

NATIONAL

Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Aung Naing Oo attends 27th ASEAN Economic Ministers' Retreat Meeting

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Union Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin participates in Informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting

UNION Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin participated in the Informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, which was held via video conference, on 2 March 2021 at 2:30 pm from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw. The meeting was participated by ASEAN Foreign Ministers and the Secretary-General of ASEAN.

At the meeting, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers discussed ASEAN Community building, regional efforts to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, ASEAN's external relations and its centrality in the evolving regional architecture, and exchanged views on regional and international issues.

The Union Minister for Foreign Affairs later apprised the meeting of the voting irregularities that occurred in the general elections which were held on 8



Union Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin joins the Informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting online from Nay Pyi Taw on 2 March 2021.

November 2020, the five-point prioritized programme to be undertaken by the State Administration Council, maintaining law and order for public safety, additional effort to be made on

COVID-19 vaccination, efforts being made to achieve lasting peace in Myanmar, Union Election Commission's efforts to scrutinize voter lists of the general elections, and Myanmar's

commitment to continue to work closely with ASEAN, especially in the implementation of the recommendations made under the Preliminary Needs Assessment (PNA) in Rakhine State.

The Informal Ministerial Meeting, which ended at 5:30 pm, was also participated by Senior Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Public Notice from Myanma Economic Bank

1. The state-owned Myanma Economic Bank is committed to providing financial security to the public. It maintains the accounts of all government departments, as well as the pensions and salaries of retired persons and gratuity matters.
2. In addition to the above activities, we accept various deposits such as Savings Bank Deposits, Accounts Deposits, Fixed Deposit and Term Deposits and issue various loans and provide a full range of local and international money transfer services.
3. For the convenience of the people in depositing and cash withdrawal, we provide services for self-depositing and withdrawing money, depositing and withdrawing money through an agent and internet, with mobile phones and withdrawals from ATMs.

Unnecessary withdrawals from bank accounts can be detrimental to interest rates, and the public can use banking services with confidence, such as transferring money from one bank to another in the form of payment, issuing cheques, bank account transfer and transferring money through a remittance system. We like to inform you that banking services can be used to ensure financial security without having to deal with large amounts of cash.

Myanma Economic Bank

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Nine Objectives

- 1. Political affairs**

 - (a) Building of a Union based on democracy and federalism in practising genuine disciplined multiparty democracy in a full fairness manner
 - (B) Emphasizing of restoration of eternal peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)
 - (c) Continuous practising of the “principle” of peaceful co-existence among countries by holding up the independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy
- 2. Economic affairs**

 - (a) Further development of production based on agriculture and livestock breeding through modern techniques and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
- (b) Stability of market economy and inviting international investments to develop the economy of entire ethnic people
 - (c) Encouragement of local businesses to create employment opportunities to be able to produce many products of the State
- 3. Social affairs**

 - (a) For ensuring of dynamism of Union spirit which is genuine patriotic spirit
 - (b) Following customs and traditions of all ethnic nationalities and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national characters
 - (c) Enhancement of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

Five future programmes of State Administration Council

- 1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted to carry out tasks that should be done, including inspection of voting lists in accordance with the law.
- 2. Effective measures will be taken for the prevention of current infectious COVID-19 with added momentum.
- 3. Efforts will be made to recover businesses that faced loss caused by COVID-19 in various ways as quickly as possible.
- 4. Emphasis will be placed on restoring eternal peace in the entire nation in line with agreements from the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) as much as possible.
- 5. When missions will be accomplished in accord with provisions of the state of emergency, a free and fair multiparty democracy election will be held in accordance with the Constitution (2008), and further tasks will be undertaken to hand over State duty to the winning party meeting the standards of democracy.

Statement of Union Election Commission
(2 March 2021)

- 1. The Union Election Commission inspected the casting of votes related to the multiparty general election held on 8 November 2020 in Thazi Township of Mandalay Region.
- 2. According to the inspection findings, the previous election commission released 156,671 eligible voters in Thazi Township of Mandalay Region. The list of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population in November 2020 showed 131,682 eligible voters who had turned 18. The voter lists mentioned that there were 14,119 citizens, associate citizens, nationalized citizens, and non-identity voters, 1,024 persons repeated on the voter lists more than three times and 16,360 persons repeated on the voter lists two times.
- 3. Findings in the inspection were as follows:-

Findings on scrutinized voting list

Sr.	Township and number of polling stations	List of township sub-commission	List from immigration department	Those involved in voting list without citizenship scrutiny card	Those involved in voter list more than three times holding one CSC	Those involved in voter list two times holding one CSC
1	249 polling stations in Thazi Township of Mandalay Region	156,671	131,682	14,119	1,024	16,360

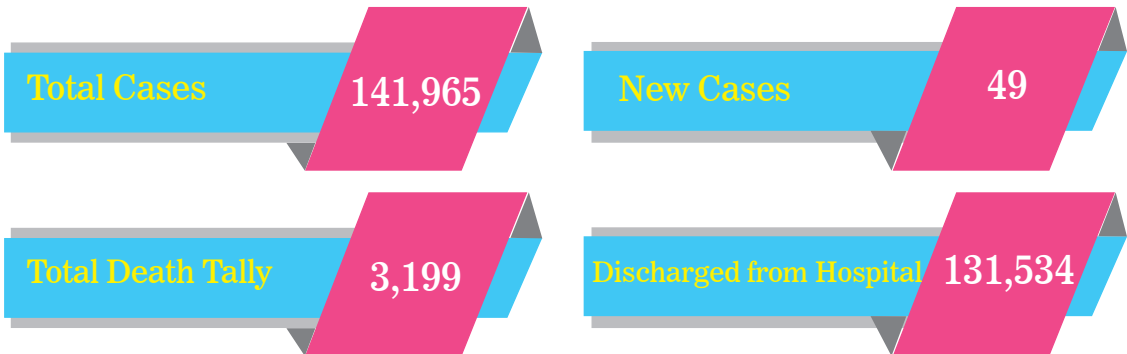
Union Election Commission

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

49 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 2 March, total figure rises to 141,965



Updated at 8 pm, 2 March 2021

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 141,965 after 49 new cases were reported on 2 March 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, 3,199 died, 131,534 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Ministry of Health and Sports

For food sufficiency of the country

He also discussed the promotion of the agricultural sector for food sufficiency of the country, livestock and fish breeding farms, commercial production of foodstuffs.

*(Excerpt from the speech to the management committee meeting of the State Administration Council
made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman
Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 26 February 2021)*

Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Aung Naing Oo attends 27th ASEAN Economic Ministers’ Retreat Meeting

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Aung Naing Oo participated in the 27th ASEAN Economic Ministers’ Retreat Meeting via video conference, which was held on 2 March 2021.

In the first session of the 27th AEM Retreat Meeting, the ASEAN Economic Ministers’ interface with the representatives of the ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ASEAN-BAC) was held. At the interface, Dr Ar Siti Rozaimeriyanthy DSLJ Haji Abd Rahman, chairman of ASEAN-BAC and the members, presented ASEAN-BAC’s priorities and initiatives for 2021 under the theme, “Recover, Stronger, Together, Sama-Sama”. U Zaw Min Win, President of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry as a member of ASEAN-BAC, briefed the current trade and investment environment in Myanmar. The Ministers stressed the importance of public-private partnership in the implementation of ASEAN Economic Integration, welcomed private engagement in the COVID-19 recovery efforts in the region and encouraged to cooperate for the



Union Minister U Aung Naing Oo joins the 27th ASEAN Economic Ministers’ Retreat Meeting online yesterday.

regional economic sustainable development.

The Union Minister informed the meeting that Myanmar would continue to implement the commitments as agreed in the regional and international agreements and the government’s efforts to facilitate trade and investment. On the comments of ASEAN-BAC members for the safety of doing business in Myanmar, Union Minister responded that the government committed to protecting the approved businesses in accordance with the existing laws, rules and regulations, and informed the

government initiative to support the business-facing operational issues and regulatory burdens by setting up help desk as after-care service. He also stressed the development of the SMART programme to facilitate trade and investment for the better business environment.

In the second session, the Ministers exchanged views on Post COVID-19 recovery efforts in each member country, strengthening global value chains in ASEAN, the Priority Economic Deliverables (PEDs) under Brunei’s Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2021. Ministers also

discussed and gave guidance on the modalities for future entry into force provisions in ASEAN economic agreements, the preparation of post-2025 vision for the ASEAN Economic Community, the status of the review of the ASEAN – India Trade in Goods Agreement and the Framework setting out the parameters of a future ASEAN – EU Agreement.

The Union Minister updated the situation of COVID-19 in Myanmar and the implementation of the National Vaccination Programme. He also explained that Myanmar would take the

measures leading to economic recovery rather than the relief measures undertaken in the past and take immediate action to review the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP), and support MSMEs to restart their business. He reiterated that Myanmar would actively participate in the regional and multilateral fora and maintain commitments to honouring the existing bilateral and multilateral agreements. Moreover, the Union Minister exchanged the view on the implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) with other ASEAN Economic Ministers.

