for the university students, free of charge at the Convocation Hall. Another occasion was when the world famous Benny Goodman Jazz Band, also from the US entertained us in the open space between the Science Block and the “Grande Thitheque pin”, in an open air setting.

Another attraction for the hostel students was the “Tazaungdaing” lighting festival. During these festivities hostel students, mostly males and sometimes accompanied by some lady hostel students went to the 15th Street in the “Lamnawdaw” township late in the evenings. There we used to loiter leisurely among the cartoon posters displayed along the colorfully lit street. We enjoyed reading the cartoons drawn by famous cartoonists and also by some upstarts. They were really entertaining. Another popular place to visit during those festivals was the “Suburban Street” (now Ngu War) in the Ahlone township where every house in the street were decorated with colourful lights.

This article will not be complete if I leave out the annual State and Division soccer tournaments held at the Aung San Stadium. For us, who hailed from all over the country, these tournaments provided us the rare opportunities to watch them ‘live’ instead of crowding around vintage radios and listen to the commentators’ incomprehensible comments. On such occasions the RU students, mostly hostel students both male and female would proceed in organized groups to the Aung San Stadium to cheer on their respective State or Division teams.

As this piece is neither a chronicle nor anything resembling to depict a rough sketch of the university environs of my university days, some important facts and names may have missed being mentioned. Also some facts may lack accuracy. However, I sincerely hope that as a nostalgic reminiscence of those good old days at the RU, these flaws would be excusable and that it will bring back the fond memories of the past to many of the alumni of the old RU.

PANDEMIC: GLOBAL NEWS

Impasse over WHO virus mission ‘not just a visa issue’: China

DELAYS to a long-planned mission by WHO experts to China to investigate the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic are “not just a visa issue”, Beijing said Wednesday.

A year after the outbreak started, international health experts were expected to arrive in China this week for a highly politicized visit to explore the beginnings of the virus, which first emerged late last year in the city of Wuhan.

The sensitive mission has been beset by delays and politics, with fears of a whitewash by Beijing.

Foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters Beijing had not yet finalized permission for the team’s arrival, saying he was “very disappointed with this news” – in a rare rebuke of Beijing from the UN body.

On Tuesday the head of the World Health Organization told reporters Beijing had not yet finalized permission for the team’s arrival, saying he was “very disappointed with this news” – in a rare rebuke of Beijing from the UN body.

Earlier this week Chinese authorities refused to confirm the exact dates and details of the visit, a sign of the enduring sensitivity of the mission.

“The issue of origin-tracing is incredibly complicated. To ensure the work of the international expert group to come to China”, said Hua.

She said the country is “doing its best to create good conditions for the international expert group to come to China”.

On Tuesday the head of the World Health Organization told reporters Beijing had not yet finalized permission for the team’s arrival, saying he was “very disappointed with this news” – in a rare rebuke of Beijing from the UN body.

For the international expert group to come to China with the sensitivity of the mission.

ORIGINS OF VIRUS

Medical workers are checking a patient’s CT image with a movable CT machine at the “Wuhan Livingroom” makeshift hospital in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province, Feb. 23, 2020. PHOTO: GAO XIANG/XINHUA

PANDEMIC: GLOBAL NEWS

Pandemic rains on Spain’s glittering Epiphany parades

FOR children, it’s the most wonderful time of the year, when Spaniards turn out to welcome the gift-laden Three Kings. But this year’s glittering parades have been tormented by the pandemic.

In Spain, it’s not Father Christmas nor Christmas Eve that beguiles all the children, but the Melchior, Caspar and Balthasar who arrive bearing gifts on the night of January 5. Every year, millions flock to the streets across Spain to watch the fairytales parades welcoming the royal visitors, with music, dancing and bucket-loads of sweets that are hurled into the excited crowds.

But with all outdoor gatherings banned to slow the spread of the virus this year, local authorities across the country have been scrambling for creative ways to keep the magic of “Reyes” alive.

Kings sail into Barcelona

In Barcelona, organizers have been working on a detailed plan “since the summer”, fearing even back then that life would not yet have returned to normal come January.

“It’s a really traditional celebration – total madness, a real family event with dancing, lights, floats and everyone packing the streets to watch,” said Esteve Carames, in charge of Barcelona’s Reyes festivities, which normally sees 700,000 people massed along the three-kilometre (two mile) route.

