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VP U Myint Swe holds meeting on completion of renovation works of Bagan, Nyaung-U temples

VICE-President U Myint Swe chaired the 5th coordination meeting yesterday on the completion of renovation works at ancient temples, pagodas and religious buildings in the earthquake-stricken Bagan and Nyaung-U areas.

In his opening speech, the Vice-President explained the works of the steering committee, the formation of two work committees and five sub-committees, as well as consultant and expert teams which are working with the international cooperation committees, renovating the sacred sites hit by a major quake on 24 August 2016.

He also said that a total of 388 damaged temples and stupas have been renovated in the past four years and that the extensive renovation to Thatbinnyu temple will be carried out under the nine-year project with assistance from the People's Republic of China.

Some restoration works were also conducted at the other 110 temples and pagodas in the same period.

The Vice-President also



Vice-President U Myint Swe presides over the fifth meeting on the completion of renovation works of Bagan, Nyaung-U Temples, on 26 January 2021. **PHOTO: MNA**

advised on the proper management of funds donated by local and foreign well-wishers for the renovation works at the religious sites to ensure resistance

against future disasters, and to strengthen security measures in the Bagan ancient heritage site.

He also expressed thanks to all the individuals and organiza-

tions concerned for their participation in the renovation efforts.

Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, secretary of the

steering committee, reported on renovation works conducted in collaboration with the relevant ministries, UNESCO, local and

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Announcement on launching of COVID-19 vaccination programme in Myanmar

MYANMAR will kick-start COVID-19 vaccination programme on 27 January 2021.

The government worked to acquire the high-quality and reliable COVID-19 vaccines in various ways such as proposals to the COVAX facility, purchase by the State Fund and government-to-government friendship programmes.

On 22 January 2021, Myanmar received 1.5 million doses of Covishield/AstraZeneca in terms of friendly relations between the two neighbouring countries.

Moreover, 2 million doses of Covishield/AstraZeneca, out of 30 million doses, purchased by the State Fund will arrive in Myanmar in the first week of February, followed by the arrival of vaccines from COVAX facility in March and the purchased vaccines

by the State Fund in April respectively.

The vaccination programme will begin for the health workers and volunteers in the front-line of COVID-19 control measures on 27 January 2021, for the Pyithu Hluttaw representatives on 29 January 2021 and for the Amyotha Hluttaw representatives and the Tatmadaw Hluttaw representatives on 30 January 2021.

Then, the nationwide vaccination programme will start on 5 February 2021, and it will reach members of Union Government, region/state government and the public.

The programme will prioritize the elderly persons, people with the underlying diseases and those who are vulnerable to the diseases living in the townships under the stay-at-home measures. Among these

townships, the programme will also prioritize people in townships and areas with a higher rate of infection in relation to the availability of doses for the vaccine.

The following vaccines will be used for the remaining persons in prioritized order.

“We need to protect ourselves in line with the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Sports, such as the basic rules of wearing masks, washing hands, avoiding crowds and observing social distancing.”

(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's speech on updated situations of COVID-19 containment measures on 21-1-2021)

Ministry of Health and Sports

Cash contribution for COVID-19 Vaccination Fund can be made through MoPFI website

1. The contribution of cash for COVID-19 Vaccination Fund can be made via the website of the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry (<http://www.mopfi.gov.mm>) in the following ways.

(a) MPU Debit/Credit Card of local banks

(b) Visa/Master Credit of local banks

(c) Visa/Master Debit & Credit Card of foreign banks

(d) Mobile Wallets such as CB-pay, KBZ-pay, OK\$ through QR Code (more mobile wallets will be available)

(e) Internet/mobile banking App of KBZ, CB, AYA, UAB and MAB (more internet/mobile banking Apps will be available)

(f) Over-the-counter at Supermarkets such as City Mart, Marketplace, Sein Gay Har, Aeon, Orange; mini-marts and convenience stores such as Denko Mini Market, Fun Fun Mart, ABC and Oasis; Mobile Wallet agents such as M-Pitesan, True Money and MyTelPay; Mobile Phone shops such as Any Call, e-City,
- Lu Gyi Min and My Fone; Wai Yan Electronics Sale Centre; the shops available Near Me logo.

2. Therefore, cash contribution can be made at the above-mentioned platforms electronically, in addition to the branches of Myanma Economic Bank and Myanma Agricultural Development Bank and other local private banks.

Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry

Announcement on fund establishment to purchase COVID-19 vaccines

1. The National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on 30-12-2020 formed a Fund Management Sub-committee on the Purchase of COVID-19 Vaccines. The sub-committee has opened the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund at the Myanma Economic Bank in Nay Pyi Taw as follows:

(a) Fund for purchase of COVID-19 vaccines (Foreign Currency Account No. EDC 600012). The bank account will be initially deposited with USD250 million, equivalent to about K338 billion from State-funding.

(b) Fund for purchase of COVID-19 vaccines (Myanmar Currency Account No. OA 013733). The bank account is initially deposited K1 billion (K1,000 million) from State-funding.
2. Therefore, organizations and people (local/ foreign countries) who want to contribute cash donation for the purchase of vaccines, can donate any type of foreign currency to the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund (Foreign Currency Account No. EDC 600012) at the Myanma Economic Bank (Nay Pyi Taw), and can donate Myanmar Kyat to the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund (Myanmar Currency Account No. OA 013733).

3. The potential well-wishers can contact the following phone numbers:
Director-General (067 3410156)
Treasury Department (067 3410158)

Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry

Locals expect Thanaka marketplace at Mahamuni pagoda

MYANMA Thanaka Association will submit a proposal to Mandalay regional government to create a Thanaka marketplace at Mandalay's famed Mahamuni pagoda.

The members of this association have expected to develop a designated area where the travellers to Mandalay can study the culture of Thanaka and buy Thanaka.

"Mandalay Mahamuni pagoda is famous in upper Myanmar, and the local and foreign travellers

pay visits daily during the peak season. So, the government should create a place for the international travellers to know the Thanaka culture and to buy the Thanaka products," said U Kyaw Moe, chairman of the association.

The officials will cooperate with the thanaka traders to call for the government to designate a thanaka marketplace in the pagoda compound where thanaka is mainly used in a daily face-washing ceremony at Mahamuni



Myanma Thanaka is seen applying on the cheeks. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MANDALAY SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)

ni Buddha image.

"There are about 20 thanaka sellers at the pagoda's stairway. The vendors have been selling there for 30 years. They are also members of our association. We want the government to create a place for the traders. But there is still no plan to designate a specific place. We sent a letter to the regional government before COVID-19 outbreak. We want them to designate a place in the pagoda compound," he said.

Thanaka is a main symbol of Mandalay and used in the face-washing ceremony of Mahamuni Buddha image since years ago. The thanaka traders will submit the proposal to the regional government for the second time to create a thanaka marketplace. The members of thanaka association will also discuss with the chair of the pagoda trustee.—Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



Myanma Thanaka is being sold at a marketplace. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MANDALAY SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)



Myanmar women and men are seen grinding the thanaka on Kyauk Pyin(stone slabs). PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG (MANDALAY SUB-PRINTING HOUSE)

We will also inform our programmes to the public about the reason for prioritizing the specific groups

In the meantime, the first thing we will do is to begin the vaccination programme next week for the frontline health workers and volunteers. At this stage, we will be able to identify difficulties and make better plans in the vaccination programme. The key government officials, civil services personnel and Hluttaw representatives will be included in the following step. We have targeted to conclude these steps in the next week or 10 days. Depending on available vaccines, we will expand the vaccination programme to control the disease in important places for the resumption of our government machinery. We will also inform our programmes to the public about the reason for prioritizing the specific groups.

(Excerpt from Chairperson of National -Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's speech on updated situations of COVID-19 containment measures on 22 January 2021)



VP U Myint Swe holds meeting on completion of renovation works of ...



Vice-President chairs the online 5th coordination meeting on the completion of renovation works of Bagan, Nyaung-U temples, yesterday. PHOTO:MNA

FROM PAGE-1 works. Chief Minister of Mandalay Region Government Dr Zaw Myint Maung discussed tourism

promotion plans and development works for the Bagan area. Permanent Secretary U Tun Ohn and Director-General from the Department of Archaeology and National Museum from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture reported on works com-

pleted during the past four years, the formation of a management committee on the UNESCO World Heritage Site Bagan, plans to develop the Safe City Solution for Bagan, funds and expenditures for the renovation works. Officials from the respective committees also reported on future plans in their respective sectors. The Vice-President gave advice and comments based on the discussions to ensure coordination at the meeting which resulted in nine resolutions, including the resolution to change the name of the committee to 'Cultural Heritage Renovation Steering Committee on World Heritage Site in Bagan'.—MNA (Translated by Aung Khin)

Myanmar nationals brought back home from RoK by relief flight

THE 41st relief flight of Myanmar Airways International (MAI) organized by the Myanmar Embassy in Seoul landed at Yangon International Airport bringing back a total of 85 Myanmar nationals after they were stranded in the Republic of Korea yesterday evening. Among them, 67 people were from the RoK, 4 from the USA, 4 from Italy, 1 from Switzerland, 1 from Egypt, 4 from Norway, 3 from Germany and 1 from Brazil. The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Yangon Region government arranged 14-day quarantine at specific places or designated hotels, followed by the 7-day home quarantine. To bring back the Myanmar citizens and Myanmar seamen who are stranded in foreign countries by relief flights and chartered flights in accordance with the instructions from National-Level Central Committee on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cooperated with the relevant ministries and Myanmar embassies from respective countries.—MNA (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Union Minister for Defence receives UNHCR Representative



Union Minister for Defence Lt-Gen Sein Win receives UNHCR Representative Ms Hai Kyung Jun at the former's office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO:MNA UNION Minister for Defence Services Lt-Gen Sein Win received UNHCR Representative Ms Hai Kyung Jun at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon. At the meeting, they discussed the relief assistance of UN agency for Rakhine State and other areas of the country.—MNA (Translated by Aung Khin)

Land administration central committee holds 32nd coordination meeting

THE Central Committee on Administration of Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Lands organized its 32nd coordination meeting yesterday.

Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Thu, in his capacity as the Chairman of the committee discussed the necessary assistance for the organizations and those who related in farmland issue and efforts of government in permitting the use of proper vacant, fallow and virgin lands to develop the country's industrial sector.

He also highlighted the need to scrutinize not to include the currently used land like eth-

nic people's customary land and lands for religious affairs, social, education, health and transportation.

Then, Secretary U Thet Naing Oo of the committee briefed the facts related to the vacant, fallow and virgin lands management and the attendees coordinated the discussion.

The meeting also focused on the applications for the use of vacant, fallow and virgin lands, reviews on the performance of the committee, comments of relevant ministries during this government term, special investigating team for the inspection on the use of lands and complaint reports on applications for the



Union Minister Dr Aung Thu participates in the 32nd meeting of the Central Committee on Administration of Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Lands on 26 January. **PHOTO: MNA**

use of vacant, fallow and virgin lands.

As some of the residents of Nay Pyi Taw Council and regions/states do not apply land use permit for their customary farmlands, their farmlands are recognized as fallow and virgin land to date. The Department of Land Management and Statistics conducts educating programmes for the public to apply for the use of vacant, fallow and virgin lands in accordance with the procedures.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

MoLIP discusses progress in e-ID registration for population

THE Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population held a meeting on the progress in the e-ID registration for population yesterday.

Union Minister U Thein Swe explained the leading of ministry in this process since four years ago with initial studying, discussions with experts, organizing the presentation of IT companies and workshop on the e-ID system.

The e-ID Work Committee has also formed sub-committees and discussed with relevant departments at national and sub-national levels about legal reforms for this system.

Experts assigned by the India government is giving technical

advice for this programme via online to meet the process with international standards.

The Union Minister also emphasized cooperation of relevant committees to implement the programme successfully, to follow the working procedures in the whole process, and to carry out the works in a real-time manner, while the relevant sub-committees are to maintain the momentum of implementation with responsible and accountable manners.

Deputy Minister U Myint Kyaing, Permanent Secretary U Aye Lwin and officials reported progress in works and the possible challenges.

In his concluding remark, the Union Minister gave advice on future plans for developing an e-ID law that can relate to other laws.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)



Union Minister U Thein Swe joins the meeting on the progress in the e-ID registration for population, yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Government representatives, stakeholders discuss peace processes

GOVERNMENT representatives yesterday held a video-conference with experts from peace process stakeholders to discuss matters related to the implementation of the agreements in Part III of the Union Accord and peace processes.

They discussed the issues from 10 am to 4:30 pm yesterday.

During the meeting, Director-General of the State Counsellor Office U Zaw Htay explained plans to implement the agreements in Part III of the Union Accord and ongoing peace processes.

Stakeholders discussed issues that need to be addressed in Myanmar's peace process, and representatives from the government and the Peace Commission made additional discussions on the peace process.

The virtual meeting was participated by Secretary of Peace Commission Retired

Lt-Gen Khin Zaw Oo, Hluttaw Representative U Pyone Cho, members of Advisory Body from Peace Commission U Hla Maung Shwe and U Moe Zaw Oo and Director-General of Ministry of State Counsellor Office U Zaw Htay.

The stakeholders who participated in the virtual meeting are U Kyaw Win (writer), U Aye Maung Kyaw, Dr Tin Maung Than, Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing (CDNH), Retired Professor Dr Tun Kyaw Nyein, U Hla Win (writer), Dr Yan Myo Thein (writer), U Ye Myo Hein (Tagaung Institute of Political Studies), U Than Soe Naing (writer), U Maung Maung

Soe (writer), U Zeya Thu (The Voice), U Mya Aye (Federal Democratic Force), U Sithu Aung Myint (writer), Dr Min Zaw Oo (MIPS), U Aung Naing Oo (CPR), Dr Min Khin Maung Yin (CPR), U Min Zin (ISP Myanmar), U Aung Thu Nyein (ISP Myanmar), U Nay Tun Naing (Peace Deck), Dr Su Mon Thazin Aung (ISP Myanmar), Daw Khin Khin Kyaw Gyi (China Deck), Daw Khin Ma Ma Myo (MIGS), U Soe Myint (Mizzima), U Kyaw Swa Moe (Irrawaddy), U Thet Naing Oo (DVB), U Sonny Swe (Frontier), and U Ahr Mahn (7Day).—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

Government representatives and stakeholders hold an online meeting on peace process, on 26 January 2021. **PHOTO: MNA**



Government representatives and stakeholders hold an online meeting on peace process, on 26 January 2021. **PHOTO: MNA**

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the President
Press Release 3/2021
13th Waxing of Pyatho 1382 ME
(25 January 2021)

Additional statistical bulletin on drug seizures, acting on information

1. In order to prevent and eradicate the dangers of narcotic drugs and psychotropic drugs, the Office of the President has formed the **Drug Activity Special Complaint Department** on 26 June 2018 to systematically accept and respond to reports on drug abuses and other related cases from the general public.
2. With orders from the Office of the President, the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department relayed information on reports on drug-related offences up to 23 January 2021 to the Ministry of Home Affairs to take action, as displayed below:

Sr	Nature of report	Detail on seizure and legal action taken
1	Information received of Ae Pu and Ma Mi Sun who live in Mawlaik Township, Sagaing Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 20 January 2021, police searched the shop of Ae Pu (a) Maung Pu, 33, son of U Kyee Maung in Michaungtwin village in Mawlaik Township and arrested him and his wife Ma Mi Sun, 35, daughter of U Tun Saung, together with stimulant tablets and heroin. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Mawlaik) MaYa (Pa) 2/2021 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
2	Information received of Tun Naing who lives in Kyaungkone village in Indaw Township, Sagaing Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 21 January 2021, police searched the house of Tun Naing, 48, son of U Hla Maung, who lives in Kyaungkone village in Indaw Township and arrested him together with heroin. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Indaw) MaYa (Pa) 5/2021 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
3	Information received of Daw Win Nyo who lives in Pankaut village in Mingin Township, Sagaing Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 23 January 2021, police searched the house of Daw Win Nyo, 37, daughter of U Aung Than, who lives in Pankaut village in Mingin Township, and arrested her together with heroin. A case has been opened against her with NaMaSa (Maukkataw) MaYa (Pa) 1/2021 under the Section 19 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Police also searched the house of her brother Myint Cho, 41, son of U Aung Than, who lives in the same compound and arrested him together with heroin. A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Maukkataw) 2/2021 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
4	Information received of people in Aung Thu Kha ward in Kawthoung Township, Taninthayi Region, using, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	In recent weeks, a total of 27 cases have been identified and 32 suspects (28 males and 4 females) were charged with the possession of illegal drugs. On 17 January 2021, according to a series of previous arrests, police searched the house of Dway Ko Ko (a) Thargyi, 26, son of U Than Aye, who lives in Aung Thu Kha ward in Kawthoung Township, and arrested him together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Kawthoung) MaYa (Pa) 14/2021 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
5	Information received of people on Abit-Khale Takontine village road, Mudon Township, Mon State, using, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	In recent weeks, a total of 30 cases have been identified and 52 males suspects were charged with the possession of illegal drugs. On 21 January 2021, on Abit-Khale Takontine village road, police arrested Arrlu, 18, son of U Shein and Alin, 22, son of U Sein Win, who live in Phaungsein ward in Thanbyuzayat Township, together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against them with NaMaSa (Kamarwut) MaYa (Pa) 4/2021 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
6	Information received of Gyar Aye, who lives in Be Inn village in Manaung Township, Rakhine State, using, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 20 January 2021, police searched the house of Gyar Aye (a) San Lwin (a) Maung Aye, 42, son of U Maung Htee, who lives in Be Inn village in Manaung Township and arrested him with WY stimulant tablets and crushed stimulant tablet powder. According to further investigation, police searched the house of San Shay (a) San Shwe, 36, son of U Phae San, who lives in Natpyin village in the same township but didn't find anything related to the illegal drugs. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Manaung) MaYa (Pa) 3/2021 under the Section 19 (a) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
7	Information received of Ma Myint Myint Htwe who lives in ward (23) in Shwepyitha Township, Yangon Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 17 January 2021, police searched the house of Ma Myint Myint Htwe (a) Myint Myint Htay, 28, daughter of U Myint Han, who lives in ward (23) in Shwepyitha Township and arrested her together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against her with NaMaSa (Hlawgar) MaYa (Pa) 2/2021 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
8	Information received of Wine Chit who lives in ward (47) Dagon Myothit (North) Township, Yangon Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 18 January 2021, police searched the house of Wine Chit (a) Htet Aung Lin, 27, son of U Than Myint, who lives in ward (47) Dagon Myothit (North) Township and arrested him together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (North Dagon) MaYa (Pa) 2/2021 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
9	Information received of Pyae Phyo Aung (a) Wat Kalay who lives in Botunzan ward in Dawbon Township, Yangon Region, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 21 January 2021, police searched the house of Pyae Phyo Aung (a) Wat Kalay, 31, son of U Kyi Aye, who lives in Botunzan ward in Dawbon Township and arrested him together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Dawbon) MaYa (Pa) 6/2021 under the Section 19 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
10	Information received of Phyo Wai Thu who lives in ward (5) in Kayan Township, Yangon Region, using, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 22 January 2021, police searched the house of Phyo Wai Thu, 34, son of U Nan Wai (a) Nan Win, who lives in ward (5) in Kayan Township and arrested him, his father U Nan Wai (a) Nan Win, 60, son of U Nyunt, Auntie Daw Mya Than, 67, daughter of U Nyunt and her niece Daw Tin Nilar Tun, 45, daughter of U Hline Tun together with marijuana. A case has been opened against them with MaMaSa (Kayan) MaYa (Pa) 1/2021 under the Section 16 (c) and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.
11	Information received of Ko Latt who lives in Uttadar ward in Yaksawk Township, Southern Shan State, selling and distributing illegal drugs.	On 20 January 2021, police searched the house of Ko Ko Latt (a) Ko Latt, 48, son of U Khin Maung Gyi (a) Maung Gyi who lives in Uttadar ward in Yaksawk Township and arrested him together with WY stimulant tablets. A case has been opened against him with MaMaSa (Yaksawk) MaYa (Pa) 3/2021 under the Section 16 (c) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

