

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
Statement on Ceasefire and Eternal Peace
4th Waning of Tabaung 1382 ME
31 March 2021

- 1. The Tatmadaw formed the State Administration Council and is carrying out the improvement of multiple sectors such as political, economic and social affairs of the State with might and main by adopting five future programmes and nine objectives.
- 2. As a plan to accomplish the process of eternal peace is a must for the State, the Central Committee for National Unity and Peacemaking, the Work Committee for National Unity and Peacemaking and the National Unity and Peacemaking Coordination Committee were constituted for soonest holding the dialogues on peace process with the armed organizations, some of which have signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement and some of which are still holding talks to sign the NCA.

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Production of foodstuffs, personal goods at home will cut
spending on foreign exchange: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presides over and addresses the SAC Management Committee meeting 4/2021 on 31 March 2021.

THE Management Committee of the State Administration Council held a meeting 4/2021 at the meeting hall of the State Administration Council Chairman's Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon, attended with an address delivered by Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in his attendance.

Also present at the meeting were Vice-Chairman of the Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Council members General Mya Tun Oo, Union Ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung, U Win Shein, U Aung Naing Oo, U Ko Ko Hlaing, U Chit Naing, U Tin Htut Oo, Admiral Tin Aung San, U Khin Maung Yi, U Aung Than Oo, U Myint Kyaing, Dr Pwint Hsan, Dr Nyunt Pe, Dr Thet Khaing Win, U Shwe Lay, Dr Thet Thet

Khine, U Maung Maung Ohn, U Saw Tun Aung Myint and Attorney-General of the Union Dr Daw Thida Oo.

First, the meeting approved the minute of the meeting 3/2021 of the Management Committee of the State Administration Council of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

In his opening address, the Senior General said a government is responsible for ensuring

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In line with the saying: one mouthful of unsuitable food, one imprudent step may lead to peril, as the food supply is of importance, food sufficiency is also essential.

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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.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Announcement of Central Committee for Prevention,
Control and Treatment of COVID-19
4th Waning of Tabaung 1382 ME
31 March 2021

IT is announced that the statements to the public, orders, notifications, and directives (excluding eased restrictions) of Union-level organizations and Union ministries effective until 31 March 2021 for prevention, control and treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) will be extended to 30 April 2021 as it is required to continue containment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

22 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 31 March, total figure rises to 142,434

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **142,434** after **22 new cases** were reported on 31 March 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, **131,800** have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA



Mandalay-Bhamo boat service reopens

THE Inland Water Transport (Ayeyawady Branch) under the Ministry of Transport and Communications resumes Mandalay-Bhamo boat service two times a week (Monday and Thursday) from Gaw Wein Jetty every 6 am.

The Pinlone vessel carried 11 passengers and 32 tonnes of loads on 29-3-2021 from Mandalay to Bhamo, while the Pyadar Pyan vessel carried eight passengers and 10 tonnes of loads from Bhamo to Mandalay.

The Padine vessel is also ready to operate the service today. Therefore, those who want to go to Kyaukmyaung, Tagaung, Htigyaing, Katha, Shwegu and Bhamo townships can contact 02-4036035 and 09 444653131.—MNA

The Pyadar Pyan vessel carried eight passengers and 10 tonnes of loads from Bhamo to Mandalay.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services ...

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3. The Tatmadaw will further cease all military operations from 1 to 30 April 2021 across the nation except for the period when security and administrative machinery of the government in addition to State defence and administrative measures are encroached on, to hold further talks with NCA signatory ethnic armed organizations for further strengthening of peace process in accord with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), continue further discussions with non-NCA signatory ethnic armed organizations until they sign the NCA, discuss necessary measures till the eternal peace is accomplished and organize the Myanmar traditional Maha Thingyan festival for 1382 Myanmar Era in line with health guidelines for COVID-19 issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports.

4. As such, all organizations and persons who have a role in the peace process must exert collective efforts to make more effective use of the period the Tatmadaw has halted all military operations to restore eternal peace through continued discussions to fulfil the wishes of the entire ethnic people, which are, a peaceful and prosper Union, socio-economic development and the correct path to democracy.

Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Production of foodstuffs, personal goods at ...

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a smooth process for the basic needs of the people and improvement of the State economy. To have the country's development, the State Administration Council has adopted five future programmes and nine objectives and is implementing them in detail. Although these tasks must be undertaken in the long run, the committee needs to decide and implement them quickly. In building the country, objectives must be adopted, and then they must be implemented in various ways and means.

The Senior General stressed the need to take measures on the rule of law to better basic needs for individual people and ensure the rule of law for enabling the people to enjoy fruits of physical and mental well-being. Moreover, efforts must be made for the improvement of basic needs and the economy of the people. To do so, not only relevant ministries but other ministries and organizations related to the work process also need to hold coordination. Likewise, emphasis must be placed on the sufficiency of basic needs for the country. In line with the saying: one mouthful of unsuitable food, one imprudent step may lead to peril, as the food

supply is of importance, food sufficiency is also essential. Rice and wheat are the main staple foods across the world. It is necessary to choose the cultivation of rice, beans, edible oil crops, and other crops suitable for the regions by utilizing the country's land resources.

Although Myanmar has oil sufficiency, palm oil is imported abroad for consumption and industries. Suppose the cultivation of oil palm in the lower Taninthayi Region secures success to reduce palm oil import volume. In that case, the country can cut spending on foreign exchange. As crushing and milling oil palm need technology, foreign investment must be invited so as to contribute towards the improvement of the State economy.

Although rice sufficiency reaches 133 per cent across the nation, Chin State meets 40 per cent of rice sufficiency, Taninthayi Region 62 per cent, Mandalay Region 70 per cent and Yangon Region 68 per cent only. Cultivation and production must be emphasized in respective regions to reduce import volume for cutting spending of money. Consequently, demand will increase, and social, economic lives will develop. Efforts to ensure region-wise food

As emphasis must be placed on research and development, research must be conducted in trade and businesses and ways and means sought for achieving success.

sufficiency will improve monetary circulation and region-wise economy. Production of foodstuffs and personal goods at home will cut spending on foreign exchange. The country's wealthiness depends on financial procession, high GDP, a large amount of money circulation for works, and state-owned reserve money possession.

Human resources, which play a key role in the State's economic development, depend on education promotion and good health. So, the committee needs to implement the plans based on existing strategies. The Senior General stressed the need for relevant ministries to hold coordination to be able to implement the remaining projects of the

previous government correctly.

Union ministers presented reports on respective sectors and sought approvals.

Next, the Senior General said in earmarking the State's budget, it is necessary to scrutinize actual income and expenditure, and amounts must not be inflated. Actual needs must be earmarked, and they must not be a loss for the State. Spending must systematically be done in accord with the procedures. Scrutiny must be undertaken to avoid failure for the country in purchasing electricity. It is necessary to encourage the private sector in the electricity sector. Efforts are being made to generate electricity through the solar system in addition to hydropower for ensuring sufficient

electrification in summer.

Regarding permitting permanent resident foreigners, they must be beneficial to the State. Special scrutiny must be undertaken whether they are living in the country according to the law. In repatriating Myanmar citizen abroad as Myanmar citizens, they must be loyal to the country and not be dual citizens. As such, they must be placed under scrutiny under the 1982 Citizenship Law.

Regarding the collection of road use, as road areas must be systematized in line with the highways law, relevant ministries and companies must take care of the work process correctly. Full road signs must be posted in accord with disciplines. It is necessary to systematically supervise the construction of buildings on road areas and cultivable lands and the use of farmlands in other ways. Inbound tourism must be operated following health guidelines for COVID-19. The Ministry of Information needs to raise public awareness for prescribed rules and regulations.

As emphasis must be placed on research and development, research must be conducted in trade and businesses and ways and means sought for achieving success. —MNA

Over 1 mln people in Myanmar receive COVID vaccine first jabs

COVID-19 prevention, control, and treatment activities are being conducted across the nation under the State Administration Council's management.

The country received a total of 3.5 million COVID-19 vaccines — 1.5 million in the first tranche and 2 million in the second one, including foreign countries' donations.

More than 1 million people receive their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and about 40,000 get the second dose to date.

The healthcare workers and volunteers were prioritized for vaccination, followed by the government employees, private healthcare staff, private industry staff (banking, transport and hotels and tourism), venerable Sayadaws and the people over 60.

The medics and nurses of the Ministry of Defence, staff and healthcare workers of Ministry of Health and Sports and volunteers of Transport and Communications and officials of Region/State Administration Councils participated

in vaccination programmes.

Those who received the vaccine did not suffer from any side effects. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine can help people from getting the disease, and it can also ease the travel restrictions.

The Ministry of Health and Sports will use the first doses of 1.5 million vaccines, and it also has enough vaccine for the second dose. Moreover, arrangements are being made to receive more vaccines for the people. — MNA



COVID vaccination programmes are underway with added momentum under the State Administration Council's management.

To build the Union based on democracy and federalism firmly.

Currently, the State Administration Council is implementing five future programmes and releasing findings of scrutiny on voter lists on first priority. The combined lists will be released upon completion. Moreover, the findings on briberies were also released. It is necessary to strive for improvement of the political, economic and social sectors of the State. As the closure of schools based on the outbreak of Covid-19 cause loss to individual students and parents as well as the State, preparations are being made to reopen the schools in a systematic manner. Some suggestions were made to close the schools, not to gather crowds and not to commit incitement. He expressed his concept that if schools are closed one year, it will be a one-year loss. So, efforts will be made to reopen the schools. Moreover, strenuous efforts are being made to achieve success in the peace process. Based on experiences, undertakings will be carried out for the all-round development of the State so as to build the Union based on democracy and federalism firmly.