The Meeting was chaired by Dato Dr Amin Liew Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office and Minister of Finance and Economy of Brunei Darussalam and attended by ASEAN Economic Ministers, Senior Economic Officials (SEOM) and representatives from ASEAN Countries, ASEAN Business Council members, the ASEAN Secretary-General and representatives from ASEAN Secretariat.

The meeting will continue on 3 March 2021.—MNA

MoI discusses implementations for March

THE Ministry of Information held a coordination meeting on 1 March in Nay Pyi Taw. Union Minister for Information U Chitt Naing, Deputy Minister U Ye Tint, departmental officials and responsible persons attended the meeting.

At the meeting, Union Minister U Chitt Naing said that he is pleased to see that staff under the Ministry of Informa-

tion serve the country with good spirits, good discipline and enthusiasm, ingenuity and loyalty to their country and people although they are being deployed to the remote areas. He also urged to continue to be dutiful. The Deputy Minister and the departmental officials reviewed the activities in February and discussed the plans for March.—MNA

Union Minister U Chitt Naing presides over the MoI coordination meeting on 1 March 2021 in Nay Pyi Taw.



MoRAC donates rice to monasteries, nunneries in Lewe of Nay Pyi Taw

THE Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture celebrated the rice donation ceremony at Pauk Myaing Pariyatti Monastery in Lewe Township of Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The Ovadasariya of Up-patasanti Pagoda Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Janinda of Pauk Myaing Pariyatti Monastery and Sanghas attended the ceremony in addition to the Union Minister of Religious Affairs and Culture, Permanent Secretary, Director-General of Religious Affairs, Director-General and Deputy Permanent Secretary of Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana and other officials.

During the ceremony, Union Minister U Ko Ko and other officials took five precepts from Presiding Sayadaw Bhaddanta Janinda of Pauk Myaing Pariyatti Monastery.

Then, the Union Minister presented the religious affairs to the Sayadaws, successful holding of Maha Pathana Pali Chanting Ceremony in accordance with the instructions of Bhamo Sayadaw, Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee.

The Union Minister also briefed the rice donation—241 rice bags for a total of 1,015 monks and 382 nuns in Pyinmana and Pobbathiri townships on 19 February, reopening of pagodas across the nation starting 8 February in accordance with the COVID-19 health rules, efforts for the promotion and propagation of Sasana and good merits for the donations.

Then, Presiding Sayadaw Bhaddanta Janinda of Pauk Myaing Pariyatti Monastery delivered sermons, and the Union Minister and officials poured the water of liberation to share merits with them.

The Union Minister and party donated a total of 145 rice bags for 1,019 monks and nunneries in Lewe of Nay Pyi Taw.—MNA

Attempt to destroy YMBA building

SOME unscrupulous persons deliberately destroyed the YMBA (Young Men's Buddhist Association) building located on Yay Kyaw street in Pazundaung Township of Yangan Region.

About 20 unidentified suspects attempted to enter by destroying the fence of the building at about 8 pm on 1 March but to no avail. Therefore, they destroyed the YBMA signboard, glasses used in windows and three air conditioners. They also painted curse words on the walls and attempted to destroy the State Flag and Sasana Flag.

Moreover, some protesters shouted out slangs in front of the building on the evening of 28 February.

Therefore, YBMA also released a statement that such doings seemed to defame the YMBA that fought for Myanmar's Independence and led the national liberation movement, and show disrespect for Myanmar's history, country and Buddha Sasana.

A case was opened against the suspects at Pazundaung Myoma police station.--MNA



About 20 suspects attempted to destroy the YMBA building yesterday.

Request to health workers

1. It is appreciated for the strenuous efforts of the medical doctors, nurses, medical experts and other health works at the respective departments under the Ministry of Health and Sports at the front-line in the fight against prevention, containment and treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).
2. As the vaccination programme of COVID-19 is being conducted for the public and the real-time healthcare services are required for the people, all the staff members at the respective departments under the Ministry of Health and Sports are strongly urged to return to their duties with taking the well-being of patients into consideration.

Ministry of Health and Sports
8 February 2021

Request to Public

1. Democracy practices have granted the public for freedom of speech, practices and living. Such freedoms should not harm others. Diverse views of others should be understood, but should not be disturbed or harassed. However, with the reason of human rights, some persons are now under pressured, harassed and threatened in breaching the laws. Undisciplined acts could lead to tarnish the image of democracy.
2. For preventing destructive actions against stability of the state, safety of the public and rule of law, it is also required to proper actions in line with the law.
3. All the people who favour justice, freedom, equality and safety are requested to oppose breaching the laws and prevent such actions for the benefit of country and people.

Trade Mark Ads Call 09251022355

State Administration Council's Announcement

Some unscrupulous persons are putting various forms of pressures and posing threats to civil service personnel in performing their duties at present. The civil service personnel who have encountered such pressures and threats shall contact the following phone numbers. Strong legal actions will also be taken against those who make such pressures and threats.

Contact phone numbers	-067 412 168	-067 412 246	-067 412 388	-067 412 598	-067 412 539
	-067 412 222	-067 412 387	-067 412 444	-067 412 066	-067 412 540

Mandalay Region Administration Council's Announcement to Public

Some unscrupulous persons are putting various forms of pressures and posing threats to civil service personnel in performing their duties at present. The civil service personnel who have encountered such pressures and threats shall contact the following phone numbers. Strong legal actions will also be taken against those who make such pressures and threats.

Contact phone numbers	-02 403 9635	-02 403 6869	-09 797 144 144
	-02 403 7199	-02 403 6978	-09 694 740 311

Watermelon supply exceeds demand as about 1,300 trucks stuck in Muse depot

ALTHOUGH watermelon is fetching a good price after the Chinese New Year, about 1,300 trucks are now stranded in Muse 105th-mile zone due to China's two-day closure of border trade. Consequently, watermelon supply exceeds the demand, said Sai Min Thu Naing from Khwar Nyo Fruit Depot.

"The price is regular after the Chinese New Year. However, the two-day holidays of trading disrupted the watermelon transport route. About 1,300 trucks were stuck in the 105th-mile zone. At present, only 150-200 trucks can enter China. So, there is no market equilibrium," he elaborated.

China shut down the post on 25 and 28 February without a specific reason, resulting in 1,300 watermelon trucks stranded in the 105th-mile zone.

A tonne of watermelon (855 variety) now receives the maximum price of 65,000 Yuan,

whereas the regular price is around 45,000 Yuan.

Additionally, about 200 watermelon trucks daily enter the Muse land border. The trucks continue to leave for China via Muse.

Myanmar's watermelon market earlier relied only on China. Myanmar shipped 45 tonnes of seedless watermelon to the Dubai market in December 2020 and January 2021.

After the country achieves success on the Dubai market, Myanmar plans to expand its market to Hong Kong SAR, the UAE and Qatar, the association stated.

On 5 January 2021, the 105th-mile Fruit Wholesale Centre released a statement that the number of watermelon and muskmelon trucks for exports is set to govern the market.

During the previous financial year, the growers and the traders suffered the loss due to the price instability and trans-



Watermelon and muskmelon will be harvested up to May-end across the country, except Kayah and Chin states.

portation difficulties triggered by the COVID-19.

Watermelon and muskmelon will be harvested up to

May-end across the country, except Kayah and Chin states.

Myanmar yearly exports over 800,000 tonnes of wa-

termelon and about 150,000 tonnes of muskmelons to China, the association stated. — NN/GNLM

Myanmar mineral exports plunge by \$521 mln as of 19 February

THE value of Myanmar's mineral exports has drastically fallen to US\$447 million as of 19 February in the current financial year 2020-2021 since 1 October, reflecting a severe drop of \$521 million as against a year-ago period, the Ministry of Commerce data indicated.

The mineral exports hit 968.6 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.

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 which cover 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 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 the 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. —KK/GNLM

Investments from Hong Kong SAR top \$87 mln in 4 months (Oct-Jan)

HONG KONG SAR, the third-largest investor in Myanmar, pumped in US\$87 million with five projects as of January-end, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

Hong Kong puts investment in real estate development, electricity, and garment businesses.

Singapore is the top source of foreign direct investments into Myanmar in the first four months of the current financial year 2020-2021, bringing in \$378 million under 12 projects.

China stood as the second-largest investors this FY, with an estimated capital of \$139.354 million from 10 enterprises.

Those enterprises listed from Thailand, India, Japan, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, the UK, Viet Nam, Marshall Island and China (Taipei) also made investments this year.

Myanmar has attracted foreign direct investments of more than US\$672.59 million

in Oct-Jan of the current FY. They include expanding capital by existing enterprises and acquisitions in the Special Economic Zones, DICA's statistics indicated.

MIC intends to reach an FDI target of \$5.8 billion for the current FY2020-2021.

Myanmar is trying to attract foreign investment by providing tax relief, tax incentives, investment opportunities, and fast processing proposals. However, the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations is inviting only responsible businesses to the country.