3. Out of the information sent to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department, so far a total of 1,525 cases have been opened files as of 23 January 2021. A total of 2,330 people, including 1,936 men and 394 women had been arrested with 11,148.5814 g of heroin, 1,491.62 g of ICE, 48,354.63886 g of opium, 1,418.96 g of low-quality opium, 54,993.40 g of speciosa powder, 558,597.32 g of speciosa, 2.5 litres of liquid speciosa, 710,205 stimulant tablets, 16,123.19 g of marijuana, 0.1 litres of opium tincture, 640.28 g of opium blocks, 60 g of poppy seeds, 60.40 g of crushed stimulant tablet powder, 0.001 g of crushed ecstasy powder, 30 firearms, different kinds of 698 cartridges and one grenade. Efforts for fighting the drug trafficking has been stepped up and the department will report on further exposed cases.

4. To seize further drugs and to arrest drugs dealers, people are urged to inform the Ministry of Home Affairs, region and state governments and to inform huge cases of drug trafficking and other suspicious cases directly to the **Drug Activity Special Complaint Department** of the Office of the President via following contact numbers:

Contacts

Landline No.

— 067-590200

Fax Phone No.

— 067-590233

Email Address

— antinarcotics@presidentoffice.gov.mm

“People are the key”

MoC holds inter-ministerial meeting on Trade Policy Review preparations

THE Ministry of Commerce yesterday organized an inter-ministerial meeting to prepare for the upcoming final report meeting of Myanmar’s second Trade Policy Review.

During the meeting, Union Minister Dr Than Myint said that Myanmar took one-and-half years to prepare for the second round of the Trade Policy Review.

Along with the process, two reports — the report of the WTO Secretariat and the report of the Myanmar government — have been prepared, according to the Union Minister.

Usually, the final meeting on the process is held in Geneva, Switzerland, where the WTO is located. But it will be held only in virtual format because of the pandemic.

After the final meeting, the report and the results of the second Trade Policy Review must be shared with government departments and relevant organizations, said the Union Minister, who also called on relevant officials to cooperate with the media to publish articles for

public outreach.

Deputy Minister U Aung Htoo said that the upcoming meeting is similar to the third-round meeting of the Myanmar Universal Periodic Review (UPR) held on 25 January this year. He called on the officials of the ministry to cooperate with the Permanent Mission of Myanmar in Geneva for the second round of the Trade Policy Review.

Permanent Secretary U Min Min discussed matters related to the successful holding of the second round, including matters on cooperation with the WTO Secretariat and necessary preparations.

Myanmar’s second round of the Trade Policy Review will be held on 15 and 17 February this year using the WTO’s Interprefy Platform.

Officials from relevant departments and organizations based in Nay Pyi Taw will participate together in the upcoming meeting from the Kempinski Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw. Other relevant officials will participate in the meeting via online.



Union Minister Dr Than Myint chairs the inter-ministerial meeting on Trade Policy Review preparations on 26 January 2021. PHOTO : MNA

The WTO’s Trade Policy Review Body (TPRB) Chairperson Iceland Ambassador Mr Harald Aspelund will serve as the chair of the final meeting of Myanmar’s second Trade Policy Review. Finnish ambassador Ms Kirsti Kauppi will serve as a discussant.

WTO member countries are

required to conduct a Trade Policy Review, with the least developed member countries having to do so once every seven years. Myanmar’s first Trade Policy Review was conducted in 2014. Although the Myanmar delegation was previously scheduled to visit the WTO headquarters in Geneva in October last year,

the planned visit was postponed because of the global COVID-19 pandemic. So, like other member countries, the final report meeting of Myanmar’s second Trade Policy Review will be held in the virtual format on 15 and 17 February.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

Workshop entitled ‘University Challenges’ held in virtual format

The Ministry of Education, National Education Policy Commission (NEPC), Myanmar Rectors’ Committee, National Institute

for Higher Education Development (NIHED), Advance HE, and British Council jointly held an online workshop entitled

“University Challenges” yesterday morning.

Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Deputy

Minister U Win Maw Tun, NEPC Chairperson Dr Myo Kywe, Myanmar Rectors’ Committee Dr Zaw Wai Soe, British Council’s Country Director Ms Sarah Deverall, and other relevant officials participated in the online workshop.

During the workshop, Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi discussed ‘Core Values of Goals’ of the Ministry of Education: (1) being good persons who can effectively respond to the challenges of the present period; who can help and respect each other (2) collaborative learning; collaboration; having ability to work together as a team (3) working responsibly and collectively; doing the right thing (4) having the ability to innovate and explore better ways to do the best for the world.

He said that the Ministry of Education is working with development partners to implement quality education in accordance with the National Education Strategic Plan (2016-2021).

To address the challeng-

es in the education sector, the Ministry of Education has been working with the British Council and development partners since 2016 to implement projects such as the Towards Results in Education and English (TREE) and Strengthening Teacher Education in Myanmar (STEM), according to the Union Minister.

To make universities independently managed ones, the Ministry is working hard for capacity building of universities and enhancing infrastructures, said the Union Minister, who added that the Ministry is making efforts to improve English and ICT skills of teachers, staff, students, and life-long learners.

He said that the Ministry is cooperating with stakeholders in drafting a university master plan and university charter.

A total of 105 people participated in the online workshop, which will run until 29 January.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)



Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi joins the online ‘University Challenges’ workshop on 26 January 2021. PHOTO : MNA

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe discusses preparations for COVID-19 vaccination plan



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe holds talks on COVID vaccination plan with the state/regional medical departmental heads on 26 January 2021. PHOTO : MNA

UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe discussed COVID-19 vaccination plan with the heads of regions/states Public Health and Medical Services Department online yesterday.

During the meeting, the

Union Minister discussed the prevention measures in regions and states as the staff of the ministry receive vaccination against COVID-19 on 27 January and appreciated the efforts of the health workers of the ministry in pre-

vention, control and treatment of COVID-19 activities in addition to COVID-19 vaccination plan.

The Union Minister said only the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines is known and the effectiveness after two doses is

not known yet. The international countries also study on the COVID-19 vaccine that it has certain efficacy for those who get injected and disease transmission from them to another.

Those who receive vaccination must wear masks, and all the people still need to follow the COVID-19 health rules.

He also stressed the communication among the central level and regions, states, districts and townships to gain successful vaccination plans, storage system and the duties of the heads of regions/states Public Health and Medical Services Department and medics to supervise the vaccination processes and to read the instructions for COVID-19 vaccination sent by the central committee.

He then discussed the allocation of COVID-19 vaccine, storage system, management for distribution and disposal, fo-

rumors for vaccinations, plans to monitor the consequence of vaccine, preparations for the public regarding with the vaccine and organizing of healthcare groups.