(Excerpt from the speech to officers, other ranks and their families in Myeik, Kyunsu and Cocogyun stations made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 21 March 2021)

Announcement on Extension of the Precautionary Restriction Measures Relating to Control of the COVID-19 Pandemic until 30 April 2021

1.

With a view to the further strengthening of measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has issued the following announcements regarding temporary entry restrictions for visitors from all countries. All those restrictions were extended until 31 March 2021 by the Ministry’s announcement dated 26 February 2021.
(a) Announcement dated 15 March 2020 regarding precautionary measures for all travellers visiting Myanmar;
(b) Announcement dated 20 March 2020 regarding additional precautionary measures for travellers visiting Myanmar and temporary suspension of issuance of visa on Arrival and e-visa;
(c) Announcement dated 24 March 2020 regarding additional precautionary measures for travellers from all countries visiting Myanmar;
(d) Announcement dated 28 March 2020 regarding temporary suspension of
2.

In order to continue its effective response measures to protect the population of the country from the risks of importation and spread of the COVID-19, the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has decided to extend the afore-mentioned entry restriction measures until 30 April 2021.
3.

In case of urgent official missions or compelling reasons, foreign nationals, including diplomats and United Nations officials, who wish to travel to Myanmar by available relief or special flights, may contact the nearest Myanmar Mission for possible exception with regard to certain visa restrictions. However, all visitors must abide by existing directives issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports relating to the prevention and control of the COVID-19 pandemic.
*Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nay Pyi Taw
Dated. 31 March 2021*

Union Minister U Ko Ko attends 25th ASEAN socio-cultural community council ministers meeting

THE 25th ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Council Ministers Meeting (ASCC) was co-chaired by Brunei Darussalam, chair of ASEAN in 2021, and the ASEAN Secretariat through video conferencing yesterday afternoon.

Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Ko Ko, Permanent Secretary U Tun Ohn, Senior Official for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Council (ASCC), Director-General of the Department of Historical Research and National Library U Aung Myint and Myanmar delegation participated in the online meeting from Nay Pyi Taw.

The meeting focused on the priority areas of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Pillar, the activities carried out



Myanmar delegation led by the MoRAC Union minister participates in the online 25th ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Council Ministers Meeting yesterday.

in 2021, declarations to be approved by the ASEAN Leaders at the 38th ASEAN Summit, and the process to be documented. The meeting discussed seven processes, including the ASEAN Leaders’ Statement on the Importance of Families for Nation-Building and Community Development, to be approved at the 38th ASEAN Summit and ASEAN Regional Plan for the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of the Child on Migration in 2021-2025; ASEAN Development Potential Programme; Strategic Plan for Rural Development and Pover-

ty Alleviation; ASEAN Climate Change Report, including the annual Cooperation Plan for the signing of the ASEAN-FI-FA MoU; Recognition of 23 processes, including action plans and agendas of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Working Bodies for 2021-2025.

The meeting also discussed the two agendas to be approved at the 24th ASEAN + 3 Summit and the 16th East Asia Summit.

At the meeting, Union Minister U Ko Ko said it is halfway to the ASEAN Community by 2025 due to cooperation with each other under ASEAN rules and regulations and the ASEAN Secretariat’s support.

He expressed words of thanks to senior officials for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Council (ASCC) and officials from the ASEAN Secretariat for their efforts to complete the 2016-2020 mid-year report during the COVID-19 period, adding it is hoped that the ASCC affiliated working groups will be able to draw up more comprehensive and strategic action plans from 2021 to 2025 based on the results of the completed annual report.

He said Myanmar is also focusing on overcoming the pandemic as other ASEAN nations and building the bright golden future, adding Myanmar’s full support to the strengthening of multilateral cooperation to create a good environment for economic development, poverty alleviation and development of the lives of the people in the ASEAN region. — MNA

Gold gilding carried out on Shwedagon pagoda

THE Shwedagon Pagoda is systematically covered in scaffolding, and gold gilding is being carried out with over 11,000 coated gold sheets by a group of 30 people starting from 29 March, according to the statement of the Shwedagon Pagoda Board of Trustees.

Besides, the implementation of engraving Gavisite copper plates will continue to carry out according to climatic condition, and gold coating around plantain bud will also be implemented.

It was announced that scaffolding works would be carried out to implement the remaining work under the Shwedagon Pagoda Gold Plate Donation Plan (2018-2019), which was suspended due to the COVID-19 crisis in 2020 after receiving sermons from the venerable senior monks on 11 March.

The Shwedagon Pagoda was reopened to the public on 8 March, and about 70,000 pilgrims have visited the pagoda to date. It is reported that the Board of



The Shwedagon Pagoda is systematically covered in scaffolding, and gold coating is being carried out with over 11,000 coated gold sheets.

Trustees of the pagoda has been making arrangements to change new statues at the birthday corners and to offer modern spotlights to the pagoda at night. — MNA

Military hospitals continue providing healthcare to civilians



A local gets eye-tests at the military hospital in Kengtung.

MILITARY hospitals in the townships of regions and states keep providing medical treatments to the people to solve their health-

care services difficulties. A total of 107,119 outpatients and 4,199 inpatients reached these hospitals from 5 February to date.

Senior medical experts, medics and nurses have conducted 4,970 major operations and 2,628 minor operations. The senior doctors treat serious cases. These hospitals managed for the birth of 6,746 babies while bringing 6,746 pregnant women to the respective military hospitals. Of those 2,634 cases are done in caesarean section and 4,112 cases in ordinary delivery.

Officials from the respective commands also provided the patients with foods, and medical workers were provided with cash assistance. — MNA

Monks, nuns, civil service personnel and locals given COVID-19 vaccination

TATMADAW medical specialists, doctors and nurses, along with the doctors and medical workers from people's hospitals, have been conducting COVID-19 vaccination to the monks, senior citizens, local residents and civil service personnel over

the age of 65 across the country. Yesterday, the vaccination was also conducted to the people over the age of 65, including monks, nuns and civil service personnel in Taunggyi, Kalaw, Nyaungshwe, Hopong, Hsihseng townships in Shan

State; Loikaw Township in Kayah State; Dedaye, Ingapu, Thabaung, Pantanaw, Wake-ma and Mawlamyinegyun and Maubin townships in Ayeyawady Region and Chanayethazan township in Mandalay Region. — MNA

Effective period for Temporary Measures to Prevent Importation of COVID-19 to Myanmar through Air Travel extended till 30 April 2021

THE effective period of the Temporary Measures to Prevent Importation of COVID-19 to Myanmar through Air Travel issued on 29 March 2020 by the Ministry of Health and Sports was extended up to 31 March 2021 23:59 Hours Myanmar Standard Time, in line with the approval of the Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19.

As the infection of this disease remains increasing in most of the world countries, the existing effective period will be further extended with the approval of the Central Committee for Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19, till 30 April 2021, 23:59 hours of Myanmar Standard Time.

Ministry of Transport and Communications

Military medical corps provide healthcare in township hospitals

THE Tatmadaw medical teams comprising Tatmadaw doctors, specialists, and nurses, have been providing necessary medical treatments to the patients in military hospitals and public hospitals.

The Tatmadaw medical team continued to provide healthcare services such as surgery, dental and oral healthcare, osteoporosis, obstetrics, otorhinolaryngology, gynaecology, hypertension and heart disease to the patients in healthcare services difficulties in Thazi Township Public Hospital, Hanza hospital, Yinmabin hospital, Tagaung Public Hospital in Thabeikkyin Township, Singtaing hospital in Kyaukse township, Yintaw hospital in Pyawbwe township, Pintale

hospital in Wantwin Township, Myittha Township Public Hospital, Welaung hospital in Taungtha Township, Public hospital in Kyaukpadaung Township, Public Hospital in Kyauktaga Township, Donzay-it hospital in Shwegyin Township and Public hospital in Latpadan township yesterday. Similarly, the Tatmadaw medical team provided healthcare services to patients at Nyaungyan Hospital in Thazi Township, Mandalay Region.

Officials from respective commands also inspected the hospitals' medical services. They comforted the patients by providing food aids and necessary things. Locals are reportedly satisfied with the medical support of Tatmadaw. — MNA



Tatmadaw medics seen providing healthcare services to locals at the Latpadan people's hospital.