The economic interaction between Myanmar and Hong Kong SAR has been increasing rapidly. Hong Kong emerged as the third-largest investor in Myanmar after Singapore and China. Between FY2016-2017 and January 2021, 144 enterprises from Hong Kong brought in foreign direct investment of \$2.5 billion into Myanmar, according to an official data on permitted enterprises released by the DICA. — HH/GNLM

Mustard, other crops grown on manageable scale using underground water in Minbu Township



Local farmers are growing the vegetables using the underground water on manageable scale in Minbu.

THE local farmers from Kyauktan village in Minbu (Sagu) Township are growing the vegetables using the underground water. This year, people are growing mustard and other crops on a manageable scale to earn family income, said Daw Mya Kyi, a mustard grower from Kyauktan village.

“This is our family business, and we have been growing them for five years. Only our family members are cultivating them. So, we could save the labour charges. We have spent merely ploughing fees and fertilizer costs. Now, the mustard is yielding profusely and is sold every two or three days. We have grown not only the mustard but also other crops,” she added.

“The cultivation is a manageable scale, and the labourers are hired when ploughing and cultivating. During the harvest season, the family members are working together to save the labour charges. The villages are growing gourd, coriander plant, garden pea, mustard and chilli. So, we are earning the family income from each crop,” said Daw Mya Kyi, a manageable scale grower. — Zayar Htet (Minbu)/GNLM ■

Mt Zinghmuh to be developed as tourist destination

MOUNT Zinghmuh, the third highest peak in Chin State, located between Haka town and Thantlang town, Falam township in Chin State, will be established as a tourist destination, according to the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism Department in Chin State.

Mt Zinghmuh is as beautiful as the highest mountain in Chin State called Nat Ma Taung (Khonnuamthung in the local Chin language). However, it is not a well-known mountain because of low transportation. Now, only the residents can reach those areas. Mt Zinghmuh is attracting more local and foreign visitors. Thus, studies are being carried out to improve the mountain road.

“Mt Zinghmuh is close to Lai Ti Li natural lake. The peak of the mountain overlooks the natural scenic beauty. It can bring benefit to the local people if it is developed as a tourist destination. That is the reason why we are establishing the Lai Ti Li natural lake as a tourist destination. Visitors can go from three cities. It is appropriate to develop these places as tourist destinations, said an official from the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism in Chin State.

Its peak is 8,414 feet above sea level. When the weather is fine, the visitors could view Chin State (North) Sagaing region and Magway region.

The visitors could reach



An aerial view of Mount Zinghmuh (Nat Ma Taung).

Mt Zinghmuh trough Falam, Haka and Thantlang towns by cars and motorbikes. The government is developing a 19,937-acre national park, covering 7,756 acres in Haka township, over 4,000 acres in Thantlang and over 6,000 acres in Falam township. —Zohayzar/GNLM ■

Two-vehicle collision kills two in Mong Phyat

TWO men were killed following a head-on car crash in Mong Phyat Township in Tachilek District, Shan State (East) on 1 March evening.

A 47-year-old man and a 45-year-old man lost their lives in the accident.

According to the witnesses, the crash happened at approximately 3:45 pm between Soatpan village and Saikgone village on Kengtung-Mong Phyat-Tachilek Pyidaungsu Road.

According to the investigation, Vigo, a 12-wheel vehicle, which was en route to Tachilek from Mong Phyat driven by Arr Phar, 37, with U Maw Yar, 47, U Arr Khant, 45, and Ma Arr Par, 18 onboard from Tachilek,



Two men were killed following a head-on car crash in Mong Phyat Township in Tachilek District, Shan State (East) on 1 March evening.

collided head-on with another Mong Phyat from Tachilek driven by Aung Ko Min Naing, 31, from Meiktila town on Pyidaungsu Road.

The driver and the passenger from the Vigo vehicle have been pronounced dead with severe injuries at the scene. Meanwhile, the passenger named Ma Arr Par from the same car was rushed to the hospital in critical condition.

The Pyidaungsu Road was shut down for about an hour during the traffic crash investigation. The road was reopened later.

The Mong Phyat Myoma Police Station has filed charges against both reckless vehicle-drivers Arr Phar, 37, and Aung Ko Min Naing, 31, under Sections 279/338/304 of the Penal Code, according to the Township Police Station. — Township (IPRD)/GNLM ■

Civil servants' loyalty towards the country

By Maung Mya Tha

The body structures of human beings are extraordinary. According to Buddha's words, the individuals are driven by Karma, Mind, Weather (environment) or Nutrition (energy). Scientists have studied the biomechanics of the living human body and found it working amazingly and precisely. That is called the circadian rhythm -- biological clock rhythms in Myanmar. It works precisely with the balance of the mental and physical system of a person. The digestive system adjusts to the diet and prepares the production of protein. If the biological clock does not work correctly, the human catastrophe will be lost.

Duties

In a healthy person, the hands, legs, head and body usually are moving. However, feelings like love, hate, enjoyment, pleasure, and stinginess occur with brain control. Crying, laughing, smiling, and anger also happen due to brain stimulation. Similarly, the lung, heart, kidney and stomach also serve their duties properly. The heart also works its circulatory system well.

According to the biological clock of a human do their regular system inside the human body. The large intestine works its daily tasks between 5 am and 7 am, while the stomach between 7 am and 9 am, the heart between 11:30 am and 1 pm, the small intestine between 1 pm and 3 pm, the bladder between 3 pm and 5 pm, and the kidney between 5 pm and 7 pm.

The pericardium works between 7 pm and 9 pm. So the experts suggest people reduce the intense emotional feeling to support the system of the pericardium. Although humans are sleeping, the biological clock is still running. The body is completely relaxed between 9 pm and 11 pm as the head to toe organs regain energy while the liver works between 11 pm and 3 am.

Meanwhile, the liver does its system precisely. The gall-

The current situation is under the State of Emergency. Some of the unscrupulous persons and those who do not want the country's prosperity are committing incitement or threatening the government staff in various ways not to enter their duties to stop the State mechanism during this period.

bladder is active from 11 pm to 1 am, while the lung from 3 am-5 am. The lung makes inhalation and exhalation to keep dirt out of the lung and make people feel active the next morning.

Ones who keep rhythms of the State's functions

Suppose the human body as a country. In that case, the head, legs, and hand, which are essential for the country, are the people, and the body's crucial inner parts are the public servants. Why? Human beings' health and bio-system play a vital role for the people while trying hard to promote the daily living standard. The public servants who keep the rhythms of the State are also crucial.

No matter how the person is influential, if the bio-system of his body fails, the person cannot afford to do something. If the worker mechanism fails, the country is also unable to stand. If the country faces disorder, the lives, properties, and daily lives will again collapse with the absence of the rule of law.

The current situation is under the State of Emergency. Some of the unscrupulous persons and those who do not want the country's prosperity are committing incitement or threatening the government staff in various ways not to en-

ter their duties to stop the State mechanism during this period.

Currently, the social network is full of such incitements. They also lure the government staff with fake news without considering the keeps of the government staff.

Moreover, the unscrupulous persons also used obscene language and criticized the dedicated government staff.

The government servants must remain loyal to the benefits of the country and the people. During the two former government terms elected by holding the multiparty general election under the 2008 Constitution, they had to serve the duties in line with the respective government's policies. Therefore, the government employees should carry out their responsibilities by using their utmost efforts to be good civil servants.

Inseparability of government and government staff

In reality, the government staff are not the loyalists of any political parties. They are the ones who serve the duties for the interests of the State and people. The State and the government staff are inseparable and live on through thick and thin.

The high morale of government employees plays a crucial role in promoting State development. If their moral status and ability decrease, it may occur delays in State development.

There are more than 1 million government staff in the country, and it is only about 1.4 per cent of the population. The government employees are serving their duties across the nation. Every government employee lives with their families who rely solely on them. The salary and benefits of government employees are the life guarantees of their family members.

Therefore, the government staff need to consider themselves if they commit something that affects the in-

terests of their departments, country and people due to their emotions or the incitement of other groups or people.

Most of the people, who urge the government employees not to go to work, are the ones who do not understand the existence of government staff and their family members, the nature of staff organizations, duties of government staff, rules and regulations.

They are intentionally committing incitement to the government staff to stop the government mechanism.

The government servants must remain loyal to the benefits of the country and the people. During the two former government terms elected by holding the multiparty general election under the 2008 Constitution, they had to serve the duties in line with the respective government's policies. Therefore, the government employees should carry out their responsibilities by using their utmost efforts to be good civil servants.

They should take into account that their family members and relatives rely on their salaries. Therefore, I hope they will not change their career in government services that guarantee their lives, social welfare benefits, entitlement, and other opportunities with the wrong concepts.

The main aim of the transfer of power is not to refrain from the democratic pathway that all the citizens desire as there was no solution or accountability for election frauds in the 2020 general election. Similarly, the proper activities are being carried out for the State's development step by step under the Constitution.

Although there are many plans to implement to a certain extent, delays occur in the operations due to the other destructive elements. Therefore, serving the duties full of responsibilities is the best choice for a good government employee who maintains loyalty towards the country and people.

Translated.

Better preparedness will mitigate losses from severe weather patterns

For the next three months: March, April and May, the people in Myanmar will be exposed to high-temperature, gale-force winds and high UV index.