This year, however, the Three Kings will be arriving by boat. The royal landing will be broadcast live from Barcelona’s port on TV, after which they will screen footage of a parade recorded in advance.

Barcelona has also set up an open-air amusement park based on The Three Kings. With a capacity for 400 visitors, it has lights, music and scenery, but no actors and nothing that can be touched.

SOURCE: AFP

SOURCE: AFP

PHOTO: GAO XIANG/XINHUA

7 JANUARY 2021
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

ARTICLE/PANDEMIC NEWS
Difficult 2020 ends on an improving note for US carmakers

GENERAL Motors and Toyota reported strong US sales at the end of 2020 on Tuesday, reflecting surprisingly robust consumer demand that mitigated the sales drop for the full year in the wake of Covid-19.

The pair are the top two automakers by US market share, and both scored higher sales in the fourth quarter despite notching double-digit sales declines for all of 2020. US auto sales for 2020 are projected to drop 13.3 per cent to 14.4 million – which would make it the worst year since at least 2012 – according to a December forecast from Cox Automotive.

Still, those numbers are much better than analysts feared after the US car market almost completely froze during spring lockdowns as the country continued with a spiralling coronavirus crisis.

“Everybody is excited the market has done as well as it has,” said Charles Chesbrough, senior economist at Cox Automotive. “We’re getting back to normal much more quickly than expected.” While the pandemic has caused elevated unemployment and long lines at food pantries, other consumers have more cash for cars and other big-ticket items due to less spending on travel and other discretionary goods, and many have benefited from federal stimulus funds.

“If you haven’t lost your job, the government has been giving away money,” said Chesbrough, who thinks the industry could benefit in the second half of 2021 from a recovering US economy bolstered by vaccinations and additional federal spending.

Chesbrough said auto companies have been able to keep selling incentives in check due to limited inventories. However, sales could sag in the first quarter if the worsening pandemic crimps demand.

SOURCE: AFP

Apple ties exec bonuses to social, environmental values

APPLE is making environmental and social values factors it will weigh when calculating bonuses for top executives, according to a regulatory filing on Tuesday.

The change taking effect this year is intended to motivate Apple executives “to meet exceptionally high standards of values-driven leadership in addition to delivering strong financial results,” the Silicon Valley technology titan said in proxy documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Financial targets and thresholds for executive bonuses at Apple will not change, the iPhone maker said.

“Beginning in 2021, an environmental, social, and governance modifier based on Apple Values and other key community initiatives will be incorporated into our annual cash incentive program,” Apple said in the filing.

Living up to Apple’s stated values regarding sustainable energy, workplace diversity and other environmental and social issues will be among factors considered when deciding whether bonuses should be increased or decreased by as much as 10 per cent, according to the company.

“We’ve led the industry in reducing our environmental footprint for years and are committed to one day sourcing 100 per cent recycled and renewable materials across all of our products and packaging,” Apple said in a section of the filing outlining its values.

SOURCE: AFP

Beijing slams ‘bullying’ US over Trump order on Chinese apps

BEIJING accused the US on Wednesday of “bullying” after President Donald Trump ordered a ban on a series of Chinese apps involving Alipay, WeChat Pay and other apps linked to Chinese companies, saying they could route user information to the government in Beijing.

Foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said Wednesday the move was an example of “bullying” by the US, and accused Washington of “stretching the concept of national security”.

“This harms both itself and others,” Trump’s executive order is to take effect in 45 days – just weeks after he is replaced by President-elect Joe Biden on January 20.

But a senior administration official said the order and its implementation have not been discussed with the “potential incoming Biden administration.”

The apps targeted by the new ban were chosen because of the extremely high number of downloads, which meant tens of millions of users could be at risk of having their data harvested, according to the administration official.

Trump’s order specifically named apps including Alipay, QQ Wallet, Tencent QQ, WeChat Pay and WPS Office. Alipay and Tencent did not respond to queries.

Previous executive orders aimed at banning TikTok – which is owned by China-based ByteDance – were derailed by court rulings indicating Trump had overstepped his legal authority.

Hua said the new order would “of course have some impact on related Chinese companies, but more important might be that it damages the interests of American consumers and the US.”

“The US talks about a free market economy and fair competition, but how does it behave?” she said.

SOURCE: AFP

FANS of British fare in France have suffered an unsavoury Brexit shock – grocery retailer Marks and Spencer hasn’t been able to stock its popular food items due to new customs systems have disrupted decades of frictionless trade.