Announcement of Union Election Commission

29 March 2021

- 1.Regarding the Multiparty General Election held on 8 November 2020, the Union Election Commission has inspected the voter lists and the casting of votes of Yesagyo Township of Magway Region.
- 2.Findings were as follows:

Findings on voter lists of Yesagyo Township						
Sr	Township and numbers of polling stations	Township sub-com-mission	List from Immigra-tion department	Those involved in voting list without citizenship scrutiny cards	Those involved in voter list more than three times holding one CSC	Those involved in voter list more than two times holding one CSC
1	234 polling stations in Yesagyo township of Magway Region,	193,236	183,297	6,431	1,229	21,188

- 3.The Union Election Commission has inspected the withdrawal/receipt/use/remaining of ballot papers used for Pyithu Hluttaw Election of Yesagyo Township of Magway Region together with the respective township election sub-commission, head of police force, Immigration and Population and administrator according to the Hluttaw Election Law Section 53.
- 4.A total of 234 polling stations in 81 village-tracts of 8 Wards in Yesagyo Township of Magway Region took out 220,957 ballots and used 149,829 ballots. It left 64,027 ballots instead of 71,128 ballots. The extra/shortage ballots and illegal extra ballots were found at respective poll stations. Findings were as follows:

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Yesagyo Township							
Sr	Township	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/village tract ballots	203,299	148,821	54,478	47,377	7,144	43
2	Township advance ballots	1,008	1,008				
3	Township Remaining ballots	16,650		16,650	16,650		
Total		220,957	149,829	71,128	64,027	7,144	43

- 5.It found 7,144 ballots were missing at 234 polling stations in 81 village-tracts of 8 Wards in Yesagyo and also found 43 extra ballots. The used and withdrawal of township advance ballots were 1,008 and it left 16,650 ballots at township election sub-commission and it also found 16,650 ballots in the inspection and so there was conformity in numbers. Yesagyo Township election sub-commission wrongly distributed township advance ballots on 26-10-2020, 27-10-2020 and 28-10-2020 with the names of Magway township Pyithu Hluttaw Candidates Daw Tin Moe Khine (UBP), U Myint Oo (NLD), U Win Ko Ko (PPP), U Than Htwe (NUP), U Aung San Oo (UDP) and U Aung Thein Kyaw (USD) instead of the names of Yesagyo Township Pyithu Hluttaw candidates U Kyaw Naing Oo (UBP), U Chan Min (USDP), Thayay Sithu U Soe Maung (NDP), U Tin Aung (PPP), U Pike Htay (UDP), U Lwin Myint Oo (NLD) and U Aung Myint Kyi (NUP).
- 6.These wrong ballots with the names of Magway Township Pyithu Hluttaw candidates were used at No (5) polling stations in War Yar Village-tract, No (1) polling station of Gway Gone Village-tract, No (3) polling station in Pay Gone Village-tract, No (1) polling station in Mauk Kalan Village-tract and No (1) polling station in Khin Mon (or) Khway Myoke Village-tract on 31-10-2020, at No (2) polling station in Khin Mon (or) Khway Myoke Village-tract on 1-11-2020, at No (2) polling station in Myay Phu Mone Nyin Village-tract on 2-11-2020, at No (3) polling station in Mauauk Seik Village-tract on 3-11-2020 and so the township election sub-commission found out that a total of 945 voters -- 278 wrong voting and 667 voters cast their votes. The township commission saved these 945 wrong ballots and 5 remaining ballots at Yesagyo Myoma police station. Therefore, a substitute voting programme was conducted for these 945 voters not to lose their rights to vote with new 950 ballots (19 ballot books). Then, the new ballot books saved at Yesagyo police station were transported to township administration department and examined a total of 10,870 ballot books for Amyotha Hluttaw and Region/State Hluttaw elections including 49 ethnic ballots by the clerks of township sub-commission, education staff, general administration department staff and found out that 2,050 ballots (41 books) without the names of Yesagyo Pyithu Hluttaw Candidates but the names of Magway Township Pyithu Hluttaw Candidates. These ballots were saved at Yesagyo police station. These sealed ballots -2,050 ballots (41 books) were examined.
- 7.The five sealed ballot packages at Yesagyo election sub-commission were found with NLD labels and so they seemed to be the ballots sent by NLD office and it found vote frauds.
- 8.Findings in Yesagyo Township were as follows:

Sr	Ward/Village tract	Total polling station	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	No (1) Ward	3	3,500	2,717	783	633	150	
2	No (2) Ward	2	2,700	2,014	686	686		
3	No (3) Ward	1	850	688	162	57	105	
4	No (4) Ward	2	1,000	740	260	60	200	
5	No (5) Ward	1	1,100	936	164	164		
6	No (6) Ward	2	2,550	1,939	611	611		
7	No (7) Ward	2	4,050	2,840	1,210	860	350	
8	No (8) Ward	3	4,150	3,148	1,002	652	350	
9	Kai Village tract	2	950	594	356	356		
10	Kan Thit	2	1,950	1,545	405	255	150	
11	Kan Oo	2	1,300	989	311	211	100	
12	Kan Daung	2	1,550	1,100	450	450		
13	Kanbe	1	400	291	109	109		
14	Kyee Kan	2	2,150	1,645	505	405	100	
15	Ko Yint	5	2,400	1,579	821	721	100	
16	Kam Pyu	5	3,400	2,565	835	837		2
17	Kway Htaunt	2	950	579	371	371		
18	Kyauk Ka	3	1,500	1,089	411	361	50	
19	Kai Ma Gyi	3	2,200	1,784	416	338	78	
20	Kyu Ywa	2	2,700	1,780	920	920		
21	Kokku Su	1	900	698	202	202		
22	Kyet Su Kyin	1	850	612	238	238		
23	Khway Myoke	2	1,250	1,021	229	229		
24	Gway Gone	3	3,400	2,635	765	605	160	
25	Nga Lan	2	950	580	370	320	50	
26	Nga Mhwar Gyi	1	550	296	254	204	50	
27	Nga Tayaw	3	1,900	1,502	398	399		1
28	Sint Kai	2	1,450	1,033	417	317	100	
29	Si Tha	6	4,150	2,948	1,202	1,206		4
30	Sin Chay Yar	3	2,700	1,758	942	842	100	
31	Sin Te	5	4,600	3,332	1,268	1,068	200	
32	Sin Ma Ye	2	1,700	1,014	686	486	200	
33	Sin Chaung	5	4,150	3,109	1,041	1,041		
34	Sar Lin Kone	4	2,900	2,173	727	763		36
35	Ze Kyun	1	900	634	266	266		
36	Za Yama	2	1,400	1,019	381	329	52	
37	Ze Kone	2	1,400	1,136	264	114	150	
38	Ze Taw	2	2,150	1,729	421	421		
39	Nyaung Taw	3	2,250	1,679	571	421	150	
40	Nyaung Zauk	4	5,100	3,709	1,391	1,341	50	
41	Taung Oo	5	5,500	3,655	1,845	1,647	198	
42	Htan Nge Taw	7	5,400	4,172	1,228	1,077	151	
43	Htan To	1	750	599	151	101	50	

44	Htan Sel Pin	1	1,450	1,210	240	40	200	
45	Ni Pa Say Taw	2	2,150	1,599	551	551		
46	Nan Oo	3	2,500	1,795	705	505	200	
47	Nwe Ni	2	1,900	1,332	568	568		
48	Nay Yin	4	2,500	1,704	796	496	300	
49	Nat Hnyaunt	1	1,350	1,043	307	307		
50	Hnaung Ba	3	2,350	1,874	476	476		
51	Payein Tha	4	2,999	1,851	1,148	1,045	103	
52	Pay Gone	4	4,300	3,219	1,081	981	100	
53	Pa Khan Nge	3	2,950	2,164	786	652	134	
54	Pa Khan Gyi	4	4,050	3,309	741	593	148	
55	Brit Ba	4	2,900	1,775	1,125	625	500	
56	Va La Ba	2	1,350	938	412	412		
57	Phone Taw Pyae	2	2,600	1,762	838	834	4	
58	Baung Be Tan	2	1,950	1,615	335	335		
59	Mau Alae	2	3,550	2,410	1,140	828	312	
60	Mauauik Seik	3	3,050	2,345	705	505	200	
61	Myay Pyu Mone Nyin	5	6800	5273	1527	1527		
62	Myay Pyu Kyin	4	2,500	1,913	587	470	117	
63	Myay Taw	4	2,900	1,965	935	835	100	
64	Me Laung Kyun	3	1650	1085	565	565		
65	Myay Son Taw	3	2,950	2,273	677	475	202	
66	Moe Kwe	2	2,000	1,485	515	415	100	
67	Mi Phaya	2	2,400	1,604	796	796		
68	Mauk Ka Lan	3	2,200	1,513	687	587	100	
69	Min Kan	1	1,100	926	174	174		
70	Min Ywa	1	1,000	756	244	244		

71	Ywa Htaung	2	1,400	805	595	595		
72	Ywa Thit	2	2,050	1,519	531	531		
73	Yay Shar	1	850	654	196	196		
74	Yet Thar	3	1,950	1,466	484	484		
75	Lay Ya Pyay	1	700	471	229	79	150	
76	Wa Boe	1	600	403	197	197		
77	Wa Ka Taw	3	2,100	1,427	673	632	41	
78	Waya	5	4,450	3,384	1,066	1,065	1	
79	Tham Manta Port	2	1,500	1,074	426	286	140	
80	Tha Khaung	3	2,200	1,702	498	298	200	
81	Thit Gyi Taw	2	2,750	2,163	587	487	100	
82	Tha Si	4	3,850	2,727	1,123	1,108	15	
83	Thayet Pin Kan	2	1,400	1,087	313	313		
84	Thanpyar Chaung	2	1,700	1,280	420	420		
85	Thapyay Pin	2	1,200	962	238	238		
86	Alae Kyaw	2	1,350	972	378	345	33	
87	Alae Thaung	4	2,750	2,047	703	453	250	
88	Aung Nan	4	2,250	1,604	646	646		
89	Aung Pan Chaung	1	1,200	731	469	469		
	Ward/village tract Total	234	203,299	14,8821	5,4478	47,377	7,144	43
	Township Advance ballots		1,008	1,008				
	Township Remaining ballots		16,650		16,650	16,650		
	Township Total	234	220,957	149	71,128	64,027	7,144	43

Union Election Commission

Construction of extended two-storeyed hospital building in Bamauk nearly completes



The extended 500-bed hospital building is 16,800 square feet wide, with two operation-rooms and a maternity ward.