Especially, gale-force winds hit the country in the evenings in March and April, the first two months of our summer season.

The Meteorology and Hydrology Department issued a weather warning yesterday stating that during March and April, isolated rains or thundershowers are likely in the afternoons or evenings, accompanied by strong winds, hail, thunder, and lightning, due to convective clouds created by gradually rising day temperatures across the country. The surface wind speed is expected to reach a mean of 35 to 40 km per hour.

Hence, people should take “full precautions” in the evenings and take “necessary action” to protect themselves and their property.

Operators of vessels in rivers in affected areas should remain on the alert for tornadoes that can occur during thunderstorms.

Gale-force winds, which tend to follow heavy rainfall, hit parts of Myanmar every year, destroying homes, toppling trees, and causing fatalities and injuries. Most areas across the country have experienced strong winds during the day due to high temperatures.

People should stop everything and stay indoors when a storm wind hits.

Another danger in the summer season is ultra-violet (UV) rays. With daytime temperatures increasing, the UV index level will also be rising day by day.

As the weather transitions from winter to summer, the daytime temperature will spiral upwards, and we can expect more severe weather patterns rather than normal conditions as the world warms up due to climate change.

On account of global warming, the evil effects of natural disasters related to climate change are threatening the safety of our planet. There have been increased occurrences of natural disasters with greater destructive impact. The consequences of climate change can cause physical and mental damage.

It is clear that we need to be ready to resist and respond to natural disasters. We would like to remind all of you that our country has seen an increase in the number of natural disasters since 1980.

Weather patterns do not care about coronavirus, and weather-related disasters are becoming more frequent and severe.

Being on alert and better preparation for coming severe weather patterns and disasters would allow us to go beyond mitigating losses.

■■■

COVID-19: UN experts urge WTO cooperation on vaccines to protect global public health

UN experts said on 1 March billions of people, especially in the Global South, risk being excluded from the benefits of COVID-19 immunization until 2024 and urged rich States to end short-sighted vaccine nationalism that is fuelling a vaccine-divide and undermining worldwide recovery.

“Recovery from the pandemic is impossible unless it ends for everyone. New mutating forms of the virus that may emerge in largely unvaccinated populations can pose a threat to all, including those previously vaccinated,” said the independent experts appointed by the Human Rights Council.

“Recovery requires all States to realize their duty to cooperate in global solidarity to ensure equitable access to the vaccines worldwide without discrimination,” the experts said.

They said the challenges of addressing the pandemic initially appeared to bring people and nations together in the face of an unknown disease.

“The collective global efforts of scientists, states and civil society organizations to find a vaccine had the promising signs of a new era of cooperation and equality, where nobody would in fact be left behind. However, as things stand,

the supply of vaccines casts a long shadow on equitable access to the scientific achievement of several vaccines being produced,” the experts said.

Division, inequality, national and regional self-interest currently dictate access to COVID-19 vaccines, they said. “According to WHO, almost 95 percent of vaccines produced thus far have gone to 10 wealthy countries. This is an abject failure of the duty to cooperate inherent in the right to development, which all human persons and peoples enjoy.”

While the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Facility (COVAX) led by the World Health Organisation is an important step towards globally coordinated vaccine distribution, States are not engaging with it sufficiently.

The experts strongly urge WTO members to positively consider necessary waivers to the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual

Property Rights (TRIPS) during the March 2021 TRIPS Council meetings, in a manner conducive to the right to development for everyone.

The WTO’s sustainable development objective cannot be realised by undermining the ability of countries to interpret the TRIPS Agreement in a way supportive of their development needs and ways to deal with public health crisis, the experts said.

“The TRIPS Agreement can and should facilitate the protection of public health on a global scale, promote self-sufficiency of all members, and not be a barrier to accessibility of COVID-19-related medicines and vaccines.

“COVID-19 pandemic is a global challenge which can only be effectively addressed through concerted global action. Lives cannot be saved and the vulnerable cannot be protected by mere rhetoric, with-



A healthcare worker administers a dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine in Tel Aviv on Feb. 16. **PHOTO: AFP**

out concrete commitment to universal and equitable vaccine access,” the experts said.

“We urge States to engage

in meaningful international cooperation, as an obligation not an option, in order to avoid delaying distributions to the

vulnerable population around the world, and not leave them further behind.”

SOURCE: UN NEWS

Charity calls for urgent action over virus school closures

Children around the world have lost more than a third of the standard global 190-day school year because of the coronavirus pandemic, Save the Children said on Tuesday. The London-based charity urged governments and donors to take swift action to prevent “an irreversible impact” on the lives of millions of children who now may never return to school.

It estimated children have missed out on an average of 74 days of education each due to school closures and a lack of access to remote learning caused by the global health crisis.

The charity calculated 112 billion schooldays have been lost in total worldwide, with the poorest children disproportionately affected.

Children in Latin America, the Caribbean and South Asia missed out on almost triple the education of those in Western Europe, it added.

We will lose the war against the pandemic if we do not ensure children get back to school safely, have access to health services,



Children leave Hawthorne Scholastic Academy following their first day of in-person learning on March 1, 2021 in Chicago, Illinois. **PHOTO: AFP**

have enough to eat and are protected.

“Almost a year after the

global pandemic was officially declared, hundreds of millions of children remain out of school,”

said chief executive Inger Ashing. “2021 must be the year to ensure that children do not pay the price for this pandemic.

“We will lose the war against the pandemic if we do not ensure children get back to school safely, have access to health services, have enough to eat and are protected.”

The charity said supporting children’s safe return to school should be made a priority at this year’s meeting of G7 wealthy nations, hosted by Britain in June.

‘I cry’

Save the Children found at the peak of the pandemic last year, 91 per cent of the world’s learners

were locked out of schools.

Its analysis concluded that the lockdowns have widened the wealth and opportunity gap both between and within countries.

“The divide grew between wealthier and poorer families; urban and rural households; refugees or displaced children and host populations; children with disabilities and children without disabilities,” Save the Children added.

It interviewed Santiago, a 13-year-old Venezuelan who attends a school for children with a profound hearing loss supported by the charity and reported being “sad, worried, and scared” by the situation.

“I like school. People understand me there. When I can’t go to school, I cry and just want to sleep,” he was quoted as saying.

Save the Children also discovered “huge discrepancies” in remote access to learning in wealthier nations during the pandemic, in particular in the US.

Students there are more disconnected from the internet than those in other high-income countries, likely hindering their online learning, it said.

Meanwhile in Norway, 30 per cent of youths aged nine to 18 did not have access to a computer at home, and in the Netherlands this was one of five children.

SOURCE: AFP

Objectives of 76th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

FOR the Tatmadaw to join hands with the entire nation to safeguard democracy, which is the aspiration of all the nationalities of the country, from deviating from its path, in accord with the basic principles of the Constitution, while observing Our Three Main National Causes, which is the national policy;

To protect the people from all dangers including natural disasters at any time and in any situation and to provide all-round assistance for ensuring social security of the people;

To restore eternal peace based on NCA, without deviating from Our Three Main National Causes, as the cessation of armed conflicts is the principal requirement in realizing democracy;

To build a strong and compact Standard Army, which has the combat prowess and combat power; to effectively safeguard the State peace and stability and sovereignty.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7: 00 pm Tuesday 2 March 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 3 March 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing Region and Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin, Mon States 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 (4-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Taninthayi Region and Kachin, Kayin and Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 March 2021: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 March 2021: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 March 2021: Generally fair weather.

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Let's strengthen the country with enhanced efficiency and capacity

By Zwe

Civil service personnel, as well as the public, have been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Government servants have to go to work as a matter of duty and are worried about the family members left at home.

Many of the employees who work away from home do not return home for many months. Some employees could not even present at the funeral of their parents and relatives. However, no matter how difficult it is, they serve the country.

In fact, there is a code of conduct to observe and rules to follow and responsibilities that range from junior to senior as civil servants. If necessary for the State's benefit, they need to perform their duties at any time, not just during working hours but also for carrying out other commitments and the original tasks.

It is clearly stated that all employees are responsible for complying with the Civil Service Personnel Law, orders, regulations and Code of Conduct. It is known to all government employees, and they also need to study and memorize it.

It is undeniable that the country's development is the success of the employees and the growth of the State-owned economy due to the inclusiveness of all employees. No employee can refuse to obey the duty to perform or break the rules to follow. Employees are devoting their time to serve the country in respective departments for the country and its people and their family.

If we look back at the history we went through, we can see that the government has never abandoned its civil service personnel but offered the salary, allowance and benefits as much as it could. They are offered a decent wage, benefits, pension and social security benefits. If they serve the country in a tranquil place, they are offered a bonus.

Although the government has not provided housing for all civil service personnel, the employees who have difficulties finding a place to live have

Moreover, every employee has the right to vote as a citizen but free from political affairs. Civil service personnel have either no right to support financially or any other way to any political party for the party's political movements or to be involved in any political party or organization.

been provided low-cost housing, staff housing and rental housing. It is obvious that the government is still providing the best possible arrangements for accommodation, even it is not fully operational.