The Union Minister also discussed with the National Immunization Technical Advisory Group – NITAG and Adverse Events Following Immunization Management Committee.

He emphasized on vaccine safety, arrangement for vaccination, rumors, duty to wait 30 minutes after the COVID-19 vaccination just at the forum, emergency treatment if some suffer from adverse events after immunization, contact numbers for those suffer some adverse condition when they arrive home, the reaction of vaccine, immunization anxiety-related reaction and co-incident event.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

MoC organizes meeting on public rental housing construction projects

THE Ministry of Construction, Yangon Region government, Mandalay Region government, Nay Pyi Taw Council and private companies jointly held an online coordination meeting of the steering committee to construct the 10,000-unit of public rental houses yesterday afternoon to discuss the progress of the project.

Union Minister for Construction U Han Zaw, in his capacity as the Chair of the Public Rental Housing Steering Committee, said the regional ministers and officials from the Ministry of Construction are making efforts to have adequate land for the implementation of the project in a short period of time, to complete infrastructures and to solve business problems such as technical engineering issues.

The project will be implemented with 130 billion kyats from the extra fund from 2019-

2020 financial year and the investments of the Myanmar Licenced Contractors Association (MLCA), Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Federation (MCEF) and Myanmar Developer Association (MDA).

The Union Minister also stressed the importance of coordination in a timely manner among the regional ministers, the Department of Urban and Housing Development and the three private business associations (MLCA, MCEF and MDA) for overseeing the completion of the construction work. The Chairmen of MLCA, MCEF and MDA discussed the progress of the project implementation works and further activities in the relevant sectors.

Secretary of the Steering Committee Deputy Minister for Construction Dr Kyaw Linn coordinated work requirements and the Union Minister delivered con-

cluding remarks.

The 10,000-unit Public Rental Housing project is being implemented in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay to provide employment opportunities and housing for low-income people under the COVID-19 economic recovery

programme. A total of 704 units in Dekkhinathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, 6,288 units in Dagon Myothit (South) Township, Yangon and 3,008 units in Patheingyi Township, Mandalay will be built according to the project.

With over 18,000 employees,

the three entrepreneur associations (MCEF, MLCA and MDA) have been implementing the project and 25 per cent of the building and infrastructure work is completed at present.—MNA

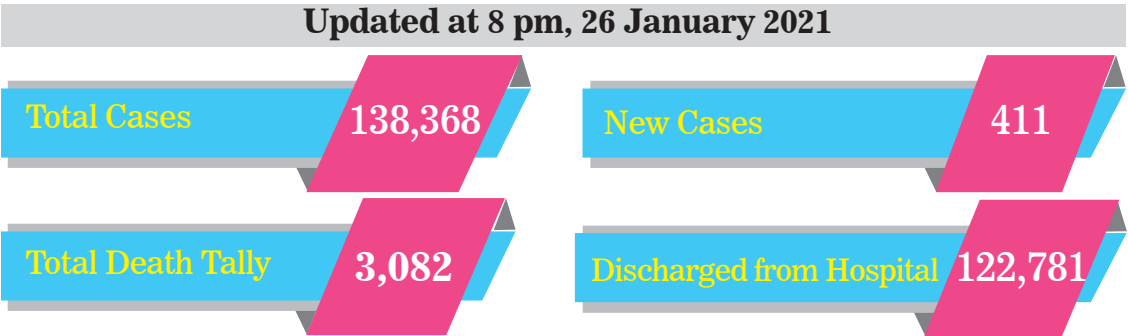
(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)



Union Minister U Han Zaw chairs the online coordination meeting on public rental housing construction projects, on 26 January 2021. PHOTO : MNA

411 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 26 January, total figure rises to 138,368

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 138,368 after 411 new cases were reported on 26 January 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 138,368 confirmed cases, 3,082 died, 122,781 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA



Vaccination: victory against pandemic

SIX days after the arrival of 1.5 million vaccines donated by the Government of India, the Ministry of Health and Sports will launch its vaccination programme today.

The first ones in the line-up for vaccination are the health professionals, workers and volunteers who fought the pandemic at the frontlines.

Pyithu Hluttaw representatives will be inoculated against the virus on 29 January and Amyotha Hluttaw representatives and Tatmadaw representatives will receive the vaccination on 30 January.

The nationwide vaccination will launch on 5 February giving shots to the people including members of the Union-level, regional and state governments.

As the vaccination programme gains momentum, we are seeing the beginning of our victory against the pandemic that that has infected over 138,000 people and taken over 3,000 lives.

The Union Government has bought 30 million doses of COVISHIELD/Astra Zeneca from India, of which about two million will arrive in the first week of February. Meanwhile, vaccines provided under the COVAX Facility will arrive in March and vaccines bought by the state budget will arrive in April.

A monitoring system is in place to report adverse effects, but all concerns must be addressed fast. Effective challenges to anti-vaccination messages must come before hardening of attitudes occur.

The coming months can bring logistics, public relations and communications challenges for the government and health authorities.

Another challenge is “infodemic” produced by social media with unfounded claims and false information which can spread all over the country in hours and days.

A monitoring system is in place to report adverse effects, but all concerns must be addressed fast. Effective challenges to anti-vaccination messages must come before hardening of attitudes occur.

Vaccinators including volunteers are urged to educate the recipients about how the vaccines work and their possible mild effects.

About 70 per cent of our population will be vaccinated against COVID-19 in

2021 and 2022.

We are confident that the experiences of the Ministry of Health and Sports and its health workers and experts in immunization programmes would make the coming national immunization programme against COVID-19 a success.

We have a long way to go until the majority of our citizens are vaccinated, but we should all be grateful to see the progress being made and keep the faith that a return to normalcy is on the horizon.

But, all must follow the basic rules and regulations — including staying masked and socially distanced until we are out of the woods.

Trade Mark

Ads

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THE PANDEMIC'S IMPACT ON PEACE AND SECURITY IS A “PRESSING CONCERN

New COVID-19 strains ‘poised to unleash’ more severe infections - Security Council hears

Since September, the devastation wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic has deepened, infecting close to 100 million people, costing more than \$3 trillion in lost wages and intensifying obstacles for peace and security around the world, the UN political chief told the Security Council on Monday.

AND while the pandemic has “hindered diplomatic action and complicated our peacemaking efforts”, Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs said via videoconference that it has “amplified the prevention challenge” and aggravated underlying dynamics of armed conflicts.

Moreover, “new strains of the virus are poised to unleash more severe waves of infection at a time when health systems and social safety networks are already on the brink”, she told the meeting on the implementation of the UN Secretary-General’s call for a global ceasefire.

Pressing concern

The pandemic’s impact on peace and security is a “pressing concern”, Ms DiCarlo said.

By upending lives and economies, challenging community relations and undermining trust in the institutions meant to address its fallout, she maintained that “the pandemic has exacerbated inequality and corruption; bred misinformation, stigmatization, and hate speech; and created new flashpoints for tension and increased risks of instability”.

The situation is especially precarious for women, youth and marginalized populations, who are particularly vulnerable to income loss and escalating gender-based and domestic violence.

Global ceasefire call



A woman and her daughter walk past the remains of destroyed homes during the March 2019 attack on Ogossagou village by armed Dogon men in which over 150 civilians were killed. PHOTO: UNICEF/SEYBA KEITA

In pointing to the momentum generated by the global ceasefire so nations can focus instead on fighting COVID-19, Ms DiCarlo cited Libya as an example of how sustained political engagement, more unified support from the international community and commitment by the parties can lead to tangible progress.

She also spoke about the opportunity it has brought about for Afghan peace negotiations to “end decades of instability and conflict”, disarmament efforts underway in Mozambique, and hope for peace in eastern Ukraine.

Notwithstanding these positive developments, some situations have witnessed dangerous escalation, such as clashes between Armenia and Azerbaijan

in the South Caucasus.

‘Political stress test’

“One thing is clear: The pandemic has served as a political stress test as much as a structural and public health one. It has laid bare where acute crisis is seen as an opportunity to gain advantage on the battlefield or as a pretext to perpetuate or entrench oppressive practices”, said Ms DiCarlo.

But she added, “it has also confirmed that where there is real political will to make and sustain peace, almost no barrier is insurmountable, especially if there is support from the global community.”

‘Tip of the iceberg’

To date, close to 99 million people are confirmed to have contracted the coronavirus around the world, according to World Health Organization (WHO) figures. Almost a quarter of them live in countries facing humanitarian or refugee crises, Humanitarian Affairs chief Mark Lowcock, said in his update.

“As the tip of the iceberg, most cases are still not in the figures”, he stated, noting that many poor countries are amidst a dangerous second wave and new and more infectious variants will make the situation worse.

Acknowledging that while vaccines “show the way out”, he said that “no one is safe until everyone is safe, and the risk that the most fragile countries are at the end of a long, slow moving queue for the vaccine imperils

us all”.

Lethal secondary consequences

In assessing the economic effects of the pandemic, Mr Lowcock highlighted a bleak picture for the most vulnerable, estimating that 235 million people will need humanitarian assistance and protection, “almost entirely down to COVID”.