THE construction of an extended two-storeyed building in Bamauk township People’s hospital compound in Katha district, Sagaing region, has nearly completed.

The extended building will be initiated very soon with the aim of providing better health-care service to locals. The hospital building project started on 27 May 2019, with K441.1 million funded by the medical services Department under the Ministry of Health and Sports budget of 2019-2020FY. Lwin Moe Aung Myin company in charge of engineer U Thura Win is responsible for the construction project. The extended 500-bed hospital building is 16,800 square feet wide, with two operation-rooms and a maternity ward. Currently, the township

People’s hospital is an existing 25-bed hospital, which does not have enough beds for emergency patients and sets up the ones in the corridor. Now, the new hospital building was constructed entirely. After opening, the hospital will deal with emergency cases occurring within the township. Officials and staff from the Ministry of Health and Sports have provided medical services to residents from Bamauk and more than 100,000 residents from 220 villages in 50 village-tracts in the township. — Hlaing Bwa (Bamauk)/GNLM

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

Regional trade exceeds \$3.8 bln in current FY: MoC reports

THE value of Myanmar’s regional trade with ASEAN countries through the sea route and land border was estimated at US\$3.825 billion in the four months (Oct-Jan) of the 2020-2021 financial year, according to the Ministry of Commerce. The ministry reported that imports surpassed exports in regional trade, with exports reaching over \$1.235 billion and imports valued at over \$2.59 billion. Since October, Thailand has been Myanmar’s largest trade

partner in ASEAN, with trade valued at \$1.62 billion, followed by Singapore (\$1.053 billion), Malaysia (over \$435.9 million) and Indonesia (\$414.97 million). Viet Nam has emerged as the nation’s fifth-largest trade partner, with bilateral trade estimated at \$246.56 million. Meanwhile, Myanmar’s bilateral trade with the Philippines was \$27.788 million, Cambodia \$13.119 million. In comparison, trade with Laos stood at \$1.02 million, and Brunei, less than

\$1 million. Myanmar’s main export items included agricultural and fishery products, as well as minerals. In contrast, imports included food and beverages, electronic tools, motor vehicles, and consumer goods. Apart from its leading trade partner China, Myanmar’s external trade was mostly carried out with regional trade partners. Trade with countries in the European Union, however, remained uncompetitive, compared with regional trade partners.—MM/GNLM

Access to financial resources key to health, economic response to COVID-19

In cooperation with international monetary organizations and partner countries in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, ASEAN-member countries, including Myanmar, have seen achievements in the financial partnership with easing restrictions and marching towards the millennium development goals.

Regarding the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services, Myanmar is also taking part in implementing the task for approving 9th pledges to ease financial services restrictions.

To put our country on the right path to quick recovery from the pandemic, we laid down the COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan-CERP as part of the Comprehensive Economic Stimulus Plan, and we are implementing it along with other recovery plans.

With the uncertainty of ending impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, challenges still exist. Undoubtedly, close financial cooperation with the international monetary organizations and ASEAN partner countries in terms of effective financial assistance to recovery sectors, including the public health sector, will play a key role in the recovery of ASEAN member countries.

We cannot beat COVID-19 and achieve economic recovery from the pandemic without sufficient and reliable external finances.

Strengthening our country's health and economic response to COVID-19 depends on strengthening our access to multilateral financial resources.

As part of efforts for addressing the economic impacts from the COVID-19, the State Administration Council has granted a six-month extension of the grace period of COVID loan, and monitoring teams in states and regions are scrutinizing the use of the loan by the businesses and the revision of functions of the working committee.

Further measures need to be taken to relieve the impacts of the pandemic. We are confident that close cooperation with international monetary organizations would ensure us to tackle the impacts of the COVID-19. We need to strengthen our commitment to building our country back better for our future generation.

Our ASEAN member countries' response to COVID-19 should be a wake-up call to international monetary organizations. At the same time, ASEAN member countries should increase collaboration to improve access to external finance.

Asia's developed economies should collaborate. The global elimination of COVID-19 is a public good. Your success is our success. We won't succeed without international help.

We are confident that close cooperation with international monetary organizations would ensure us to tackle the impacts of the COVID-19. We need to strengthen our commitment to building our country back better for our future generation.

Pandemic delays gender parity by a generation: WEF

THE pandemic has rolled back years of progress towards equality between men and women, according to a report released Wednesday showing the crisis had added decades to the trajectory towards closing the gender gap.

A range of studies have shown that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on women, who have lost jobs at a higher rate than men, and had to take on much more of the extra childcare burden when schools closed.

The effects will be felt in the long-term, according to the World Economic Forum, which in its annual Global Gender Gap Report found that the goalposts for gender parity appeared to be moving further away.

The organization, which usually gathers the global elite in the plush Swiss ski resort of Davos each year, had found in its previous report, published in December 2019 right before the pandemic hit, that gender parity across a range of areas would be

reached within 99.5 years.

But this year's report shows the world is not on track to close the gender gap for another 135.6 years.

"Another generation of women will have to wait for gender parity," the WEF said in a statement.

The Geneva-based organization's annual report tracks disparities between the sexes in 156 countries across four areas: education, health, economic opportunity and political empowerment.

Workplace equality in 267 years

On the plus side, women appear to be gradually closing the gender gap in areas such as health and education.

But inequality in the workplace -- which has long appeared to be the stickiest area to fix -- is still not expected to be erased for another 267.6 years.

And the pandemic has not helped.

The WEF pointed to a study by the UN's International Labour



A new report shows the world is not on track to close the gender gap for another 135.6 years. Pedestrians wearing face masks cross the road in central Seoul on June 23, 2020. PHOTO: AFP

Organization showing that women were more likely to lose their jobs in the crisis, in part because they are disproportionately represented in sectors directly disrupted by lockdowns.

Other surveys have shown that women were carrying a

greater share of the burden of increased housework and childcare during lockdowns, contributing to higher stress and lower productivity levels.

Women were also being hired back at a slower rate than men as workplaces opened up again,

according to LinkedIn data referenced in the report.

"The pandemic has fundamentally impacted gender equality in both the workplace and the home, rolling back years of progress," WEF managing director Saadia Zahidi said in the

statement.

"If we want a dynamic future economy, it is vital for women to be represented in the jobs of tomorrow," she said, stressing that "this is the moment to embed gender parity by design into the recovery."

Political gender gap growing

It was in the political sphere that the march towards gender parity did the biggest about-face, with several large-population countries seeing the political gender gap widen, the WEF study found.

Women still hold just over a quarter of parliamentary seats worldwide, and only 22.6 per cent of ministerial positions.

On its current trajectory, the political gender gap is not expected to close completely for another 145.5 years, the report found.

That marks a 50-percent hike from the estimated 95 years in the 2020 report, WEF pointed out.

Progress across the categories varies greatly in different countries and regions.

SOURCE: AFP

A third of global farmland at 'high' pesticide pollution risk

A third of the planet's agricultural land is at "high risk" of pesticide pollution from the lingering residue of chemical ingredients that can leach into water supplies and threaten biodiversity, according to research published Monday.

The use of pesticides has soared globally as agricultural production has expanded, prompting growing fears over environmental damage and calls to cut hazardous chemical use.

Researchers in Australia modelled pollution risk across 168 countries with data on the usage of 92 active pesticide ingredients and found "widespread global pesticide pollution risk".

They highlighted several acutely vulnerable ecosystems in South Africa, China, India, Australia and Argentina, at the nexus of high pollution risk, high water scarcity and high biodiversity.

The study, published in Nature Geoscience, found that overall 64 per cent of global agricultural land --approximately 24.5 million square kilometres



Insecticides, herbicides and fungicides, collectively known as pesticides, are chemicals that are used in agricultural pest control. PHOTO: FOODPRINT.ORG/AFP

(9.4 million sq miles) -- was at risk of pesticide pollution from more than one active ingredient, and 31 per cent is at high risk.

"It is significant because the potential pollution is widespread and some regions at risk also bear high biodiversity and suffer from water scarcity," said lead author Fiona Tang, of the University of Sydney's School of Civil Engineering.

Some environmental factors may also slow the breakdown of the pesticides into non-toxic substances, like cold temperatures

Tang said there were a number of factors that would contribute to a region becoming a potential contamination hotspot, including using excessive amounts of pesticides or those containing highly toxic substances.

The report found that Asia has the largest land area, 4.9 million square kilometres, at high risk, with China accounting for 2.9 million square kilometres

or low soil carbon, while heavy rainfall might also cause high levels of run-off.

The study did not look directly at impacts on human health, but researchers said the leaching of pesticides into water used for drinking could pose a risk and called for a greater analysis into contamination of rivers, estuaries and lakes.

Sustainability call

Researchers looked at 59 herbicides, 21 insecticides and 19 fungicides.

They used estimates of pesticide application rates drawn from the United States Geological Survey data and country-based information from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

They fed this into a mathematical model and used it to estimate pesticide residues potentially remaining in the environment.