While still being reasonable, I would like to share a little bit about the code of ethics that civil service personnel should observe. There are 15 codes of ethics. Firstly, it is stated to keep the loyalty and respect of the State; the second is to respect existing laws. The third is to work for the benefit of the people.

The fourth is to carry out the duties and responsibilities honestly and completely. The fifth is to try to upgrade the skills, performance and strive for capacity building. The sixth states to follow the orders and responsibilities of the superior.

The seventh is to ensure that no financial loss is made. The eighth code of ethics is to abide by the rules and regulation of the staff and the workplace regulations, orders and instructions of the organization.

The ninth code of ethics states that no manner with moral depravity or lack of decency is allowed.

The tenth states not to

abuse the authority assigned by the State for personal gain and to avoid bribery. The eleventh states to avoid dishonestly making money apart from the salary.

The twelfth code of ethics

Let me encourage all employees to be a part of the key players to move forward to the expected democratic nation with understanding and trust by individually upgrading the skills and capacity, by complying with the workplace rules and regulations respectfully and by following the employee ethics unitedly.

states to maintain the unity of all employees. The thirteenth states that the use of department equipment must not be used without permission.

The fourteenth code of ethics states not to write or publish a book that will tarnish the State's image, and the last one is to avoid engaging in any activity that endangers the security and safety of the State.

There are required qualifications for each position to become civil service personnel, such as educational qualification, age, skills. When becoming one, it must comply with workplace rules, such as working time rules and regulations and the rules of conduct.

Employees are not allowed to leave the workplace or to take leave without proper reason. They must not leave work without permission during working hours. The complete performance of the duty is one of the top responsibilities of the Code of Conduct.

Not to do inciting, encouraging or supporting to disrupt staff unity and the peace in the workplace. The employees

need to be careful during this time of State Emergency.

Moreover, every employee has the right to vote as a citizen but free from political affairs. Civil service personnel have either no right to support financially or any other way to any political party for the party's political movements or to be involved in any political party or organization.

It is not allowed to be involved in organizations, associations, or union that are not organized according to the rules set by the State Government. It is the staff duty to prevent their families from involving in actions to attack the government directly or indirectly. It is also issued as a matter of staff policy not to engage in any discussion or incitement related to party politics.

From my point of view, for why it is forbidden to not involve in any political party movement as civil service personnel, it is because the government is always changing. However, the State's civil service organizations never do. Besides, every employee generally performs their duties until the age of 60.

If the employee organizations and employees are only expressing their personal feeling with differences in political beliefs, it can lead to the disruption of building the country, and it is believed that these rules and regulations were published.

I believe that State Employees are people who work with their skills for the country's interest and its people. I hope they will serve the nation by staying out of activities that will harm the interest of the country and people with the staff rules and regulations.

Let me encourage all employees to be a part of the key players to move forward to the expected democratic nation with understanding and trust by individually upgrading the skills and capacity, by complying with the workplace rules and regulations respectfully and by following the employee ethics unitedly.

Translated.

Twitter to boot users who persist with Covid-19 lies

TWITTER said Monday it will start labelling misleading tweets about Covid-19 vaccines and boot users who persist in spreading such misinformation. The one-to-many messaging service introduced a “strike system” that will gradually escalate to a permanent ban after the fifth offending tweet.

Twitter users will be notified when a tweet is labelled as misleading or needs to be removed for breaking the platform’s rules, earning a strike, according to the company. The second and third strikes will each result in the violating account being blocked for 12 hours. With a fourth violation, an account will be sidelined for seven days. A fifth strike will get accounts permanently suspended, Twitter said.

Twitter late last year began calling on users to remove dangerously misleading Covid-19 claims, including suggestions that vaccines are used to harm or control people. The service also targeted baseless claims about adverse effects of vaccines or questioning the reality of the pandemic.

Since then, Twitter has removed more than 8,400 tweets and notified some 11.5 million accounts worldwide about violations of its Covid-19 information rules. —AFP ■



Twitter said Monday it will start labeling misleading tweets about Covid-19 vaccines and boot users who persist in spreading such misinformation. PHOTO: AFP

The United States remains the world’s worst-affected country

THE novel coronavirus has killed at least 2,539,505 people since the outbreak emerged in China in December 2019.

At least 114,360,550 cases of coronavirus have been registered. The vast majority have recovered, though some have continued to experience symptoms weeks or even months later.

These figures are based on daily tolls provided by health authorities in each country and exclude later re-evaluations by statistical organizations, as has happened in Russia, Spain and Britain.

On Monday, 6,800 new deaths and 298,141 new cases were recorded worldwide. Based on the latest reports, the countries with the most new deaths were the United States with 1,336 new deaths, followed by Brazil with 778 and Spain with 467.

The United States is the worst-affected country with 514,657 deaths from 28,664,448 cases.

After the US, the hardest-hit countries are Brazil with 255,720 deaths from 10,587,001 cases, Mexico with 186,152 deaths from 2,089,281 cases, India with 157,248 deaths from 11,124,527



The novel coronavirus has killed at least 2,539,505 people since the outbreak emerged in China in December 2019. PHOTO: AFP

cases, and the United Kingdom with 122,953 deaths from 4,182,009 cases.

The country with the highest number of deaths compared to its population is the Czech Republic with 193 fatalities per 100,000 inhabitants, followed by Belgium with 191, Slovenia at 185, the United Kingdom with 181 and Italy with 162. Europe overall has 856,095 deaths from 37,753,889 cases, Latin America and the Caribbean 680,305 deaths from 21,441,424 infections, and the United States and Canada 536,664 deaths from 29,532,563 cases.

Asia has reported 256,981 deaths from 16,170,542 cases, the Middle East 104,478 deaths from 5,524,684 cases, Africa 104,031 deaths from 3,904,996 cases, and Oceania 951 deaths from 32,453 cases. Since the start of the pandemic, the number of tests conducted has greatly increased while testing and reporting techniques have improved, leading to a rise in reported cases. However, the number of diagnosed cases is only a part of the real total number of infections as a significant number of less serious or asymptomatic cases always remain undetected. —AFP ■

More than 400 acts of violence against COVID health workers in 2020: report

INSULTS, beatings, arrests – health workers battling the coronavirus were subjected to more than 400 acts of violence related to COVID-19 worldwide in 2020, according to a report published Tuesday by a health NGO.

The Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition unveiled an interactive map that shows 1,172 violent acts and attacks occurred against health workers or facilities last year, “a minimum estimate,” according to the NGO.

More than a third (412) of the acts are directly related to COVID-19, it said, citing several examples including in Mexico, where a nurse was attacked and injured by a group accusing her of spreading the virus.

In Dakar, three social workers had stones hurled at them by residents who refused to have a coronavirus victim buried near their homes.

In Birmingham, England, a health worker was spat at and insulted by a neighbour.

The vast majority, 80 per

cent, of the perpetrators of the violence were civilians, but threats also came from public authorities.

In Egypt, health workers who criticized the regime’s handling of the pandemic were arrested by security forces and accused of spreading false information and of belonging to a terrorist group.

Insecurity Insight, which developed the interactive map, also recorded 802 attacks in countries at war or on victims of civil conflicts, such as the bombing of hospitals in Yemen and the kidnapping of doctors in Nigeria.

“The map shows that violence and intimidation against healthcare was a truly global crisis in 2020, affecting 79 countries,” said Insecurity Insight director Christina Wille in a statement. —AFP ■



FILE: A health worker process a COVID-19 antibody test after getting the blood from the patient. PHOTO: AFP

Iraq receives first Covid vaccines, gift from China

IRAQ on Tuesday received 50,000 Sinopharm vaccines donated by China, the health ministry announced, launching a long-awaited vaccination campaign.

Health ministry spokesman Seif Al-Badr told reporters that the first delivery in the early hours meant inoculations could begin.

“The doses will be delivered to Baghdad’s three main hospitals, and maybe to some provinces,” said Badr, who confirmed the jabs were donations.

“We will start vaccinations today, Tuesday,” he said.

The health ministry simultaneously announced it had agreed with the Chinese ambassador in Baghdad to purchase another two million doses, with no details on payment or timing. Sinopharm affiliate Wuhan

Institute Of Biological Products says its vaccine has an efficacy rate of 72.51 per cent, behind rival jabs by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, which have 95 per cent and 94.5 per cent rates respectively.

Hours earlier, on Monday afternoon, the health ministry launched an online platform for citizens to register for vaccinations, but it had not said the campaign would begin the next day and the page was not functional on Tuesday.

It has said health workers, security forces and the elderly would be prioritized and that the vaccine would be administered free of charge, but has given few other details.