“I came especially for their broccoli and spinach,” said Sarah, who said she works in a company who thinks the industry could benefit in the second half of 2021 from a recovering US economy bolstered by vaccinations and additional federal spending.

Chesbrough said auto companies have been able to keep selling incentives in check due to limited inventories. However, sales could sag in the first quarter if the worsening pandemic crimps demand.

SOURCE: AFP

Beijing accuses US of ‘bullying’ over Trump’s order on Chinese apps

US President Donald Trump has ordered a ban on Alipay, WeChat Pay and other apps linked to Chinese companies, saying they could route user information to the government in Beijing.

PHOTO: AFP/FILE
Iran says South Korea holding its $7b funds ‘hostage’

This undated picture taken in an unknown location and released on Tuesday by Yonhap news agency in Seoul shows South Korean Navy’s destroyer ROKS Choi Young.

Photo: Yonhap/ AFP

Iran on Tuesday accused South Korea of holding $7 billion of its funds “hostage” but stressed that Tehran’s seizure of a Korean tanker in Gulf waters was not a tit-for-tat move. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps on Monday sent out naval speedboats to seize the Hankuk Chemi with 20 crew aboard, accusing it of “breaking maritime environmental law.”

South Korea has demanded the release of the ship and dispatched its anti-piracy unit to the region.

“We are not hostage-takers,” Iran’s government spokesman Ali Rabiei told a press conference. “We are used to such allegations. But... it is the government of Korea that has taken over $7billion of ours hostage on baseless grounds”.

He added that the seizure was based on a court order after the tanker had “caused oil pollution in the Persian Gulf. It was warned beforehand, and (the seizure) request was a technical one.”

South Korea will dispatch a delegation to Iran soon to resolve the tanker situation “through bilateral negotiations,” said its foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khazan.

South Korea’s vice-foreign minister Choi Jong-kun will go ahead with a previously planned three-day trip to Tehran early next week, the spokesman added.

Source: AFP

Claims Day Notice M.V Asia Energy

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V Asia Energy Voy. No. (2012) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7-1-2023 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIT/MITT where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301928

Shipping Agency Department Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S New Highest Shipping Pte Ltd

Claims Day Notice M.V IAL 001 Voy. No. (088N/S)

Agent For: M/S Regional Container Lines

Claims Day Notice M.V MATHU BHUM Voy. No. (270W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MATHU BHUM Voy. No. (270W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 7-1-2023 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of PHT 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 Golden Sea Shipping Pte. Ltd.
New Venezuela parliament sworn in, US-backed Guaido out

A new Venezuelan parliament was sworn in Tuesday with President Nicolas Maduro’s parallel legislature. The new assembly was denounced as “a fraudulently elected body” by outgoing US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who said in a statement Washington recognized Guaido as “the legitimate president of Venezuela”.

“We consider this group to be illegitimate and will not recognize it nor its pronounce- ments,” he said of the new parliament which was also rejected by Colombia, Brazil and Uruguay.

Members of the Lima Group, consisting of more than a dozen Latin American nations and Canada, said they did “not recognize the result of an election” that violates the National Assembly’s “constitutional right to meet without intimidation or interference” to elect its president and governing board.

A total 256 of the National Assembly’s 277 seats are in the hands of Maduro’s United Socialist Party of Venezuela and its allies after December 6 elections boycotted by the opposition, who claimed fraud.

The chamber, which has a five-year mandate, previously had an opposition majority with Guaido as its speaker since 2019.

After eight years of Mali campaign, France seeks exit strategy

EIGHT years after France sent troops to Mali to prevent jihadists from overrunning the country, it faces tough choices over how to keep pursuing Islamist extremists without becoming bogged down in a potentially unwinnable war.

Five French soldiers have been killed by roadside bombs in Mali over the past 10 days, bringing to 50 the number of troops killed across the Sahel since France launched a campaign to clear northern Mali of jihadists in January 2013.

The latest victims included Sergeant Yvonne Huynh, the first female soldier killed since the French intervention began.

Her death Saturday, claimed by a group linked to al-Qaeda, coincided with a massacre across the border in western Niger, where unidentified gunmen killed around 100 villagers in one of the region’s worst atrocities.

These deaths – and disputed claims Tuesday from villagers in central Mali that up to 20 wedding guests were killed in an air strike – have clouded recent successes chalked up by France’s 5,100-member Barkhane counterterrorism force and its African partners.