Regions were considered to be high risk if residues of at least one of the pesticide ingredients were estimated to be at least 1,000 times greater than concentrations that would produce no effect.

"The higher the risk score, the higher the probability for a non-target species to experience an effect," Tang told AFP, adding that this may not be as severe as death.

The report found that Asia has the largest land area, 4.9 million square kilometres, at high risk, with China accounting for 2.9 million square kilometres

of that.

Researchers said estimates of elevated contamination in Russia, Ukraine and Spain meant nearly 62 percent of European agricultural land (2.3 million square kilometres) is at high risk of pesticide pollution.

The researchers also broke down risks in terms of type of environment -- soil, surface water, ground water and atmosphere.

Of these, Tang said surface water is the most vulnerable because run-off can pollute waterways.

The study called for a global strategy to transition towards "sustainable agriculture and sustainable living", involving low pesticide use, reduced food loss and food waste.

In 2019 the UN's Global Environment Outlook (GEO) called for reduced pesticide use and said food production is not only the main driver of biodiversity loss, but is also a major polluter of air, freshwater and seawater, particularly when farming is over-reliant on chemical pesticides and fertilizers.

SOURCE: AFP

Sarpay Beikman Literature Award and Pakokku Literary Award ceremonies to be held

THE 2019 Sarpay Beikman Literature Award and Pakokku Literary Award established by Pakokku U Ohn Pe have been announced in state-owned newspapers. The award ceremony will be held on 1 and 2 April.

The 2019 Sarpay Beikman Literature Award Ceremony will be held on April 1 (Thursday) at 10 am, and the Pakokku Literary Award Ceremony will be held on 2 April (Friday) at 10 am at the Department of Printing and Publishing at No. 228, Theinbyu Road, Yangon.

Award winners are invited to attend the ceremony. For more information, please contact the Administration section of Sarpay Beikman at 01-381449.—MNA



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Wednesday 31 March 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30) hrs M.S.T today, the low pressure area over the Southeast Bay of Bengal and adjoining South Andaman Sea still persists. It is likely to reach over Central Andaman Sea and it may further intensify into a depression during subsequent (24)hrs. Weather is cloudy over the Andaman Sea and Southeast Bay and a few cloud to partly cloudy elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal. **FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 1 April 2021:** Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Kachin State, scattered in Upper Sagaing, Taninthayi Regions and isolated in Mandalay Region and Chin, Kayin, Mon States. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy to cloudy in the Remaining regions and states.

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon - Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (30-35) mph. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (7-9) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon - Taninthayi Coasts and about (5-8) feet off and along Rakhine Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of scattered rain or thundershowers in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady, Taninthayi Regions and Kayin, Mon States and isolated rain or thundershowers in Kachin, Kayah States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 April 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 April 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 April 2021: Partly cloudy to cloudy.

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Don't make fake tragic situations

By Maung Thaw Ma Na

INDEED, those who love reading have read about King Vessantara and his wife, Maddi Devi, including his son and daughter. It is better to watch the performance at the theatre about that story. The story mainly focuses on the generosity (dāna) of King Vessantara. However, the Brahmin character who abducted his son Zali and his daughter Kanazein is the most dramatic scene in the story.

The audience will have the feeling of anger rather than the feeling of sympathy. We, the audience, only see the scene of Brahmin brutally took two children with him.

Like such a Jataka story, the fans of Myanma movies and Pyazet only like the tragic plots rather than the story's essence. The audience would even throw the materials to the movie screen or the stage when the tragic climax would play there.

Such a case is happening nowadays. The unscrupulous people create tragic climaxes to build up tension. The people immediately get angry without thinking of the truths as soon as they see or know some cases in the protests. They also use obscene languages and attack

at the same time. I am doubtful that there would be some cases being fabricated by the opposition group in the riots.

For an obvious example, the public criticized adamantly as a girl had died due to a headshot in the demonstration near Thabyay Gone in Nay Pyi Taw on 9 February and another girl with a headshot in the middle of the protest between 84th and 30th streets in Mandalay on 3 March.

Regarding these cases, the officials instantly released accurate information and opened cases. Myanmar Police Force also announced that the riot-control weapons did not cause the death cases with complete evidence.

In these two cases, the people also doubted there would be some irregularities of opposition groups. A girl was assassinated in the Mandalay riot on 3 March. Such cases disappeared for a while due to the criticisms. Such cases are questionable that the assassination at close range in the riots is back again after disappearing for a while.

Even the children aged about ten years old have died in recent riots. It is such a suspicious fact. People can vividly see if we watch the CCTV footage

that the security forces systematically dispersed the angry protest crowds. Even when the protesters attempted to attack the security forces, they conducted actions at the lowest level.

In these big groups of people, when about 10-year-old children died due to the shots not knowing where they were coming, some tried to spread false news like "the security

forces fatally shot the children and brutally killed the children," via social media to international countries and UN. Although they spread such false information, it is questionable why the 10-year-old children are included in such terrible riots.

If we think about such cases, it is unacceptable that the children participate in the terrible riots. It is also an unreasonable incident, like even the children join in riots. In the attack with stick, knives, spears, catapults, jingalis, homemade bombs and guns, only the youths participate in it without any elderly or middle-aged persons. Such cases can be viewed in video clips on the social network. In the video clips, the children are not included.

Children cannot be in the attack with sticks and knives, and according to the nature of children, they will be scared or hide when they see some terrible manners of others. We should consider two girls' death cases due to the shots not knowing where the bullets are coming from in the recent riots.

It should uncover the activities of identified groups in the riots. According to the saying, when the world is on fire, some will step on their own children

For an obvious example, the public criticized adamantly as a girl had died due to a headshot in the demonstration near Thabyay Gone in Nay Pyi Taw on 9 February and another girl with a headshot in the middle of the protest between 84th and 30th streets in Mandalay on 3 March.

Regarding these cases, the officials instantly released accurate information and opened cases. Myanmar Police Force also announced that the riot-control weapons did not cause the death cases with complete evidence.

We should know the opposition group that creates engagements between Tatmadaw and the people in this current political affairs. This Union, Tatmadaw and People are in unity in the same plot.

It should uncover those who commit unacceptable activities by making the children hostages in the riots, including assassinations without any suspects.

to insulate the fire. It can be supposed that the people replace with their own innocent children due to their anxiety and anger. We can see the most devious things. We can understand when we consider it perfectly. Do the security forces do such destructive actions to incite hatred against them? It should consider the real suspects who incite hatred against the security forces. When we watch or listen to a story, we should consider its primary purpose, including its fundamental story structures.

If we only have the feeling of anger just for the tragic plots, we will lose the main essence of the story.

We should know the opposition group that creates engagements between Tatmadaw and the people in this current political affairs. This Union, Tatmadaw and People are in unity in the same plot.

It should uncover those who commit unacceptable activities by making the children hostages in the riots, including assassinations without any suspects.

Therefore, don't create fake tragic situations for the country, between the public and Tatmadaw.

Arson attackers sentenced to 20 years' jail with labour

THE military tribunal sentenced the protestors from Shwepyitha township -- Than Win, Ye Myint Kyaw(aka) Ko Ye and Saw Tun Naing (aka) Mae Gyi to 20 years in jail with labour for making arson attack on No (13) Ward administration office on 23 March under Section 436 of the Penal Code on 30 March.

As the fire broke out at the garment factories, basic education high schools and administrative offices in Hlinethaya, Shwepyitha, Dagon

Myothit (North), Dagon Myothit (South), Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) and North Okkalapa townships in Yangon Region and rioters managed to prevent the fire engines from fighting the fires. These places were put under Martial Law on 14 and 15 March. It has already announced 23 types of crimes to be heard by the military tribunal in these areas. So severe actions would be taken against those who would commit any of these crimes.—MNA



Twenty-year jail sentence with labour against arson attackers seen above.

Security measures conducted to ensure community peace



Tatmadaw, Police Force and Fire Brigade makes the joint security measures starting 14 February.

TATMADAW, Police Force and Fire Brigade jointly conducted security measures to ensure the State's stability, security of people, the rule of law and community peace starting 14 February night.

Tatmadaw, police and fire brigade members also jointly conduct security measures for the peaceful night and community peace in respective regions and states and keep serving security measures the whole day.—MNA

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.

Police officer brutally killed in Phado, Bago Region

ACCORDING to a statement from the Myanmar Police Force, a police officer was arrested and brutally killed by a mob in Phado town, Kyauktaga Township, Bago Region.

According to the statement,

Phado area police station was reported that a group of ten people arrested a police officer from the police station while he was on his way to his parents to Bopasan (5) ward in Phado town and was taken to Nyaungwine

cemetery, about the one-mile distance to the town.

When the team of the officer and security forces arrived at the cemetery, he was found with his arms and legs tied to a tree and stabbed in the abdomen

and chest. The policeman was dead on the way to the Phado hospital.

According to the investigation, it was discovered that about ten rioters, including Chit Min Thu, 33, son of U Hto Kyi,

killed the policeman brutally. A case has been filed to take effective action against them under the law. It is also reported that effective action will be taken against those who have accepted them.—MNA

Eight suspects arrested for killing police officer in Mandalay

THE Myanmar Police Force released a statement that a police officer from Mahaaungmye township police station was abducted and set on fire by about 200 rioters while he was riding a motorbike to deliver documents to the Department of Prisons on Kannar Road on 29 March 2021.