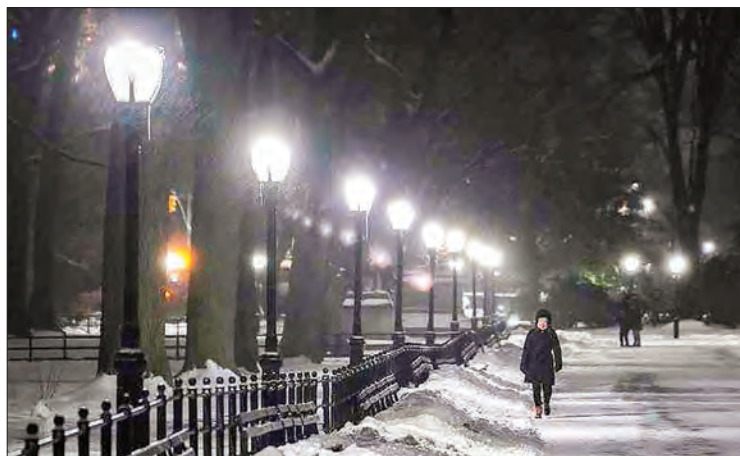
The first jabs arrived as the Iraqi government faces growing criticism of its handling of the pandemic. —AFP

As oil prices rally, old OPEC tensions set to rise

AS members of the oil cartel OPEC and its allies meet this week to discuss adjusting output, analysts expect old tensions between oil producer giants to flare up again.

Russia and Saudi Arabia, respectively the world's second and third largest producers of oil after the United States, had often been at loggerheads in the past, but when crude oil prices plunged due to the pandemic, they rallied to radically cut production levels and underpin prices.

Now that prices have rebounded to pre-pandemic levels, at around \$65 a barrel, the two heavyweights and their partners will discuss how to move forward -- and how much crude to release back onto the global market.



Cold weather in the United States and Covid-19 vaccine programmes have helped oil prices recover to around \$65 a barrel. PHOTO: AFP

"The priorities are well known: Russia wants to return to normal production as quickly as possible while Saudi Arabia wants to benefit from high prices a little longer," Bjarne Schieldrop, chief analyst at commodities research group Seb,

said ahead of a ministerial level meeting Thursday at which quotas are expected to be adjusted.

Loosening cuts

While global demand for crude is recovering, OPEC has ensured that its production cuts create an "artificial shortage"

that supports prices, according to Stephen Innes, chief global market strategist at broker group Axi.

Following two days of tough negotiations at 2021's first summit in early January, the 23 members of the OPEC and OPEC+ groupings agreed to slowly increase oil supply to the world market.

For March, members have already agreed to withhold 7.05 million barrels per day (bpd), less than the 7.125 million bpd they cut in February. With vaccination campaigns underway and demand in China, the world's largest oil importer, back at pre-pandemic levels, exactly how much oil OPEC+ will allow to be traded for April will be at the heart of Thursday's ministerial-level debate. —AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Thai Airways to halve workforce under rehabilitation plan

THAI Airways International PLC said Tuesday it expects around 6,000-7,000 employees to participate in a voluntarily resignation agreement, thereby halving its workforce.

The employee reduction is part of the troubled flag carrier's debt rehabilitation plan submitted to the Central Bankruptcy Court as ordered by the Thai government last year.

Chansin Treenuchagron, the carrier's acting president, said that Thai Airways employed some 29,000 workers in 2019, before reducing to 21,000 at the end of last year.

It expects a further reduction to around 14,000-15,000 positions by this year which the company considers "suitable for the airline's future business plan," according to Chansin. — Kyodo News ■

Amazon accused of race-gender bias in workplace

A lawsuit filed in US federal court on Monday accused Amazon of keeping women and Black employees down while publicly talking up the need for diversity and social justice.

Charlotte Newman, who is Black and heads Under-represented Founder Startup Business Development at Amazon Web Services, said in the suit she has been harassed, sexually assaulted, and kept from advancing to positions she deserved in the corporation.

"Like so many other Black and female employees at Amazon, Charlotte Newman was confronted with a systemic pattern of insurmountable discrimination based upon the colour of her skin and her gender," attorneys argued in the lawsuit.

Newman is asking for her case to be heard by a jury, and to be awarded unspecified cash damages. —AFP ■

Scottish distillery looks to history to lift spirits



Around 10,000 people are directly employed by the Scottish distilling industry. PHOTO: AFP

IT has survived world wars, Prohibition and The Great Depression but this may very well be the toughest time yet for Scotland's oldest whisky maker.

The Glenturret Distillery, located on the banks of the River Turret two miles (3.2 kilometres) northwest of the town of Crieff, was established in 1763 and is a popular stop for whisky enthusiasts.

Apart from the rushing river and a distiller rolling oak barrels into a filling house, The Glenturret, which closed to visitors during the Covid-19 lockdown, is eerily quiet. Travel restrictions that came with the pandemic have caused sales to fall at the distillery, in pubs and restaurants, and at airport duty-free shops.

But it is a 25 per cent tariff on Scotch imposed by the United States in October 2019 and now a slow-down in exports to Europe after the end of the Brexit transition that is hitting profits the hardest.

"It has been a really tough period for us with Covid, US tariffs and Brexit as well," the distillery's managing director, John Laurie, told AFP.

"Covid in particular affects our tourism. Then the export markets have been impacted by Brexit and Scottish whisky tariffs in America have been really troublesome."

Laurie said the increased paperwork and export requirements after Britain's departure from the European single market on December 31 had delayed shipments to the bloc. —AFP ■

Zoom reports big 3Q gains, but slowing growth sinks stock

ZOOM'S videoconferencing service remains a fixture in pandemic life, but its breakneck growth is showing signs of tapering off as investors debate whether the company will be able to build upon its recent success after a vaccine enables people to intermingle again.

For now, Zoom is thriving as tens of millions of people who never heard of the service at the beginning of the year rely on its video meeting tools to connect with their co-workers, teachers, friends and family while efforts to fight contain the pandemic prevent them from going into offices, schools and most many other places. That dependence boosted Zoom's fortunes, producing a pandemic-driven success story that was highlighted again Monday with the release of the company's quarterly results for the August-October

period.

Zoom's revenue more than quadrupled from the same time last year to \$777 million, yielding a profit of \$198 million, up from just \$2.2 million a year ago. Both those figures easily topped the estimates among analyst surveyed by FactSet Research, but Zoom's stock still shed 5% in Monday's extended trading after the numbers came out.

One possible reason for the reaction is that number of companies anteing up for Zoom's subscription version of its service isn't rising as rapidly as during the pandemic's early stages. Zoom ended its latest quarter with 433,700 customers with at least 10 employees, an increase of 63,500 customers from July. In each of the previous two quarters, Zoom had added more than 100,000 customers with at least 10 em-



Millions of people are using Zoom to communicate. PHOTO: AFP

ployees.

While that slowdown was considered an inevitable, the drop-off is nevertheless causing many investors to start considering the possibility that Zoom won't be able to maintain the

momentum it gained from this year's stay-at-home orders after a substantial portion of the population is vaccinated against the novel coronavirus that has killed more than 1.4 million people worldwide. —AFP ■

Asia markets mixed on renewed fears over valuations

ASIAN markets struggled on Tuesday to maintain a global rebound from last week's rout as the improving economic outlook and vaccine rollouts were offset by lingering worries that valuations may have run too far.

US lawmakers' push to get Joe Biden's huge stimulus through Congress in the next two weeks and Wall Street's powerful lead – driven by a rally in tech firms – were not enough to keep spirits up, with inflation fears also hanging in the background.

A ramping-up of immunizations, falling

infection rates, government and central bank support and the easing of lockdown measures have fanned expectations that the global economy will enjoy a blistering recovery this year and next, helping propel equities to record or multi-year highs.

But the bright-eyed optimism has given way in recent weeks to worries that the so-called reflation trade will send prices soaring and force officials at the Federal Reserve and elsewhere to wind in their ultra-easy monetary conditions, including lifting interest rates. —AFP ■

German exports to Britain slump 30% on Brexit, pandemic



A container ship passing by the northern German port of Cuxhaven. PHOTO: AFP

GERMANY exported 30 per cent less goods to Britain in January compared to a year ago, official estimates showed on Tuesday, with demand hurt both by Brexit and the coronavirus pandemic.

Federal statistics

agency Destatis said German exports to Britain have been declining since 2016, the year when the UK voted in a referendum to leave the European Union. But the drop in demand has sharply accelerated over the last year.

For 2020, German exports to Britain declined 15.5 per cent compared to 2019, marking the biggest drop on an annual basis since the financial and economic crisis of 2009.

German exports to Britain were worth €66.9

billion, compared with €89bn in 2015 before the Brexit vote.

Likewise, Germany imported less from Britain over the last year, at €34.7 billion marking a drop of 9.6 per cent from 2019. The decline was most dramatic in the second half of the year when shipments plunged 16.2 per cent compared with a fall of 2.5 per cent in the first six months of 2019. British exporters and cross-Channel freight hauliers have encountered severe delays and disruption since Britain departed the EU market. But European leaders see this as the inevitable consequence of the UK government's decision to pursue a complete break from the EU. —AFP ■

China's billionaires club swells as market rally offsets virus pain

MORE than 200 billionaires were created in China last year as booming stock markets and a flood of new listings offset the ravages of the virus pandemic, according to a global tally released Tuesday.

The size of China's exclusive billionaire's club has almost doubled in the past five years as the world's number two economy continued to outpace most others, and its ability to mostly avoid the worst of the coronavirus meant it was one of the few to expand in 2020.