Shifting public mood

In the past year, the French have killed the leader of the notorious al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb group, Abdelmalek Droukdal, as well as one of the military leaders of the al-Qaeda affiliated Group to Support Islam and Muslims (GSMI).

This marks a significant shift in the campaign against the jihadist threat in the Sahel region, where France, the EU’s leading member state, had to ask for forces from its African partners to share the burden.

France is now looking to conclude its costly military effort in West Africa and start reducing its presence in the Sahel, where it has more than 5,000 soldiers deployed.

A French soldier on an exercise in Burkina Faso uses a bomb detector as he searches for a roadside device, one of the deadliest tactics used by jihadists.

NORTH WEST POINT IMMIGRATION DETENTION CENTRE

Australia vows to ‘restore order’ on immigration detention island

UNREST broke out at an Australian immigration detention centre, authorities and NGOs said Wednesday following reports the Christmas Island facility had been set alight by frustrated detainees.

The Australian Border Force said an operation was underway “to restore order after a disturbance” at the North West Point Immigration Detention Centre on the Australian territory in the Indian Ocean.

“A small number of detainees caused some damage to the facility overnight and con- tinue to be non-compliant,” the government agency said in a statement, adding there were no reports of any injuries.

Advocacy group Refugee Action Coalition said reports from inside the centre suggest- ed two compounds had been set ablaze overnight Tuesday into Wednesday as tensions boiled over.

“While the extent of the damage is not known, the glare from the fires and the extent of the smoke in the air indicates the fires are substantial,” the group said.

SOURCE: AFP

TIME FOR RETREAT?

France’s Barkhane military campaign against Islamist extremists in the Sahel has claimed one of two crunch US Senate runoffs.

Democrats need both seats to preserve an unwinnable war.

It will be the eighth swearing-in ceremony the Bushes have attended, Ford said.

SOURCE: AFP

WORLD

7 JANUARY 2021

The Globe New Light of Myanmar

MOST OUTSTANDING VOTES IN CLOSE RACE

Democrats claim victory in one of two crunch US Senate runoffs.

Democrats claimed victory in one of two crunch US Senate runoffs on Wednesday morn- ing, with candidate Raphael Warnock saying he “believed he had won.”

Democrats were also hopeful of winning a second seat in the knife-edge runoff that will determine the balance of power in the US Senate under Joe Biden’s presidency.

The hard-fought races have brought the international spotlight onto this southern state, nine weeks after the most tumultuous American election in two decades.

Democrats need both their candidates, Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock, to prevail in order to snatch the Senate from the Republicans. Outgoing President Donald Trump’s party needs either Kelly Loeffler or David Perdue to hold their seat to preserve its majority.

SOURCE: AFP

WASHINGTON, DC

BIPARTISAN SUPPORT

George W. Bush to attend Biden inauguration: spokesman

REPUBLICAN former US president George W. Bush will attend the inauguration of Democrats Joe Biden and Kamala Harris in Washington on January 20, his chief of staff said Tuesday.

“President and Mrs Bush look forward to returning to the Capitol for the swearing in of President Biden and Vice President Harris,” Freddy Ford tweeted.

Witnessing the peaceful transfer of power is a hallmark of our democracy that never gets old,” he added, in a seeming jab at President Donald Trump who refuses to concede defeat and has not confirmed if he will attend Biden’s inauguration.

It will be the eighth swearing-in ceremony the Bushes have attended, Ford said.

SOURCE: AFP

NEW YORK

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SOURCE: AFP

NEW YORK

WORLD

7 JANUARY 2021

BRIEF

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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SOURCE: AFP
CONGRESS OF THE WORKERS’ PARTY OF KOREA (WPK)

DPRK top leader reviews work as 8th Party Congress opens

THE eighth Congress of the Workers’ Party of Korea of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) opened here on Tuesday, with top DPRK leader Kim Jong Un delivering an opening address, reported official media on Wednesday.

The congress was convened in order to comprehensively and strictly review the work of the party’s central committee, clearly reconfirm the exact orientation and duty in its struggle for winning a big-leap forward in the development of the Party and socialist construction.”

Members of the leadership body of the party’s seventh central committee and delegates elected by the party’s organizations at all levels attended the congress.

The congress elected its presidium and secretariat, and elected Kim Jong Un to the presidium, the report said. According to its agenda, the congress will review the work of the party’s central committee and the Central Audit Commission, and elect the party’s central leadership body.