During the investigation of the case, Nyein Min Thu (a) Kyaw Mae, son of U Myint Soe, who lives in Thayattapin

village, Patheingyi Township, was arrested on 31 March. According to the investigation, he confessed to stabbing the victim to death after about 100 people including him had taken the money and ring and beaten the victim and burnt him with tires and chairs.

According to further investigation, it was identified that a group of people including Arrgyi, 35; Yan Shin, 25; Sithu

Aung, 30; who live in the north of Thayatpin, Pwa Gyi, 45; (brother of Pwa Gyi) Than Tun Oo, 40; who live in Mintae Eekin, and Khwaygyi (a) Nga Sine, 25, in Ye Htut village in Thayat Tapin tract; Nga Ye (a) Ye Zaw, 22 and Bayluwa (a) Baygyi, 19, killed the police officer.

It is reported that the arrest of those who brutally killed the police officer is underway.—MNA



One of the eight suspects under arrest for killing police officer in Mandalay.

Myanmar-Thailand border trade down by \$360 mln as of 12 March

THE value of Myanmar's bilateral trade with the neighbouring country Thailand through the land border has registered a decrease of US\$360 million between 1 October and 12 March of the current financial year 2020-2021 as against a year-ago period, the statistics issued by the Ministry of Commerce indicated.

The ministry reported that exports surpassed imports in trade with Thailand this year, with exports reaching over \$1 billion and imports valued at over \$538.5 million, totalling \$1.57 billion.

During the corresponding period of the past FY2019-2020, Myanmar-Thailand border trade touched a high of \$1.9 billion.

Following some traders tested positive for COVID-19, some

border posts were temporarily halted last year. At present, fruits and agricultural products such as cucumber, mango, tomato and vegetable, fishery products, building materials and other pharmaceutical-related goods and equipment can be traded. Myanmar-Thailand friendship bridge No. 2 is also open for trading.

The halt in trading undoubtedly harmed the traders and truck drivers from both sides, said a trader from Myawady.

During the last FY, Myanmar has increasingly exported corns to Thailand through the Myawady border. Myanmar's corn exports to Thailand significantly soared to over 1.2 million tonnes through border posts between Myanmar

and Thailand during October and May period in the 2019-2020FY, an official of the Ministry of Commerce said.

At present, Myanmar exports the corn to Thailand through Myawady and Tachilek land border. About 5,000-6,000 tonnes of corn are daily sent to Thailand through Myawady, while the Tachilek border does not regularly export.

Myanmar is allowed for corn export between 1 February and 31 August with Form-D, under zero tariff. Thailand imposed 73 per cent of tax on corn import to protect their growers' rights if the corns are imported during the corn season of Thailand, following the notification of the World Trade Organization regarding

corn import of Thailand, said a corn exporter.

Myanmar intends to reach an export target of one million tonnes of corns to Thailand this year, said U Min Khaing, chair of the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

Additionally, exports of natural gas from the Taninthayi Region has contributed to the enormous increase in border trade with Thailand in the previous years. This year, gas exports via the Hteekhee border drastically fell.

There are seven border posts between Myanmar and Thailand, Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Hteekhee, Myeik, Mawtaung and Maese. Except for Tachilek and Myawady, the remaining border

posts showed a decrease in the trade this FY.

The value of border trade stood at \$162.4 million via Tachilek, \$600.5 million via Myawady, \$170 million via Kawthoung, \$63.6 million via Myeik, \$502.24 million via Hteekhee and \$7.2 million via Mawtaung. Maese border post has not witnessed any trade yet.

Myanmar primarily exports natural gas, fishery products, coal, tin concentrate (SN 71.58 per cent), coconut (fresh and dry), beans, and bamboo shoots to Thailand. It imports capital goods such as machinery, raw industrial goods such as cement and fertilizers, consumer goods such as cosmetics and food products from the neighbouring country.

— HH/GNLM

Action not taken yet against 'Thanaka-brand' cosmetics



Authorities submitted a proposal to UNESCO in March 2021 to include Myanmar Thanaka on the representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity.

ACTION has not been taken yet against the fake cosmetics that are being sold in the market in the name of Thanaka, said U Kyaw Moe, the chairman of Myanmar Thanaka Growers and Producers Association.

"We have planned to boost Myanmar Thanaka products and market. But, it is not possible to set up those plans currently. Also, we haven't taken action against those who are selling fake Thanaka cosmetics in the market," he added.

The department of consumer affairs needs to provide adequate protection under the law for the Myanmar Thanaka market's sustainability. Myanmar Thanaka Growers and Producers Association inspected the shops selling the fake cosmetics under the Thanaka name that contains little or no Thanaka in Monywa town in September 2020. The association inspected

in cooperation with the department of consumer affairs, the Food and Drug Administration Department, the municipal team and the Myanmar Police Force. "There would be more convenient for the Thanaka growers if they received funding support from the authorities to strengthen the Thanaka market. The cultivation of the Thanaka is too costly. The producers of Thanaka cosmetics don't use raw Thanaka as much as they should. Hence, farmers lose revenue," said U Aung Win, the Myanmar Thanaka Growers and Producers Association executive member.

Authorities submitted a proposal to UNESCO in March 2021 to include Myanmar Thanaka on the representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity. The UNESCO team holds its meeting every three months and chooses the items

for putting the selected items on the list of cultural heritage. Myanmar will know the result next December 2021 as to whether Thanaka will be listed in UNESCO or not.

In 2020, the Myanmar Thanaka Growers and Producers Association requested the Department of Archaeology and National Museum and Myanmar President Office to designate the full moon day of Tabodwe as Thanaka Day. Then, the Department of Archaeology and National Museum, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture decided to designate the full moon day of Tabodwe, which will fall on 19 February, as Thanaka day. There are nearly 200,000 acres of Thanaka plantations in the Sagaing region. Among them, Thanaka plantations are found mainly in Ayadaw Thanaka, with more than 100,000 acres. — Lu-lay/GNLM

Watermelon growers from Bamauk Tsp reap gains from strong sales

THE growers of watermelon (China Taiwan origin) in Bamauk Township, Sagaing Region, earn a handsome profit from solid sales.

A packet of watermelon seeds costs K15,000. The growers prepared for land treatment to cultivate the next crop after rice crops in Bamauk Township villages. The duration of watermelon planting is 100 days. The prices of watermelon range between K2,500 and K4,000, depending on size. The growers can yearly earn a healthy profit of K1 to 1.5 million. This melon is of high quality. Furthermore, chemical-free planting attracts more buyers, said a buyer Ma Zin Mar Htet Aung.

Earlier, we did not see any watermelon farm in Bamauk Township. At present, melon cultivation helps earn for the livings and socio-economy of the local people.

More than 1,000 trucks of watermelon are now stranded in Muse 105th mile zone. Over 200 trucks are passing the cross-border route between Myanmar and China. Consequently, watermelon supply exceeds the demand, leading to possible market failure, Khwar Nyo Fruit Depot warned.

A truckload of watermelon (855 variety) fetches 45,000-65,000 Yuan at present. Myanmar's watermelon market primarily relied only on China. Myanmar has shipped 45 tonnes of seedless watermelon to the Dubai market in December 2020 and January 2021. After the country achieves success in the Dubai market, Myanmar plans to expand its market to Hong Kong SAR, the UAE, and Qatar. On 5 January 2021, 105th mile Fruit Wholesale Centre released a statement that the number of watermelon and muskmelon trucks for exports is to be set to govern the market.

During the previous financial year, the growers and the traders suffered the loss due to the price instability and transportation 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 watermelon and about 150,000 tonnes of muskmelons to China, the association stated.—Hlaing Bwa/KK/GNLM



More than 1,000 trucks of watermelon are now stranded in Muse 105th mile zone.

Wildberries: the Russian e-commerce giant targeting Europe

KRISTINA draws closed the purple curtain of the changing room at her nearest Wildberries location, emerging moments later to twirl in a black dress with the label still attached.

But the 42-year-old housewife is not at one of Moscow's department stores.

Rather she is at the local branch of a Russian e-commerce giant whose steady rise to the top was built largely on physical locations uncharacteristic of a leading online retailer.

Founded in 2004 by a teacher on maternity leave, Wildberries carved a lucrative niche by allowing customers to try out their

orders at pick-up points and pay only for items they take home.

"I haven't decided yet what to keep," says Kristina, eyeing the dress in a mirror at the collection point.

At this location in central Moscow, a steady stream of customers entre, flash a code on their phones to receive packages from an attendant and duck into changing booths.

The system has made Wildberries Russia's e-commerce leader in sales and pushed it into the European market. Even though Russia's economy has been sluggish in recent years, e-commerce is booming.



Wildberries allows customers to try out their orders at pick-up points and pay only for items they take home. PHOTO: AFP

Boosted by the coronavirus pandemic, Wildberries' sales grew 74 per cent to \$6 billion last year. The company registered nearly 324 million orders in 2020 — nearly 1.6 million products per day — doubling the number of 2019.

There is a rush of new players in the market and even though growth has been explosive after starting at almost zero, there is still plenty to play for. — AFP ■

VW pulls a fast one: 'Volkswagen' rebrand a ruse



A Volkswagen spokesman said the "Volkswagen" rebrand was a joke. PHOTO: AFP

VOLKSWAGEN US' subsidiary is keeping its name and will not rename itself "Volkswagen," a company spokesman said Tuesday, confirming that an earlier announcement was an April Fool's joke that may have gone further than intended.