And the Hurun Global Rich List showed 259 people breaking into the billion-dollar bracket – more than the rest of the world combined – taking China total to 1,058, the first country to break the 1,000 mark.

In comparison, second

best performer the United States saw 70 new billionaires created, taking its total to 696.

Leading the Chinese pack was Zhong Shanshan of bottled water giant Nongfu, who entered the list for the first time with an \$85 billion fortune, putting him number one in Asia and into Hurun's global top 10. Zhong, a former construction worker, made his cash following a \$1.1 billion initial public offering in Hong Kong last year.

However, a clampdown on ecommerce giant Alibaba saw tycoon Jack Ma fall down the pecking order. The one-time darling of China's entrepreneurs has come under pressure from regulators, who have reigned in Alibaba and fintech arm Ant Group on anti-trust issues. —AFP ■



Beijing is top of the list with the world's most billionaires for the sixth year in a row. PHOTO: AFP

Eurozone inflation steady as energy prices recover

THE rise in eurozone consumer prices steadied in February, official data showed on Tuesday, as the slump in energy prices sharply slowed despite the enduring pandemic.

The Eurostat agency said inflation in the 19 countries that use the euro ran at 0.9 per cent last month, the same as in January.

January's rate marked a big leap after several months of negative inflation due to the slumping consumer demand caused by the coronavirus and restrictions to the economy across Europe.

The rise in prices in 2021 has stoked talk that

the European Central Bank should consider reining in its massive stimulus programme, even if inflation remains below the ECB's near two percent target.

A global debate over the resurgence of inflation has heated up as the US sets out to rollout a \$1.9 trillion stimulus plan to reboot the economy.

Europe's spending stimulus has been less ambitious, but markets have signalled expectations that inflation will rise in the coming months, with borrowing prices for EU governments increasing.

Eurostat said that energy prices fell by 1.7



Energy prices fell by 1.7% in February compared to a year ago. PHOTO: AFP

per cent in February compared to a year ago, instead of the negative 4.2 per cent seen in January and the even deeper drops seen last year. Those arguing for the ECB to keep helping the economy will point to core inflation, which strips out volatile components like energy and food. Eurostat said core inflation fell in February to 1.1 per cent, from 1.4 per cent in January, indicating that the European economy has yet to enter a high gear. —AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ALVAN VOY. NO. (SCY1094)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ALVAN VOY. NO. (SCY1094)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **3-3-2021** 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 FU RONG SONG

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V FU RONG SONG VOY. NO. (65)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **3-3-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT-4** 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 COSCO SHIPPING SPECIALIZED CARRIERS CO LTD

Iran denies Netanyahu claim that it struck Israeli ship



The MV Helios Ray vehicle carrier is owned by HELIOS Ltd, an Israeli company registered in the Isle of Man. **PHOTO: AFP**

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused arch-foe Iran on Monday of a recent attack on an Israeli-owned ship, saying his country was “striking back”.

“It is indeed an Iranian act, that’s clear,” he told public broadcaster Kan, referring to the MV Helios Raya vehicle carrier, which was last week hit by a blast in the Gulf of Oman leaving two holes in its side.

“Iran is Israel’s greatest enemy, I’m determined to block it, we’re striking at it throughout the region,” he said.

Iran strongly rejected Netanyahu’s accusation.

“We strongly deny this accusation,” spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said at a press conference, adding that “the source of this accusation itself shows how invalid (the claim) is.”

The ship was sailing from Saudi Arabia to Singapore when it was hit by an explosion in the Gulf of Oman, maritime security groups and the owner said Friday. The MV Helios Ray vehicle carrier is owned by HELIOS Ltd, an Israeli company registered in the Isle of Man.

The owner of the vessel, Israeli businessman Rami Ungar, confirmed the blast in statements to Israel’s Kan state television and said it caused some damage.

“The damage is two holes about a meter and a half (five feet) in diameter,” he said, without elaborating, according to Kan.

“But it is not yet clear to us whether it was caused by missile fire or mines attached to the ship,” he added.

“We have no idea if this is an incident that is part of the tensions between Iran and the United States and if it has to do with the fact that the owner of the ship is Israeli.”

Ungar said there were no casualties among the crew and no damage to the engine.

The Israeli state broadcaster said the vessel was transporting cars from Dammam to Singapore when the blast occurred.

It suggested Iran could be behind the blast, noting the incident comes amid heightened tensions between Israel and the Islamic republic. —AFP ■

Merkel proposes easing some virus curbs in Germany from Monday



Germany closed bars, restaurants, gyms and cultural centres in November, before adding non-essential shops and schools in December as the country was badly hit by a second Covid-19 wave. **PHOTO: AFP**

GERMAN Chancellor Angela Merkel wants to allow more socializing between households from next week as part of plans to gradually loosen virus curbs in the Covid-weary nation, a draft text showed Tuesday.

A draft text seen by AFP

on the eve of crunch talks with regional leaders showed that Merkel plans to propose that two households, not exceeding five adults, be allowed to get together from March 8.

Under the current rules, one household may only social-

ize with one other person.

The text also proposes that flower shops, book stores and garden centres should be next in line to reopen, after hairdressers were already allowed to open their doors earlier this week.

However most other shops and restaurants, as well as leisure, cultural and sporting facilities, should remain shut until March 28, according to the draft.

“We mustn’t gamble away the successes we’ve achieved,” it says.

The text has yet to be agreed by Germany’s 16 state premiers, who are due to meet with Merkel on Wednesday to decide the next steps in the fight against the pandemic. —AFP ■

US urges Saudis to disband force behind Khashoggi killing

THE United States on Monday urged Saudi Arabia to disband an elite unit controlled by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman that Washington sanctioned over the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

“We have urged Saudi Arabia to disband this group and then adopt institutional, systemic reforms and controls to ensure that anti-dissident activities and operations cease and cease completely,” State Department spokesman Ned Price said of the Rapid Intervention Force.

He also called on Saudi Arabia to take further action after last month provisionally releasing Loujain al-Hathloul, an advocate for women’s right to drive in the ultra-conservative kingdom who was jailed for nearly three years.

“We are urging Saudi Arabia to take additional steps to lift travel bans on those released to commute sentences and resolve cases such as those of women’s rights activists and others,” Price said.

President Joe Biden on Friday declassified an intelli-

gence report that found that Prince Mohammed ordered the 2018 killing of Khashoggi, a US-based contributor to The Washington Post who was lured into the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. The report found that seven of the 15 members of the hit squad that flew to Istanbul came from the Rapid Intelligence Force, which it said “exists to defend the crown prince” and “answers only to him.”

The Treasury Department imposed sanctions on the force -- meaning any US transactions with it will be a crime -- but the administration stopped short of personally targeting the powerful crown prince.

Price, following up on Friday’s release of the report, vowed that the Biden administration would put a higher priority on human rights following former president Donald Trump’s chummy relationship with the Saudis.

“We have made crystal clear and will continue to do so that the brutal killing of Jamal Khashoggi 28 months ago remains unacceptable conduct,” Price said. —AFP ■



In this AFP file photo taken on October 10, 2018, a demonstrator dressed as Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (C) with blood on his hands protests with others outside the Saudi Embassy in Washington, DC, demanding justice for missing Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. **PHOTO: AFP**

Armenia struggles through crisis as war wounds fester

ANGER caught in Mari Hovhannisyan’s throat as she demanded Armenia’s leadership resign, more than three months on from a disastrous war that saw swathes of territory lost to Azerbaijan.

“I am six months pregnant but I had to come out,” the 36-year-old told AFP, directing her fury at her country’s Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

“I am against this regime, against the betrayer who sold out our land, our flag, our nation,

everything. He should be in jail, he can’t remain in place.”

Around her in Armenia’s capital Yerevan several thousand protesters, waving the national flag, echoed her contempt.

But at the same time, just over a kilometre away on Monday evening, the man they are targeting was defiantly plotting his own way forward in front of a far larger crowd of supporters on the city’s main square. —AFP ■

Chinese envoy asks for more int’l aid for Yemen

A Chinese envoy on Monday asked for more international assistance to prevent famine in Yemen.

Yemen, with the multiple challenges of violent conflict, economic crisis, COVID-19, and food insecurity, is deeply mired in a large-scale humanitarian disaster. The international community must act immediately, increase assistance to Yemen, prevent further deterioration of the humanitarian crisis and make every effort to avoid the spread of famine, said Dai Bing, China’s deputy permanent representative to the United Nations.

The entire UN system must efficiently and effectively carry out humanitarian operations, and strengthen coordination with regional countries and organizations. All parties to the



Photo taken on Feb. 14, 2021 shows a boy carrying the food donated by a charity group in Hajjah Province, north Yemen. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

conflict must ensure safe and unhindered humanitarian access so that humanitarian supplies can be delivered to the people in need, and vulnerable groups such as women and children can be effectively protected, he told a high-level pledging event for Yemen.