He painted a grim picture of the worst global economic contraction in 90 years; a decade of lost per capita income growth; looming sovereign debt defaults; extreme poverty rising for the first time in 20 years, triggering a steep upsurge in food insecurity and multiple famines; and disappearing public services.

“In more than 20 countries in which my office is present, disruption in routine immunization campaigns leaves millions of children vulnerable to killer diseases like measles and cholera”.

An appeal to the Council

While the humanitarian community has managed to scale up assistance, the effort has been outpaced by the growing scale of this crisis, according to Mr Lowcock.

He appealed to the UN Ambassadors for \$35 billion to support the Global Humanitarian Overview, which aims to reach 160 million people; strengthen international financial institutes that provide for their most vulnerable; and action for equitable

vaccine distribution.

“The next six months will be crucial. Today’s decisions will determine our course for years to come”, he concluded.

COVID repercussions

Jean-Pierre Lacroix, head of Peace Operations, told ambassadors that already complex political situations have continued to feel the strain of COVID-19 – delaying the peace process in South Sudan, limiting contacts between the two communities in Cyprus, exacerbating the political and economic situation in Lebanon and being used as a pretext to establish an unconstitutional presidential transition in the Central African Republic.

He noted that backlogs in peacekeeper rotations, due in large part to the pandemic, are now being loosened and described how UN peacekeeping has adapted to COVID, including during the drawdown in Sudan’s Darfur operation, patrols in Mali as well as in supporting host States.

Testing collective resolve

COVID-19 has also “put a spotlight on the importance of women’s leadership during crises”, said the UN peacekeeping chief, reminding that they are on the frontlines, coping with the fallout and helping to mitigate the political risk associated with the pandemic.

SOURCE: UN NEWS

Union Day slogans for 2021 (74th Anniversary)

1. Equal opportunities and equal responsibilities, living in a peaceful, prosperous and stable Union.
2. Unity is strength, solidarity is power That is the heart of the Union.
3. Many fruits sprouting from one stem, this is our brotherhood of the Union.
4. Our Union built with brotherhood, Never forget Union day.
5. Drinking the same water, living on the same land, we are Union nationals of the same blood.



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 26 January, 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is a few cloud over the North Bay and partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 27 January, 2021: Light rain will be isolated in Taninthayi Region. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5-8) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Generally fair in the whole country.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27 January, 2021: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27 January, 2021: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27 January, 2021: Generally fair weather.

THE WHO'S VACCINE ADVISORY GROUP

Moderna Covid-19 jabs can be spaced up to six weeks: WHO

WORLD Health Organization experts on Tuesday cautiously backed delaying second injections of the Moderna coronavirus vaccine in some situations, as they have already done for the Pfizer-BioNTech jabs.

The WHO’s Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE) also insisted that international travellers should not be prioritized for any Covid-19 jabs for the time being.

During a meeting last week,

the experts had discussed the Moderna vaccine, which, like the Pfizer-BioNTech one, uses mRNA technology and is being rolled out in a number of countries.

Both vaccines require boosters after three to four weeks, but several countries facing limited vaccine supplies have said they will delay administering the second injection so that more people can get the first dose.

The WHO’s vaccine advisory group said it was best to respect

the tested intervals of 28 days between doses.

But earlier this month, it said that in “exceptional circumstances” it was possible to wait for up to 42 days to administer the second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, and on Tuesday, it said the same for the Moderna jabs.

It warned though that “the evidence for this is not strong”, and stressed that “SAGE does not recommend halving the dose”.

The UN health agency has so

far only approved the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for emergency use, but it is expected to soon issue approval for the Moderna jab as well.

SAGE also recommended Tuesday that the Moderna vaccine, like the Pfizer-BioNTech one, only be administered in settings that can deal with a potential anaphylactic reaction.

It said it could not recommend its use during pregnancy or breastfeeding without seeing

further safety data.

Amid a global shortage of various Covid-19 vaccines, the experts also advised against prioritizing vaccinating international travellers.

The WHO is calling for health care workers and the most vulnerable 20 per cent of people in every country to receive Covid-19 jabs before broadening immunization programmes to other populations.

“In the current period of very limited vaccine supply, preferen-

tial vaccination of international travellers would counter the principle of equity,” SAGE said.

“Because of this and the lack of evidence that vaccination reduces the risk of transmission, SAGE currently does not recommend Covid-19 vaccination of travellers,” it said.

It added though that of course people in high-risk groups planning to travel should be included in vaccination programmes.

SOURCE: AFP

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

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye participates in online training for COVID volunteers in Yangon

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement held online training for Community COVID Volunteer (CCV) to involve in the community-based COVID-19 prevention and control activities of Yangon Region yesterday.

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye, in his capacity as the Secretary of the National Volunteer Leading Body, said the country has been facing the second wave of COVID-19 since August 2020.

Although the infection and death rates in regions and states, including Yangon Region decline, the virus outbreak is still occurring. All should make protections not to occur the third wave after the second one.

The Union Minister also discussed COVID-19 vaccination plans and cooperation work between the government and public to carry out the protective activities in the long run.

He also stressed the need to cooperate with the youth committee members from respective wards/villages, women committee members, Red Cross Society and volunteering groups, as well as to conduct training



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye joins the online training for CCV in Yangon yesterday. PHOTO : MNA

programmes to produce Community COVID Volunteer (CCV). He then discussed the duties of villages/wards volunteers to raise the public awareness on COVID-19, to inform the officials

if someone is supposed to have symptoms of the disease and to cooperate in educating programmes and vaccination plans.

The Union Minister also said the first training was conducted on 12 January for 105 volunteers of Mandalay while the second one for 97 volunteers of Yangon Region on 14 January and today's training for another 130 volunteers of Yangon.

The lists of trainees will be sent to their respective village/ward administrators and health departments when they complete the training. The move aims to offer effective measures for the people by connecting with the volunteers, civil society organizations and departments concerned.

Gathering the Community COVID Volunteers will be a supportive measure to develop the socio-economic status of the residents.

Then, Vice-President of Myanmar Medical Association Professor Dr Mya Thida briefed the training, and other officials coordinated the discussion. —MNA (Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

Union Attorney-General receives UNHCR Representative

UNION Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo received UNHCR Resident Representative Ms Hai Kyung Jun and Deputy Resident Representative Ms Yukiko Iriyama at the office of UAG in Nay

Pyi Taw yesterday.

The Union Attorney-General discussed the procedures and strategic plans of his office, the rule of law and justice affairs, and cooperation works with interna-

tional organizations and peace processes of country in the post 2020.

He also focused on the children in conflict areas, enactment of the Child Rights Law,

progresses in implementing of recommendations by the Independent Commission of Enquiry, preparations for the third-cycle report of Myanmar for Universal Periodic Review and the review of UPR workgroup on the report on 25 January.

The UNHCR official discussed cooperation works between the two offices, potential issues to cooperate between two sides, reforms of Myanmar in protecting children rights and transparent collaboration in the rule of law and judiciary reforms.

The meeting was also attended by Deputy Attorney-General U Win Myint, Permanent Secretary Dr Thida Oo and Director-General Dr Swe Swe Aung. —MNA (Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo receives the UNHCR delegation yesterday. PHOTO : MNA

COVID-19
Call Centre
opens daily

In efforts to speed up the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 disease, the call centre (phone number 2019) is established by four communications operators and the Blue Ocean Company with the coordination of the Medical Research Department of the Health and Sports Ministry and Post and Telecommunications Department from 9 am to 5 pm daily at the Medical Research Department in Yangon.

Over 43 staff from the Medical Research Department and 17 volunteers from the Myanmar Medical Association totally 60 workers have been working at the centre since 8th April.—MNA

Natural rubber price plunges to K750 per pound on weak global trend

By Nyein Nyein

DOMESTIC natural rubber’s price fell to K750 per pound as global price slid into a bear market, said U Khaing Myint, Secretary of Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association (MRPPA).

The natural rubber hit up to K1,000 per pound at the end of 2020. At present, the rubber price drastically dropped to K750 per pound. Rubber price stood at US\$2,600 per tonne in 2020-end in global market, whereas it fetches only \$2,100 per pound at present.

“Myanmar’s natural rubber price is tracking the global rates. The price slid to around K740-750 per pound at present”, he said.

The pandemic hinders international producers. Consequently, natural rubber prices went into a bear market, he continued.

“Rubber price is directly related to the coronavirus situ-



A worker loading smoked rubber sheets to a truck at a rubber market. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

ations. The lockdown in London and Europe with the heightened COVID-19 measures affected

the rubber market,” U Khaing Myint affirmed. Rubber is primarily pro-

duced in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago, and Yangon regions in Myanmar. As

per 2018-2019 rubber season’s data, there are over 1.628 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar, with Mon State accounting for 497,153 acres, followed by Taninthayi Region with 348,344 acres and Kayin State with 270,760 acres. About 300,000 tonnes of rubber is produced annually across the country. Seventy per cent of rubber made in Myanmar goes to China. It is also shipped to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, the Republic of Korea, India, Japan, and other countries, according to the MRPPA.