The German automaker's US subsidiary, which is launching a media blitz for a new all-electric sport utility vehicle, recrafted its social media pages Tuesday and said the new moniker represents its "future-forward investment in e-mobility," according to a press release early Tuesday that was widely covered, including by AFP.

Company officials kept up the pretense for hours, with a US

spokesman confirming the name change early Tuesday in response to an email question about whether it was an April Fool's joke.

But VW spokesman Mark Gillies said in an email late Tuesday that the "Volkswagen" rebrand was a joke after the Wall Street Journal and other media reported that the announcement was indeed a ruse.

The incident comes as VW unveils new ads in the United States for the ID.4, its new electric model. VW's shift to electric cars marks an opportunity to redefine itself after the bruising "Dieselgate" scandal, which led to billions of dollars' worth of government settlements and a shakeup of company leadership. —AFP ■

Total's Mozambican gas plans delayed, not doused by attacks

A deadly assault by Islamic State-linked militants in Mozambique could delay plans by Total to build a massive liquefied natural gas facility, analysts warn, although the project is still likely to go forward.

Dozens of civilians were killed in the assault and capture of the key northern town of Palma by militants, and thousands fled the area.

Total, a French energy major, announced Saturday that it was suspending operations at the facility, located just a dozen kilometres from Palma.

The announcement came just days after Total announced it was resuming construction, which had been suspended for months owing to previous violence.

The Mozambique LNG project envisages building a massive facility capable of chilling and compressing natural gas into a liquid state, which makes it much easier to transport large amounts by ship.

The facility will also be capable of storing liquefied natural gas (LNG) and loading it onto ships. Total and its partners plan to invest \$20 billion in the project, and raised nearly \$15 billion in financing last year, the largest amount ever for a project in Africa. —AFP ■



A deadly assault by Islamic State-linked militants in Mozambique could delay plans by Total to build a massive liquefied natural gas facility, analysts warn, although the project is still likely to go forward. PHOTO: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Banking shares retreat as markets weigh mixed trends on Covid-19

BANKING shares were under pressure Monday in Europe and the United States on worries over losses connected to US fund Archegos Capital Management, as investors weighed the latest mixed trends on the coronavirus.

Top global banks Nomura of Japan and Switzerland's Credit Suisse warned they could face significant losses following reports of their exposure to a US fund that liquidated billions in stocks last week.

The price of shares for Nomura plunged by 16 per cent in Tokyo after it warned of a potential \$2 billion loss, while Credit Suisse shed 14 per cent. —AFP ■

Malaysia pays Singapore US\$76 mn over rail cancellation

MALAYSIA has paid Singapore over US\$76 million compensation following the cancellation of a controversial high-speed rail line between the neighbours after years of stop-start negotiations, officials said Monday.

The 350-kilometre (217-mile) railway was expected to cut travel time between the city-state and the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur to 90 minutes from the four or more hours by car currently.

But the neighbours scrapped the project in December after failing to agree on changes proposed by a new Malaysian government, which had taken power after the fall of a short-lived reformist administration. —AFP ■

Boeing seals large 737 MAX order as airlines eye recovery

US carrier Southwest Airlines agreed to buy 100 additional Boeing 737 MAX planes, the companies announced Monday, in a vote of confidence for the aircraft after a 20-month grounding.

The order, which includes options on another 155 new MAX planes, is the biggest for the model since regulators cleared it to resume service in late 2020 following two deadly crashes that sent Boeing into a crisis exacerbated by the industry downturn during the pandemic.

Southwest's order is worth \$12.5 billion at catalogue prices, which are almost never paid. The announcement means Boeing could build more than 600 new MAX jets for Southwest through 2031, Boeing said. —AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V PRESIDIO VOY. NO. (054W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V PRESIDIO VOY. NO. (054W/E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **1-4-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP/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 NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPPING PTE., LTD

Rich nation appetites driving tropical deforestation



Rising demand in wealthy countries for dozens of commodities ranging from coffee to soybeans has stepped up the pace of deforestation in the tropics. **PHOTO: AFP**

RISING demand in wealthy countries for dozens of commodities ranging from coffee to soybeans has stepped up the pace of deforestation in the tropics, researchers said Monday.

Even as North America and Europe expand forest cover within their own borders, efforts to slow forest loss in the global south through offset schemes and direct payments have been overwhelmed by these appetites, they reported in the journal *Nature Ecology & Evolution*.

The first country-by-coun-

try quantification of how rich-nation imports drive deforestation showed that each person in G7 nations accounts for, on average, the loss of four trees somewhere else in the world per year. In 2015, the last year for which figures were available across all the datasets examined, that totalled more than three billion trees, the researchers found. In five of those G7 nations — Japan, Germany, France, Britain and Italy — 91 to 99 per cent of their “deforestation footprint” was in foreign countries, half of that in the tropics. That foot-

print has grown most rapidly in China and India, but per capita tree loss is still far below that of rich nations.

“Most forests are in poorer countries that are overwhelmed with economic incentives to cut them down,” lead author Nguyen Tien Hoang, an expert in environmental modelling and mapping at the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature in Kyoto, told AFP.

“We show that richer countries are encouraging deforestation through demand for commodities.”—AFP ■

In Tunis, flamingos wade past waste in key Africa wetlands

HUNDREDS of flamingos wade past waste in the murky waters of the vast Sijoumi lagoon, a critical wetland in the heart of Tunisia’s capital threatened by overexpansion.

Once set apart from the city, today half of Tunis’ residents live on the banks of the “sebkha”, or mudflat, where more than 100,000 birds of around 100 different species spend winter.

The birds’ human neighbours complain of pollution, recurrent flooding and swarms of mosquitos from the lagoon, one of North Africa’s most important wetlands that became a dumping ground during decades of urbanisation.

A government-led project that includes buildings, concrete embankments, and digging into the mudflat aims to control pollution and regenerate the habitat, but some environmental groups have pushed back against the initiative.

Hamdi, a 31-year-old shopkeeper in the working-class

district of Sidi Hassine, hopes the project will beautify the area and solve the “problem of plastic waste and flooding from rainwater”.

The lagoon plays a vital role not only in absorbing the overflow of water during heavy rains, but also as a breeding ground for the flocks of migratory birds that gather there at the end of winter. But as rural populations flocked to Tunis, unauthorized building flourished in the former agricultural suburbs of the city and the lagoon became a dump for waste, mainly from construction.

A place to avoid

More than 1.8 million cubic metres of solid waste is estimated to have been disposed of in the lagoon since 2009, according to a government study.

As a result the 2,600-hectare lagoon has been unable to absorb as much rainwater during downpours, leading to flooding that often forces businesses and schools to close.

—AFP ■

US to invest heavily to boost offshore wind farms

THE US government on Monday unveiled plans to bolster offshore wind farms with the goal of supplying energy to more than 10 million homes by 2030, as part of President Joe Biden’s efforts to fight climate change.

The objective of the initiative — which will be carried out by the departments of commerce, the interior, transport and energy — is to produce 30 gigawatts of wind power in the country by that date, the White House in a press conference.

Achieving the goal will require more than \$12 billion in investment per year along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, and is expected to create tens of thousands of jobs, the administration said.

The move should cut 78 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions, the White House



Wind turbines of the Block Island Wind Farm off the coast of Rhode Island in October 2016: the Biden administration has announced it plans major investment to boost offshore wind farms. **PHOTO: AFP**

said.

The government plans to designate an offshore wind development zone off the coasts of the New York and New Jersey. Lots will be offered for operation by the end of 2021 and the beginning of 2022.

Only one offshore wind farm is currently fully operational in the United States: the Block Island Wind Farm, completed at the end of 2016 off the state of Rhode Island and capable of producing 30 megawatts. —AFP ■

Ecuador policeman held over 185 baby tortoises in suitcase

AN Ecuadorian policeman has been arrested after airport officials in the Galapagos Islands discovered 185 baby giant tortoises stuffed in a suitcase to be trafficked, prosecutors said Monday.

The reptiles, no more than three months old, were found in luggage destined for Guayaquil in mainland Ecuador during a routine inspection on Baltra island Sunday, authorities said.

The juvenile critters had been wrapped in plastic, and ten of them had died by the

time the suitcase was opened.

Another five have died since, possibly due to stress, the environment ministry reported Monday.

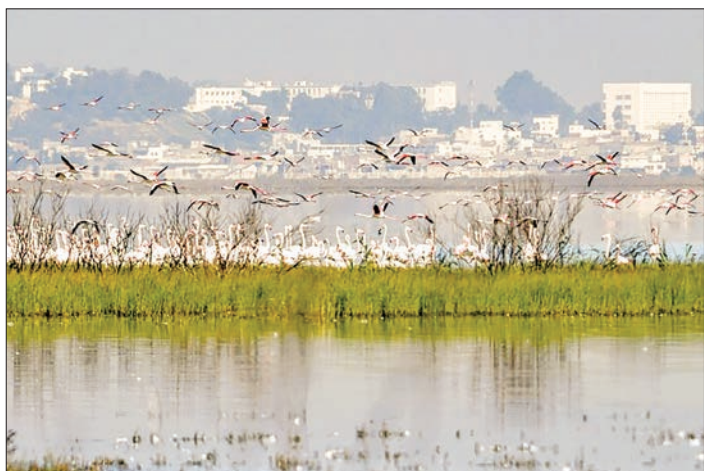
The policeman will be charged with crimes against wildlife and risks a three-year prison sentence, the prosecutor’s office in Ecuador tweeted.