This Party Congress, which may run for several days, is the second one under Kim. The seventh Party Congress was convened in May 2016.

SOURCE: KCNA/XINHUA

NEW YEAR PERIOD

JR passengers down 68% in holiday period to record low due to virus

A platform for shinkansen bullet trains is nearly empty at JR Tokyo Station on Jan. 3, 2021, amid the coronavirus pandemic. In ordinary years, train stations are crowded on Jan. 3 as many people return from holidays.

THE number of people using the shinkansen and conventional train services operated by Japan Railways Group Inc. plunged 68 percent during the year-end and New Year period from a year earlier to 4.679 million, marking the lowest level since comparable data were made available in 1991, six JR companies said Wednesday.

The margin of fall was the biggest on record as well, with JR companies citing the novel coronavirus pandemic and the suspension of some services due to heavy snow in Japan’s northwest as reasons. In the 12-day period through Tuesday, the number of passengers in the Tohoku area on the Tokyo to Sendai line fell 67 percent to 252,677.

Shinkansen services were suspended for the entire week between Dec. 17 and 24.

“Tsunami” that would only be used to fight the coronavirus, sparking privacy concerns Tuesday about the scheme.

The city-state has a programme called “Trace Together” for tracking close contacts of Covid-19 patients, that works via a phone app and a dongle.

Take-up was initially slow due to privacy worries but rose to almost 80 percent of residents after government assurances and a decision to make its use mandatory for accessing some public places like malls.

However, a senior official admitted in parliament that police could “obtain any data”—including information gathered through the contact-tracing programme—in the course of a criminal investigation.

Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan said later that, to his knowledge, police had so far only accessed contact-tracing data on one occasion during a murder probe.

SOURCE: AFP

PRIVACY CONCERNS

Singapore admits police can access contact-tracing data

SINGAPORE has admitted data collected for contact-tracing can be accessed by police despite earlier assurances it would only be used to fight the coronavirus, sparking privacy concerns Tuesday about the scheme.

The city-state has a programme called “Trace Together” for tracking close contacts of Covid-19 patients, that works via a phone app and a dongle.

Take-up was initially slow due to privacy worries but rose to almost 80 percent of residents after government assurances and a decision to make its use mandatory for accessing some public places like malls.

However, a senior official admitted in parliament that police could “obtain any data”—including information gathered through the contact-tracing programme—in the course of a criminal investigation.

SOURCE: AFP

DECARBONIZATION

China to launch carbon emissions trading scheme next month

CHINA'S delayed carbon trading system will start operating in February, the environment ministry has said, as the world’s biggest polluter takes steps towards decarbonizing its economy by 2060.

The ministry issued rules on Tuesday allowing provincial governments to set pollution caps for big power businesses for the first time.

Firms can buy the right to pollute from others who have a lower carbon footprint, but the programme is expected to drive overall emissions by making it more costly to do so.

“This is one of the most exciting developments for the world’s largest carbon market in the recent rollercoaster year,” said Zhang Jianyu, vice president of the environmental Defence Fund China, which has consulted with the government on emissions trading.

However, 60 per cent of power in China is still provided by coal despite ambitious renewable energy targets, and experts warn the powerful coal lobby will be pressing hard for favourable carbon caps.

Under the new rules, more than 2,200 firms that emit over 26,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year can start trading their emission quotas from February.

China's nationwide system is expected to eclipse that of the European Union to become the world’s largest emissions trading scheme (ETS).

Beijing has pledged to peak emissions before 2030 and become carbon neutral 30 years later. But it pared back initial plans to cut emissions from seven other industries including aviation, steel and petrochemical manufacturing.

“When Europe started its trading scheme in 2005, there were issues in the first phase where members were kind of caving in to lobbying pressure,” said Li Shuo from Greenpeace China.

SOURCE: AFP

OBITUARY

U Tun Maung (a)

Reggie Tun Maung 92 years


SOURCE: XINHUA
Ten teams to compete in Myanmar National League I in 2021

A total of ten teams will participate in the 2021 season of the Myanmar National League I, according to the official decision made by the Myanmar National Football Committee meeting held yesterday by videoconferencing.

The meeting was joined by U Zaw Zaw, President of the Myanmar National Football Federation and Myanmar National League Committee, football officials, MNL Club owners and chairmen.

During the meeting, football officials focused on Myanmar football development and the current situation of the Myanmar National League football teams.