Thailand is buying Myanmar’s natural rubber at a reasonable price through the black market in Phayathonzu, Kawthoung and Myeik towns. As a result of this, the government needs to control illegal rubber exports strictly, MRPPA stated.

Myanmar yearly exports over 200,000 tonnes of natural rubber to foreign countries, generating over \$200 million. (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Myanmar mineral exports down by \$500 mln as of 15 January

THE value of Myanmar’s mineral exports has drastically fallen to US\$352.6 million as of 15 January in the current financial year 2020-2021 since 1 October, reflecting a tremendous drop of \$500.5 million compared to a year-ago period, the Ministry of Commerce’s data indicated.

The mineral exports hit 853.13 million in the corresponding period of last FY.

The coronavirus impacts led to the slump in mineral exports this FY. The heightened COVID-19 measures also shut down the events like gem emporium and expo, a trader said.

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

Due to the limited extraction of natural resources, exports of forest products and minerals had dropped significantly in the previous years. Permits for mining blocks were suspended in 2016. However, after two years, Myanmar’s mining sector has now been opened to local and foreign investors, according to the ministry.

Within two years of implementing the Myanmar Mines Law, the Mines Department has approved more than 140 out of 3,000 proposed mining blocks. Many more blocks are to be granted the permit.

At present, evaluation teams in Kachin, Kayah, Shan, and Kayin states and Sagaing, Taninthayi, and Magway regions are screening mining applications, based on the opinions of the respective departments and the state/regional governments.

The Myanmar Mines Law was enacted on 24 December 2015. However, the law came into force when the rules were issued on 13 February 2018.

The ministry undertakes the screening process of the proposals for medium and large-scale mining blocks. As per the regulatory changes in 2018, regional and state governments are given the power to process applications for artisanal and small-scale mining blocks.

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

Myanmar’s mineral exports have shown a marked increase in the previous FY2019-2020, touching \$1.87 billion, an increase of \$405.48 million compared with the year-ago period, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

In the FY2018-2019, mineral exports were pegged at just \$1.465 billion.

Myanmar’s mineral products constitute 10 per cent of overall exports. About 80 per cent of mineral products are shipped to external markets through sea trade. At the same time, 20 of them are sent to neighbouring countries through border trade channels. — Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Manwain border checkpoint suspended for 3 hours as 50 Chinese drivers block entrance

By Nyein Nyein

MANWAIN land border trade post, the entrance of China-Myanmar cargo trucks, was suspended for three hours on 26 January as 50 Chinese truck drivers blocked the entrance, not allowing the entry into and exit out of Myanmar truck drivers, said U Min Thein, the vice-chairman of Muse Rice Depot.

On 26 January, at around 8:30 am, about 50 Chinese truck drivers from China, Kyalgaung trucks and small vehicles association obstructed the Manwain checkpoint that did not allow the Myanmar truck drivers from Kyalgaung side to re-enter Myanmar side.

So, the Myanmar cargo trucks could not enter China through the Manwain checkpoint. The Myanmar cargo trucks from China could not return to the Myanmar side.

Therefore, the Manwain checkpoint was totally suspended that morning. The bilateral trade between China and Myanmar has also stopped for many hours.

For that reason, the Muse Rice Depot inducing the traders requested the two countries’ authorities to resolve the Manwain checkpoint blockade as soon as possible.

With the authorities’ coordination in both countries, the Chinese truck drivers were removed at 11:30 am (MST) on 26 January. The trucks are entering to return to both sides, as usual, he added.

Further, although Chinese cargo trucks are allowed to enter Myanmar side only with the permission letter from the border trade authorities, the Chinese cargo trucks are entering Myanmar side without having any official letter whatsoever, said U Min Thein.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

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Dated: 27th January 2021

Form of Invitation for Bids (IFB)

Date: 27 January, 2021
Loan Agreement No.: MY-P17
IFB No.: 011/DRD/Water Supply/Lot A2-1 (Construction)

1. The Government of Myanmar has received a loan from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) towards the cost of the Regional Development Project for Poverty Reduction Phase II (Water Supply Sector). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the Contract for Construction of Water Supply Systems for Bokpyin Town, which is in the Tanintharyi Region.

2. Bidding will be conducted through procedures in accordance with the applicable Guidelines for Procurement under Japanese ODA Loans, and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries, as defined in the Loan Agreement.

3. The Department of Rural Development in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the construction and completion of the following works in and near Bokpyin Town.

(a) a river intake and 250mm dia. HDPE raw water transmission pipeline, 2920m long

(b) an access road along the raw water transmission pipeline, 2920m long

(c) a water treatment works, capacity 1,051m³/d

(d) a 368m³ reinforced concrete clear water tank

(e) a 250mm dia. HDPE treated water transmission pipeline, 6153^m long

(f) a distribution system of uPVC pipes, 14.8 km long in dias. 50 to 150mm

(g) 927 no. metered house connections

4. The work requires suitable experience in the construction of underground water pipelines and reinforced concrete tanks and the installation of electrical and mechanical equipment.

5. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the Bidding Documents at the office of the Department of Rural Development, Near Office No. 36, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. Facsimile: 067-418655, 067-418633
E-mail: drdvsp.oda@gmail.com, pl.hq@drdmyanmar.net

6. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on the submission of a written application to the address above.

7. Bids must be delivered to the address above on or before 10:00 am on 25 February, 2021 and a pre-bid meeting will take place on 5 February 2021 at local time 10:00am through online system.

8. Bids will be opened in the presence of Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at 10:00 am and 25 February, 2021 at the office of the Department of Rural Development, Near Office. 36, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

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UNPRECEDENTED MOVE

ANA to offer up to 2-year sabbatical leave

ALL Nippon Airways Co. said Tuesday, as travel demand plunges amid the coronavirus pandemic. The airline’s move, unprecedented in Japan in terms of length of the leave, comes as ANA tries to curb labour costs, having furloughed many cabin crew members due to the virus spread. Around 15,000 ANA pilots, and cabin and ground staff will be eligible for the new sabbatical system to pursue goals that necessitate long-term planning such as studying abroad, obtaining qualifications and working temporarily at other companies, they said.

SOURCE: KYODO

Transferring Distributor for Registered Pesticides

Distribution and registration processes of pesticides produced by AgroStar Pte.Ltd., are transferring from Asian Crops Global Co.,Ltd to Min Mahaw Co.,Ltd. So, any objection regarding to this transfer can notify to this address: Co-Secretary,Pesticides Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Gyogone (West), Insein. for the following Pesticide within (14) days from this announcement.

No.	Trade Name	Active Ingredients	Registration Type	Registration Number
1.	Ka Yu Cide	Niclosamide 70% WP	Provisional	P2020-5134

Address: Min Mahaw Co., Ltd., No. (49/A), Thirimingalar (2) Street, Kamaryut Town Ship, Yangon, Myanmar. Ph: +959420131708, +951536127

Invitation For Open tender No.(1/2021)

1. Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Department of Mines invites to submit the tender quotation sale open tender of (3041.638) Metric Tons, average metal content (Ni- 35.94 %, Fe-62.19 %) (17) Lots of Ferro Nickel by United States Dollar as follow,
(a) Ferro Nickel (500) MT (2) Lots, Tagaung Taung, Mine Site
(b) Ferro Nickel (200) MT (5) Lots, Tagaung Taung, Mine Site
(c) Ferro Nickel (100) MT (10) Lots, Tagaung Taung, Mine Site
2. Base price of Ferro Nickel shall be based on the London Metal Exchange Nickel average price in the month prior to the month of tender opening and the iron ore price 300 U.S. dollar per metric ton. The highest proposal amount (Premium amount added to the LME price and deduction of transportation and handling expenses) shall be winning tender.
3. Tender Closing Date and Time is 23-2-2021, (14:00) PM and Opening Tender is (15:00) PM.
4. Tender documents are available from the Mineral Development Division, Department of Mines, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Office Building No. (19), Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar. If you need detailed information, please can be inquired at telephone no. (+95) 67- 3409378, 67- 3409372 within the Office hours.

Tender Committee
Department of Mines

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation

Invitation For Open tender No.(2/2021)

1. Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Department of Mines invites to submit the tender quotation sale open tender of (5008.574) Metric Tons, (21) Lots of Cathode Copper by United States Dollar as follow,
(a) Cathode Copper (108.574) MT (1) Lot, Yangon, Eden Warehouse
(b) Cathode Copper (100) MT (5) Lots, Yangon, Eden Warehouse
(c) Cathode Copper (200) MT (5) Lots, Yangon, Eden Warehouse
(d) Cathode Copper (200) MT (7) Lots, Monywa, Mine Site
(e) Cathode Copper (500) MT (2) Lots, Monywa, Mine Site
(f) Cathode Copper (1000) MT (1) Lot, Monywa, Mine Site
2. Base price of Cathode Copper (Eden Warehouse, Yangon) shall be based on the London Metal Exchange Copper price on the date of tender opening. The highest proposal amount shall be winning tender.
3. Base price of Cathode Copper (Mine Site, Monywa) shall be based on the London Metal Exchange Copper price on the date of tender opening. The highest proposal amount (Premium amount added to the LME price and deduction of transportation and handling expenses) shall be winning tender.
3. Tender Closing Date and Time is 23-2-2021 (14:00) PM and Opening Tender is (15:00) PM.
4. Tender documents are available from the Mineral Development Division, Department of Mines, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Office Building No.(19), Nay Pyi Taw and details can be asked to (+95) 067 3409378 and 067 3409372 within the Office hours.