Political settlement represents the only solution to the Yemeni issue. Yemen’s sovereignty, independence, unity, and territorial integrity must be fully respected. All parties to the conflict should strive to achieve a cease-fire as soon as possible. The international community should continue to support the role of the United Nations as the main channel of mediation, he said. It is imperative for all relevant parties to put the interests of Yemen and its people first, effectively implement the Stockholm Agreement and the Riyadh Agreement, carry forward the political settlement process, find a solution acceptable to all parties based on consensus reached at the international and regional levels and within Yemen, said Dai. — Xinhua ■

All 279 kidnapped Nigerian students released

ALL 279 Nigerian students kidnapped from their boarding school in the northern state of Zamfara have been released and are on government premises, the governor of the state told AFP Tuesday.

“I am happy to announce that the girls are free,” Dr Bello Matawalle told an AFP journalist. “They have just arrived in the government house and are in good health.”

An AFP reporter saw hundreds of girls wearing hijabs, gathered at the government premises.

Authorities initially said 317 girls were abducted in the raid by hundreds of gunmen on the

Government Girls Secondary School in remote Jangebe village on Friday.

But Matawalle said the “total number of female students abducted” was 279.

“We thank Allah they are all now with us.”

Government officials had been in talks with the kidnappers -- known as bandits -- following Nigeria’s third school attack in less than three months.

A source said “repentant bandits” had been contacted to reach out to their former comrades as part of efforts to free the students. —AFP ■

Last Soviet leader Gorbachev marks 90th birthday in quarantine

MIKHAIL Gorbachev, the historic reformer who presided over the collapse of the Soviet Union, marked his 90th birthday in quarantine Tuesday and like everyone else is “tired” of virus restrictions, his spokesman said.

Congratulations poured in from around the world, with Pres-

ident Vladimir Putin, US leader Joe Biden and German Chancellor Angela Merkel all sending their best wishes, he added.

“He is in quarantine in hospital for the duration of the pandemic,” Vladimir Polyakov, spokesman for the Gorbachev Foundation, told AFP.

“He is tired of this, like the rest of us.”

In power between 1985 and 1991, Gorbachev pushed for reforms to achieve “glasnost” (openness) and “perestroika” (restructuring) but his policies eventually led to the demise of the Soviet Union.

After the Berlin Wall fell, he won the 1990 Nobel Peace Prize for “the radical changes in East-West relations.”

Gorbachev, the first Russian leader to reach the age of 90, will mark his birthday with family and friends and has already received a “heap” of messages from around the world, his spokesman said. Gorbachev would talk to his family and friends in a socially-distanced setting, possibly by video link. “We’ve set everything up,” Polyakov added. He said that Gorbachev had passed the time in isolation “editing books and articles”. —AFP ■



Mikhail Gorbachev, the historic reformer who presided over the collapse of the Soviet Union, marked his 90th birthday in quarantine Tuesday and like everyone else is “tired” of virus restrictions, his spokesman said. **PHOTO: AFP**

Tina Turner bids farewell to fans with emotional new doc



Paired with a musical about her that had its Broadway premiere in 2019 until the pandemic shut it down, the new film is billed as Turner’s farewell to her legions of fans. **PHOTO: AFP**

MUSIC legend Tina Turner is the subject of one of the most successful biopics ever made but she tells the makers of a new documentary there’s much more to her story.

“Tina” by Oscar-winning directors Dan Lindsay and T.J. Martin premiered Tuesday at the Berlin film festival.

It traces Turner’s six-decade career as an unlikely triumph over abuse and discrimination.

Paired with the musical about her that had its Broadway premiere in 2019 until the pandemic shut it down, the film is billed as the 81-year-old Turner’s farewell to her legions of fans.

The documentary includes emotional interviews with the singer in which she recounts her childhood of grinding poverty picking cotton in the Ten-

nessee fields, her singing debut with violent husband Ike Turner and her lonely years even as the world’s top female rock star.

Friends weigh in including Oprah Winfrey, “I, Tina” biographer Kurt Loder and Angela Bassett, who was nominated for an Oscar for her portrayal of Turner in the 1993 blockbuster “What’s Love Got to Do with It”.

Turner was famously critical of the movie, refusing to watch it for several years and rejecting her depiction as a “victim” in it.

‘Pack places like the Stones’

In the documentary, she explains that the reason she decided to come forward in the 1980s about her years of physical, emotional and sexual abuse by Ike was that even after the split, interviewers insisted on asking her about their partnership.—AFP ■

Three players remain at SUFC for new football season

SHAN United have recently renewed the contracts of goalkeeper Myo Min Latt, defenders Nanda Kyaw and Hein Phyto Win for two years, according to the team statement.

The three star players assisted the team in winning trophies in the 2019 and 2020

seasons.

Hein Phyto Win joined Shan United at the end of the 2015 season – as a Myanmar U-18s international back then – along with Ye Min Thu, Phone Thitsar Min, Sa Aung Pyae Ko, Zar Nay Ya Thu and Soe Lwin Lwin.

“There are only senior play-

ers in the team now. Ko David and Ko Kyaw Zin Lwin play the same position as me. But I must try. I can play not only as a right-back but as a left-back as well. What matters most is the chance to play. Nobody here can take it for granted that they will be the first line-up players.

Everybody has a chance to try,” said Hein Phyto Win.

Myo Min Latt, who made his move to Shan United in the 2015 season, is the player who has played for this team longer than any other player in the current squad, and plus he showed his good performance as a first

line-up keeper in the 2020 season in which Shan United won 11 games in a row.

Nanda Kyaw, the Myanmar international defender who pitched up at the team in 2019, could play not only as a left-back but also as a centre-back and a left-winger.—GNLM ■

England ready to host more Euro 2020 games: Johnson

LONDON — England is ready to host extra matches for this year’s European football championships, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said in an interview published on Tuesday.

Johnson told The Sun of his government’s ambitions as he laid out a joint United Kingdom and Ireland bid to host the 2030 World Cup.

The Euros are set to be played in 12 cities across the continent from June 11, after being postponed last year as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

The tabloid said British ministers are holding talks with European football’s governing body UEFA about hosting more games due to rising cases across the continent and the slow roll-out of vaccines.



England is ready to host extra matches for this year’s European football championships, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said in an interview published on Tuesday. **PHOTO: AFP**

Britain has been one of the nations hardest-hit by the virus but has already vaccinated 20 million people with at least one dose and plans to finish the whole population by the end of July. Johnson’s spokesman last week dismissed talk about England hosting the whole tourna-

ment but Johnson indicated the country could take on more than just the semi-finals and final at Wembley.

“Any other matches they want hosted, we are certainly on for that!” he said. “We are hosting the Euros. We are hosting the semis and the final.—AFP ■

Detained ex-Barcelona president to appear before judge

MADRID — Former Barcelona president Josep Maria Bartomeu, detained Monday as part of a probe into last year’s ‘Barcagate’ scandal, will appear before a judge on Tuesday, a police source said.

His right-hand man Jaume Masferrer will also appear before the investigating judge leading the probe after spending the night at a police station along with Bartomeu, the source added.

Two other men who were also detained as part of the operation which involved a search of Barcelona’s stadium – the club’s current chief executive Oscar Grau and its head of legal services Roma Gomez Ponti – were released late on Monday.

The so-called ‘Barcagate’

scandal involves allegations that the club covered up payments made to a company called I3 Ventures, hired to boost the image of then-president Bartomeu on social media.

Part of the social media campaign included criticizing current and former players, like Lionel Messi, Pep Guardiola and Xavi Hernandez. Messi described the controversy as “strange” in an interview with Catalan newspaper Mundo Deportivo. Spanish radio station Cadena Ser, which broke the story, claimed Barca paid I3 Ventures an inflated fee and put payments through in smaller, separate amounts to avoid the club’s financial controls.—AFP ■

Richarlison strikes to boost Everton’s top-four bid

LONDON — Everton boosted their bid to earn a top-four finish in the Premier League as Richarlison sealed a 1-0 win

against struggling Southampton on Monday (March 1).

Carlo Ancelotti’s side won for the first time in six home

league games thanks to Richarlison’s early goal.

Everton’s last success at Goodison Park had come against Arsenal just before Christmas, but ending a run of three consecutive home league defeats lifted them to within two points of fourth-placed West Ham.

The seventh-placed Toffees have a game in hand on West Ham, as well as Liverpool and Chelsea, who occupy the places directly above them.

Fresh from beating Liverpool 2-0 to secure their first victory over their Merseyside rivals at Anfield since 1999, Everton are firmly in contention to qualify for the Champions League via a top-four finish.—AFP ■



Everton boosted their bid to earn a top-four finish in the Premier League as Richarlison sealed a 1-0 win against struggling Southampton on Monday. **PHOTO: AFP**



Barca president Josep Maria Bartomeu was detained by police on Monday. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Federer pulls out of Miami Open: report

MIAMI — Defending champion Roger Federer has withdrawn from this month’s Miami Open as he works his way back to full fitness following surgeries to repair his right knee, US media reported on Monday.

The 39-year-old Swiss star, who has not played since losing in the semi-finals of

last year’s Australian Open, is due to make his return from a year-long layoff at the Qatar Open in Doha next week.

However the Miami Herald cited Federer’s agent Tony Godsick as saying on Monday that the 20-time Grand Slam singles champion had opted to skip the Miami tournament for scheduling reasons.—AFP ■