According to the unanimous decision of the meeting, there will be ten teams to be included in the Myanmar National League I and Shan United, Hanthawady United, Ayeyawady United, Yangon United, Yadanaarbon FC, Rakhine United, Sagaing United, Chinland FC and Myawaddy FC, were selected according to the MNL Regulations.

Football authorities also decided to hold the MNL League II tournament with a total of eight teams, including Dagon FC.

The 2021 season of the MNL League I tourney is scheduled to hold from April to September, depending on the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021.

Next, the MNL League II tourney will be held from May to August, and the Bogyoke Aung San Shield football tournament will run from June to September.

In the meantime, Women’s League football tournament will be launched from April to July, and Youth League (U-21) is scheduled to run from May to November, according to the MNL online meeting.—Lynn Thit (Tgi)

BELING — In January 2017 Brazil international Oscar moved from Chelsea to Shanghai SIPG for an Asian record 60 million euros, prompting a warning from Arsene Wenger that Chinese clubs were distorting the global transfer market.

But four years later it is a very different story after the Chinese Football Association imposed a series of measures to cool extravagant spending in the Chinese Super League, markedly dimming its star power.

Six months after Oscar’s arrival the CPA slapped a 100 per cent tax on incoming foreigners, with the levy going to developing Chinese youth players.

Then last month the CPA said that overseas players cannot earn more than three million euros a year. Domestic players also saw their salaries capped.

“CFL club expenditure is about 10 times higher than South Korea’s K League and three times higher than Japan’s J-League,” said CFA president Chen Xuyuan.

“But our national team is lagging far behind. The bubbles not only affect the present of Chinese football, but also its future.”

All players must now have new contracts, according to the state news agency Xinhua, adding that teams can sign “supplemental agreements” with players whose existing deals were above the cap.

That means Oscar, the 29-year-old attacking midfielder, will continue to earn more than 20 million euros a year for the time being.

—AFP

LONDON — Ole Gunnar Solskjaer on Tuesday hit back at Jurgen Klopp’s jibes about Manchester United’s penalty record as the Old Trafford boss claimed Premier League managers are trying to influence referees.

Liverpool boss Klopp highlighted the large number of penalties given to United since Solskjaer took charge in a rant that following the champions not getting a spot-kick in Monday’s defeat at Southampton.

Klopp claimed United have had more spot-kicks in two years under Solskjaer than Liverpool have in his entire five-and-a-half year reign. United have been awarded six league penalties this season compared to the five won by Klopp’s men.

They have been given 42 in all competitions since Solskjaer took over in December 2018 compared to Liverpool’s 19 in the same period.—AFP

LONDON — Son Heung-min fired Tottenham into the League Cup final as the South Korean’s decisive goal sealed a 2-0 win over Championship side Brentford on Tuesday.

Moussa Sissoko put Jose Mourinho’s team ahead in the semi-final at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

But Tottenham were still searching for the knockout blow against spirited Brentford until Son netted with 20 minutes remaining.

Tottenham will face Manchester United or holders Manchester City, who meet in the second semi-final on Wednesday, at Wembley on April 25.

It will be the club’s first domestic final since losing the 2015 League Cup showpiece against Chelsea, and their first final in any competition since the 2019 Champions League defeat against Liverpool in Madrid.

Mourinho, appointed in November 2019, is hoping to lead Tottenham to their first major trophy since the 2008 League Cup.

He has already won the competition four times, landing his first silverware in English football in 2005 with Chelsea, where he won it twice more before a further success at Manchester United in 2017.

Mourinho is the third manager to reach a League Cup final with three different clubs, following Ron Atkinson and Ron Saunders.—AFP

Son, Sissoko send Spurs into League Cup final

Son Heung-min celebrates with teammates after he scores his team’s second goal during Tottenham Hotspur’s South Korean striker Son Heung-Min (R) celebrates with teammates after he scores his team’s second goal during the English League Cup semi final first leg football match between Tottenham Hotspur and Brentford at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London, on January 5, 2021. —PHOTO: GLYN KIRK / POOL / AFP

Tottenham Hotspur (South Korea) celebrate with teammates after scoring their side's second goal against Manchester United during their English Premier League football match in London on January 3, 2021. —PHOTO: GLYN KIRK / POOL / AFP

Hantharwady United striker Francis Emeka (in dark blue) attempts to breach the defensive line of the Yangon United in a previous season MNL match at YUSC Stadium on 19 September 2020. —PHOTO: MNL