Tender Committee
Department of Mines

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation

ON THE RISE

Hyundai Motor’s Q4 net profit jumps

SOUTH Korean automaker Hyundai Motor defied the coronavirus pandemic to post a surprise 78 per cent surge in fourth-quarter profits Tuesday, as robust domestic sales offset weak overseas demand.

Net profit in the October-December period jumped to 1.38 trillion won (\$1.24 billion) from 772 billion won a year earlier, Hyundai, which along with its affiliate Kia is among the world’s top 10 automakers, said in a statement.

Domestic sales in the final three months rose five percent, driven by its luxury Genesis line, while foreign sales dropped by 6.6 per cent, the company said.

“Robust sales of SUV models and Genesis luxury models as well as declining incentives helped lift revenue in the fourth quarter despite an adverse economic environment,” it said.

Full-year profits came to 2.12 trillion won, down 33.5 per cent from 2019, demonstrating the financial toll the pandemic has taken on global carmakers.

GM, Toyota and Fiat Chrysler all reported double-digit declines in US sales last year.

And total US auto sales for 2020 are projected to drop 15.3 per cent to 14.4 million, making it the worst year for the industry since at least 2012, according to a December forecast from Cox Automotive.

Going into 2021, Hyundai said it will focus on “future business strategies” by producing electric and hydrogen-powered vehicles and aim for an up to 15 per cent increase in revenue.

SOURCE: AFP

TURMOIL IN RULING COALITION

Italy PM quits and seeks new government as pandemic rages

PRIME Minister Giuseppe Conte resigned Tuesday in the hope of forming a new government after weeks of turmoil in his ruling coalition, leaving Italy rudderless as it battles the deadly coronavirus pandemic.

The uneasy coalition that has led Italy since September 2019 was fatally weakened earlier this month by the withdrawal of former premier Matteo

Renzi's small but crucial Italia Viva party.

Ahead of a key vote in parliament this week that he looked set to lose, Conte's office announced he would step down Tuesday, in what supporters said was a move to form a new government.

He gathered his cabinet around 9.30 am, ahead of a visit to President Sergio Mattarella, the ultimate

arbiter of Italian political crises, to seek a new mandate.

Mattarella will then open discussions with party leaders on a way forward, likely on Wednesday and Thursday - leaving a vacuum at the top of the eurozone's third-largest economy at a crucial time.

Italy was the first European country to face the full force of the COV-

ID-19 pandemic and has since suffered badly, with the economy plunged into recession and deaths still rising by around 400 a day.

Parts of the country remain under partial lockdown, the vaccination programme has slowed and a deadline is looming to agree plans to spend billions of euros in European Union recovery funds.

SOURCE: AFP



Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte waves during a videoconference with members of the European Council on the EU response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Rome, Italy, Nov. 19, 2020. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

FARM PROTESTS

Protesting farmers battle police after storming Indian capital

THOUSANDS of Indian farmers battled police across New Delhi Tuesday as they took protests against agriculture reform into the capital during a giant Republic Day military parade.

Police laid on one of their biggest security operations in years in a bid to keep protesters away from Prime Minister Narendra Modi as he oversaw a parade full of pomp.

raised the emblem of their movement on flagpole where India's tricolour normally flies.

Hundreds also gathered outside the Delhi police headquarters and fought with officers.

Across the city, security forces fired tear gas and staged baton charges,

but the protesters laid into police with their own weapons -- and hijacked buses that had been used to block their convoys.

Two months of protests against agricultural laws that deregulated produce markets have turned into the biggest challenge faced by Modi's Hindu

nationalist government since it came to power six years ago.

The government had opposed the rally saying it would be a "national embarrassment" at a time when it should be celebrating Republic Day.

SOURCE: AFP



Protesting farmers gathered at the Red Fort in the heart of the capital. PHOTO: AFP

US Senate confirms Yellen as first female Treasury secretary

THE US Senate on Monday voted by a wide margin to confirm Janet Yellen as the first woman to lead the Treasury Department, giving her a key role in Congress negotiations over a huge Covid-19 economic relief package.

Yellen is not new to the role of trailblazer, as she also was the first woman to lead the Federal Reserve,

from 2014 to 2018, and previously the White House Council of Economic Advisors. Her immediate job in the first weeks of the new administration will be to help win Congress approval for President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion rescue package to secure US economic recovery from the Covid-19 crisis.

SOURCE: AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V HAN XIN

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V HAN XIN VOY. NO. (2009)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **27-1-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIPL** 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 UNI SPRING LOGISTICS HOLDINGS\ PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NORDMAAS VOY. NO. (102S/104N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NORDMAAS VOY. NO. (102S/104N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **27-1-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/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: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD.

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NEGAR VOY. NO. (SCY1090)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NEGAR VOY. NO. (SCY1090)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **27-1-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **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: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S LAND AND SEA INTERMODAL LOGISTICS SDN BHD LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MONICA D V.2355

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MONICA D VOY. NO. (2355)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **27-1-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **TMIT-2** 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 CHUN AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS CO LTD



Vice-President U Henry Van Thio, chairman of the Central Committee of Intellectual Property (CCIP), delivered a speech at the first meeting of the CCIP since its formation under Section 4(a) of the Industrial Design Law, Trademark Law, Patent Law, and Literature and Art Copyright Law. **PHOTO: MNA**

Measures to help implement 2019 Trademark Law

By Dr Moe Moe Thwe
TRANSLATED BY HTUT
HTUT (TWANTAY)

MYANMAR has been working with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) since 1997 for ensuring the implementation of a new system of intellectual property right, which is capable of meeting international criteria. Myanmar became the 176th member country of WIPO in 2001. The Ministry of Science and Technology previously formed under the Ministry of Education is an organization that made the collaborative effort with the Office of Union Attorney-General to ensure provisions of intellectual property rights meeting international criteria are enacted. With regard to the amendment and the enactment of copyrights, patent rights, industrial design rights and trademark rights, local intellectual property right experts and legal compilers met to discuss legal subject matters for several times.

The intellectual prop-

erty bills were submitted to the parliament in 2014 and trademark law and industrial design law could be amended following the discussions with the bill committee at Pyithu Hluttaw in 2015. The IP bills were re-submitted to the parliament in 2016 during which discussions were held with the bill committee at Amyotha Hluttaw and Pyithu Hluttaw. The suggestions of relevant ministries, legal experts and the people were taken into consideration when the bills were drafted. Pyidaungsu Hluttaw managed to enact the laws of copyrights, patent rights, industrial design rights and trademark rights in 2019.

In an attempt to implement the already-enacted IP laws, one law after another would be applied. In doing so, the difficulties would be able to be reduced and enough time could be acquired to fulfil the need of human resources and carry out the amendments, thereby overcoming the technical barrier that can face in electronic registration (E-registration).

Trademark Law

Of the four IP laws, the Trademark Law was aimed

for the implementation first. Myanmar Trademark Law was signed into law by the president on 30 January in 2019 in accord with the Law No 3 of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. The responsible ministry for the implementation of the Trademark Law is the Ministry of Commerce. The Central Committee of Intellectual Property Rights, the Intellectual Property Rights Agency and the Department of Intellectual Property Rights had to be formed under this Trademark Law. Under the Notification No 18/2020 issued by the Union Government on 6 March in 2020, the Central Committee of Intellectual Property Rights was formed with Chair (Vice-President-2), Vice-Chair (Union Minister for Commerce), and Secretary (Deputy Minister for Commerce) and four experts on intellectual property rights and members of relevant ministries totalling 31. The first meeting of the Central Committee of Intellectual Property Rights was held on 3 June in 2020 during which future tasks could be approved for ensuring the implementation of the IP laws. The Department of Intellectual Property

Rights prepared for rules and regulations as well as duties necessary for the formation of the Intellectual Property Rights Agency.

The rules of the by-law, application form, registration fee and trademark inspection and guidance on applicants of intellectual property right are in preparation. The employees who inspect electronic registration through IT systems, website and trademark right applications must be given educative training. The information about intellectual property rights must be distributed to the public. Internal and external IP organizations must work together under the guidance of the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar doesn't currently have a special system for inspecting trademark registration. According to the term of 'first come first served', the system of 'First to Use' is operational in the market. The trademark owners can register their trademarks in accord with Registration of Deed Law at the Settlement and Land Records Department. The applications have to be submitted according to the procedures, but no trade-

mark is inspected. The trademark owner has to announce the trademark caution in the daily newspaper, inviting any objection to the trademark along with the specific time frame. If there is no objection, the registered trademark can be officially used for a product or a service. To do so can be regarded as a proof that means the owner of the registered trademark. If there is a trademark dispute, it can be used as evidence.

The Trademark Law 2019 was drafted based on basic norms described in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights TRIPS. This law offers a chance to the person who first applies, which means the First-to-File system. It is, therefore, necessary for the owner of the trademark to register the trademark at the earliest. Anyone can apply for the registration of a trademark at the Department of Intellectual Property Rights under the Ministry of Commerce if trademark rights are wanted, whatever trademark old or new is registered.

Trademark registration

The trademark owners

will have to strive for the First-to-File system to be able to quickly apply for trademark registration on the first day when application forms start to accept. A number of trademarks applied for official registration at the Department of Settlement and Land Records are almost 200,000, more than half of them are expected to be re-applied for registration. The trademarks without registration that are being used in the market are many. Therefore, the trademarks without registration being used in the market should apply for an official registration so that they will be able to compete in the future market.

Many applications can be received on a date for acceptance of applications. Information technology is required in order to accept a large number of applications within a single day. IT systems such as Industrial Property Automation Software (IPAS) and WIPO File will be used. The WIPO will provide IPAS software and technical assistance. In addition to the assistance by the government, server, computer and related parts are being installed with the help of the USAID and the JICA.

IPAS software is a system providing members of WIPO, and it is operational in ASEAN member countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Viet Nam, Indonesia, the Philippines and Brunei. This system helps to carry out the submission of the application of trademark registration, inspection, feedback response and release of the registration document. IPAS software to be used for Myanmar's registration is based on trademark registration processes. The use of IPAS software helps the submission and inspection of intellectual property right registration, and it can also keep and release the information in a systematic manner.

Application for marks

Mark means any visible mark, which includes names, letters, numbers, illustrated parts, or combinations of colours, or one such mark combined with another, in order to distinguish a particular good or service from other goods or services. It includes trademark, service mark, collective mark and certification mark. The mark that can be seen on the product is the trademark, for example, Fame. Some marks can be seen in the services, and they

are called a service mark, for example, KBZ bank. Some marks are collective ones, for example, UMFCCI. Some are certification marks, meaning that they show the quality and reputation of the goods or the service of the mark, for example, organic product.

Intellectual property right application can be made in person or by a representative. Trademark can be applied by filling up the application form. Trademark can also be applied being attached with the recommendation letter of the representative. The application can be stated either in Myanmar or in English. The information must be complete with fixing the filing date, and the data filled up the application form must be true. The date on which the Department has received a complete application is deemed as the date of submission of the application for registration. The Department of Intellectual Property will send the inform letter to the IPR applicants if incomplete application forms are found. In connection with the incomplete application forms, the applicants have to make amendments to the application within 30 days from the date on which the inform letter is received. If not

so as per instruction, it will be regarded as disqualified application.

Article 16 and 17 contained in Chapter 8 of Trademark Law states any requirement to acquire the filing date and enjoy the rights of the registered mark.

The applicant for the registration of a mark may write the registration application in Myanmar or English, must translate the Myanmar language application into English or vice versa if the Registrar requests so, and must write a statement that the translation under subsection (b) is true and correct and sign it. The applicant for the registration of a mark shall include the following in the application: (1) an application for registration; (2) name and address of the person or legally formed organization applying for registration; (3) name, citizenship scrutiny card number, and address of the agent or representative if the applicant entrusts an agent or representative with this matter; (4) a clear and complete description of the mark.

It is very important to be a complete application form because the date on which the application form is submit-

ted will be regarded as the filing date. If the registration of a mark is submitted to the Office of Registration of Deeds, the documents related to the registration will be required for submission. The right of priority is stated in Chapter 10 of the Trademark Law. If the right of priority is demanded, it is required to submit the registration of a mark attached with the strong documents.

With regard to the right of priority of registration of a mark in accord with the article 19 (a) and 20, if the number of applicants who submit the registration of similar marks is more than one person, only the first applicant who has submitted an application that meets stipulations to register his mark must be prioritized. If more applicants request the registration of identical or similar marks on the same date, or if the right of priority dates is the same, this matter will be negotiated among the applicants. Only the approved applicant will get the right of registering a mark. If the applicants do not reach the agreement, they must follow the decision of the registrar using the prescribed method.

(TO BE CONTINUED)



Union Minister Dr Than Myint participates in the “soft opening” ceremony for application of trademark registration online on 1 October 2020. PHOTO: MNA

Italy govt legislates to avoid Olympic Games ban

ROME — Italy's government on Tuesday pushed through a decree guaranteeing the independence of the national Olympic Committee (CONI) to offset the threat of a ban from the Olympic Games.

The International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Executive Committee meets in Lausanne on Wednesday with Italy facing sanctions for not respecting national sporting body CONI's independence.

"The Council of Ministers has approved the decree which guarantees the autonomy of CONI," sports minister Vincenzo Spadafora announced.

"Now the last word is up to the Parliament to make it law."

The emergency decree was approved shortly before the resignation of Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte.

Global governing body the IOC, which warned Rome in the summer of 2019 of the risks of government interference in the management of CONI, puts great emphasis on the independence of national Olympic committees, a key element of its Olympic Charter.

The origin of the dispute dates back to the end of 2018 when the agency managing the employees and resources, in particular financial, of CONI was put under the direct control of the national government.

It had previously been managed directly by the IOC.—AFP ■



Italy risk suspension from the Olympic movement. PHOTO: POOL/AFP

Nadal takes veiled swipe at Djokovic over quarantine complaints

MELBOURNE — Rafael Nadal has taken an apparent swipe at Novak Djokovic over his requests for quarantined players preparing for the Australian Open, saying not everyone felt the need to "advertise" how they were trying to help.

The Serbian world number one issued a list of suggestions to Tennis Australia last week on behalf of 72 players unable to leave their Melbourne hotel rooms after Covid-19 cases were detected on their planes to Australia.

They reportedly included moving players into private homes with tennis courts and getting them better meals.

But his requests fell on deaf ears, while Australian media portrayed players as petulant and selfish and fel-

low star Nick Kyrgios called Djokovic a "tool".

Djokovic later issued an open letter to say his "good intentions for my fellow competitors in Melbourne have been misconstrued".

"We all try to help each other," Spanish great Nadal told ESPN Tuesday from Adelaide, where he and Djokovic are quarantining ahead of the year's opening Grand Slam in Melbourne on February 8.

While most players are undergoing a mandatory 14 days of quarantine in Melbourne, Nadal, Djokovic and other superstars of the game including Serena Williams and Naomi Osaka jetted into Adelaide, where they are due to play an exhibition on Friday.—AFP ■

Tokyo seeks 10,000 medical staff for Olympics despite virus surge

TOKYO — Japan's government said Tuesday it still planned to recruit 10,000 medical personnel for the virus-delayed Olympics, despite the heavy strain on the healthcare system caused by a third wave of infections.

Opposition politicians grilled the government over the plans in parliament, as medical associations raised the alarm about dwindling capacity.

Japan's government and Olympic officials have insisted the Games will open as scheduled this July, despite rising infections at home and abroad, and sinking domestic support.

And in parliament on Tuesday, Olympic Minister Seiko Hashimoto said the government was still committed to



Japan's Olympics minister Seiko Hashimoto. PHOTO: KYODO

a plan to secure thousands of medical staff for the Games.

"We are trying to secure necessary medical staff of around 10,000, on the premise of asking doctors and nurses

that each of them work about five days during the Games period," she said.

Games organizers are still discussing the exact medical provisions needed and how to "deal with Covid-19 infections" at the delayed event, she told parliament.

Just six months before the huge international event is due to begin, Tokyo and other areas are under a state of emergency to tackle a record spike in Covid-19 cases.

Japan has been hit less hard than many other countries, with about 5,000 virus deaths overall, but doctors have warned medical facilities are at risk of collapse — especially if the Olympics triggers fresh outbreaks.—AFP ■

Bale gets a boost with rare praise from Mourinho

LONDON — Gareth Bale's goalscoring performance was labelled as "good" by Tottenham Hotspur manager Jose Mourinho after the Premier League club came from behind to beat Championship side Wycombe 3-1 in their FA Cup fourth round tie.

Mourinho's assessment will boost the spirits of the 31-year-old Wales star, who has had an underwhelming second spell at Spurs since coming on a season

long loan from Real Madrid.

He has been hampered by fitness issues, and mostly been confined to Europa League games, playing just 45 minutes of Premier League football since early November.

Mourinho, though played him for the full 90 minutes of the Wycombe game, and Bale showed his rustiness in front of goal by spurning several chances after he had drawn the sides



Gareth Bale received a welcome boost in having his goal scoring performance in the FA Cup win over Wycombe praised by Tottenham Hotspur manager Jose Mourinho. PHOTO: AFP

level. However, Mourinho said his overall performance — which set them up with a tough fifth round trip to Everton — had been pleasing.

"It was good," said Mourinho.—AFP ■



Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic have been quarantining in Adelaide. PHOTO: AFP