The Galapagos Islands, some 1,000 kilometres (600 miles) off the coast of Ecuador, are a protected wildlife area and home to unique species of flora and fauna.

The Galapagos are where Charles Darwin’s observation of birds and tortoises on different islands gave rise to his theory of natural selection.

The reptiles — the largest living tortoises in the world — are the volcanic islands’ star attraction, but are listed as endangered.

The environment ministry said the surviving tortoises were taken to a breeding centre on the neighbouring Santa Cruz island. —AFP ■



Residents complain of pollution, recurrent flooding and swarms of mosquitos from the lagoon, one of North Africa’s most important wetlands. **PHOTO: AFP**

Women in the majority as Spanish PM reshuffles cabinet

SPANISH Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez reshuffled his government Tuesday, in a move that will see the majority of government posts handed to women.

The cabinet is now composed of 12 women and 10 men, with the four key posts of deputy premier held by women.

Spain was the “only country in the world” to have a cabinet dominated by women, Sanchez said.

Pablo Iglesias, the leader of the far-left Podemos party, was replaced as vice president



In this handout picture made available by La Moncloa, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez holds a press conference at La Moncloa palace in Madrid to announce his cabinet reshuffle on March 30, 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

by Labour Minister Yolanda Diaz, also from Podemos.

Iglesias has quit the government to run for the post

of Madrid’s regional chief. He posted a short video message on his Twitter account, vowing to continue to work where he felt he “could be of most use”.

Sanchez told journalists the reshuffle maintained the coalition deal he had with Podemos under which they held one deputy premier post.

The alliance between the Sanchez’s socialists and Podemos has been fraught with tension in recent weeks, notably as a result of the jailing of rapper Pablo Hasel over the contents of his lyrics.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Vietnam jails four activists up to 10 years on anti-state charges

FOUR activists have been jailed for up to ten years after Vietnamese courts found them guilty of spreading “anti-state propaganda”.

Vietnam’s communist government is swearing in a new cabinet, with top leaders taking office in the next few days.

It is also preparing for legislative elections in May for the rubber-stamp national assembly that has around 500 members.

Pressure on human rights activists has coincided with these political events, observers say.

In the southern Central Highlands province of Lam Dong on Tuesday, activist Vu Tien Chi, 55, was jailed for 10 years for sharing and posting online articles allegedly defaming the Communist Party and Vietnamese leaders. Since 2018, Chi has shared 338 articles and posted 181 videos on his personal accounts on Facebook and YouTube, questioning the policies of the state and government.—AFP ■

Mexican drug trafficker held US woman hostage for a year

AN alleged member of the notorious Sinaloa drug cartel held a US woman hostage for one year to collect a drug debt from a Delaware-based group of dealers, US justice officials said Tuesday.

The Justice Department said Luis Raul Castro Valenzuela, aka Chacho, demanded that the Delaware dealers hand over more proceeds from the sale of heroin and fentanyl to gain her freedom.

The woman, only identified as ND, was taken hostage in January 2020 and only freed last month in raids by Mexican police in Culiacan, which also led to Castro Valenzuela’s capture.

She was recovered “in good health,” the department said.—AFP ■

Honduran president’s brother gets life in US jail for drug trafficking



Protestors celebrate outside the US District Court Southern District of New York on March 30, 2021 after Juan Antonio “Tony” Hernandez, brother of the president of Honduras was sentenced to life for drug trafficking offenses. **PHOTO: AFP**

HONDURAN President Juan Orlando Hernandez’s brother was sentenced to life in prison

by a New York judge Tuesday for large-scale drug trafficking after a trial that implicated the leader

of the Central American country.

Tony Hernandez, 42, was found guilty in October 2019 on four counts -- including conspiring to import cocaine into the United States, possessing machine guns and making false statements.

Judge P. Kevin Castel said a life sentence for the former Honduran congressman who trafficked more than 185 tonnes of cocaine into the United States, some branded with his initials “TH,” was “richly deserved”.

President Hernandez, however, described the ordeal as a scandal, calling the sentencing “outrageous” and stating that it was “incredible that the false

testimonies of confessed murderers are heard and valued in this way”, referring to some of the convicted killers who served as witnesses.

Prosecutors had demanded life in prison, stressing that Tony Hernandez had “shown no remorse” and was “a central figure in one of the largest and most violent cocaine trafficking conspiracies in the world”.

His defence team had called for the mandatory minimum sentence of 40 years.

Hernandez, who served as a member of the Honduran Congress from 2014 to 2018, was arrested at a Miami airport in November 2018.—AFP ■

Crashed Indonesia passenger jet’s cockpit voice recorder found: ministry

THE cockpit voice recorder from a crashed Indonesian passenger jet has been found, the country’s transport ministry said Wednesday, more than two months after the accident that killed all 62 passengers and crew.

Officials said a press briefing “regarding the discovery of the Cockpit Voice Recorder” from the Sriwijaya Air Boeing 737-500 would be held later Wednesday morning. The 26-year-old plane -- previously flown by US-based Continental Airlines and United Airlines -- plunged around 3,000 metres (10,000 feet) into waters off Jakarta just minutes after takeoff on January 9.

Divers had been searching the Java Sea for the missing voice recorder -- one of the plane’s two “black boxes” -- which records flight crew conversations. A flight data recorder was earlier plucked from the wreckage-littered seabed. A preliminary report into the crash last month said Indonesian pilots had reported multiple problems with the ageing jet’s throttle system before the fatal crash.

But investigators had said it was too early to pinpoint an exact cause. The cockpit voice recorder could provide vital clues to what the desperate crew was saying when the flight from Jakarta to Pontianak in Borneo went down.



Divers had been searching the Java Sea for the missing voice recorder -- one of the plane’s two “black boxes”. **PHOTO: AFP**

Indonesia, a Southeast Asian archipelago that relies heavily on air transport to connect its

thousands of islands, has suffered a string of deadly plane crashes in recent years.—AFP ■

ONE Championship: TNT event to be launched on 8 April

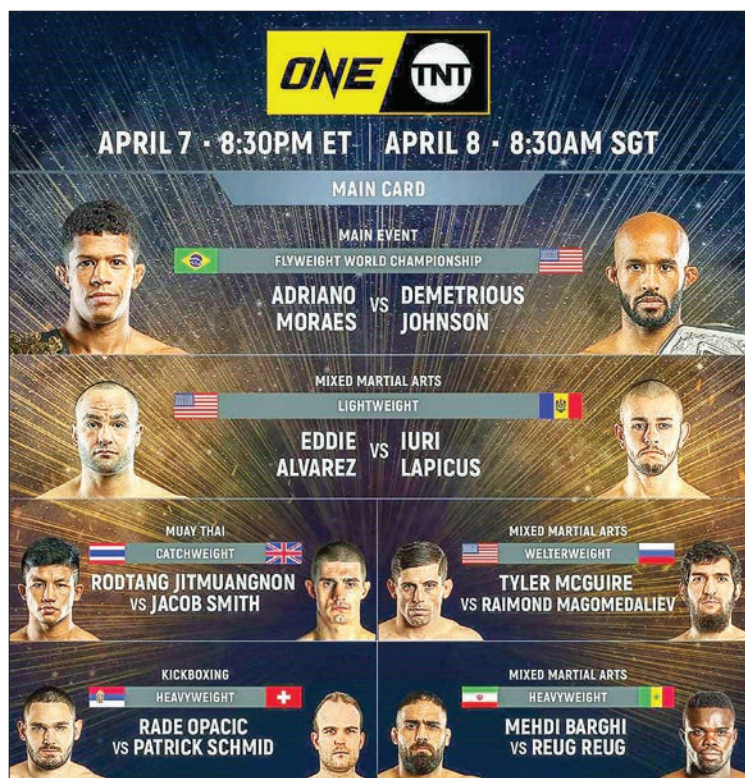


PHOTO: ONE CHAMPIONSHIP

A special event of the ONE Championship named “TNT” featuring bouts of world-class fighters will be held at Singapore Indoor Stadium in Singapore at 8:30 pm on 8 April, the time which is equivalent to Eastern Time of 8:30 pm on 7 April according to the ONE Championship.

There will be a total of six fights: all the bouts will be men’s fights.

In the main card of the event or Flyweight World Championship, Adriano Moraes of Brazil will fight against Demetrious Johnson of the United States.

In the co-main event or

Lightweight Mixed Martial Arts fight, Eddie Alvarez of the United States will take on Iuri Lopicus of Moldova.

In the Catchweight Muay Thai bout, Rodtang Jitmuangnon of Thailand will face Jacob Smith of the United Kingdom.

In the Welterweight Mixed Martial Arts fight, Tyler McGuire of the United States will fight with Raimond Magomedaliyev of Russia.

In the Heavyweight Kickboxing fight, Rade Opacic of Serbia will meet Patrick Schmid of Switzerland.

In the Heavyweight Mixed Martial Arts fight, Mehdi Barghi of Iran will take on Oumar Kane of Senegal.

The ONE Championship Fights will be broadcast live free on ONE Super Application and ONE

Championship YouTube Channel, according to the statement with the ONE Championship. The first two fights will also be streamed live on the ONE Championship Facebook page, officials stated.—GNLM

Germany rest Neuer, Gundogan set to take over captaincy

GERMANY goalkeeper Manuel Neuer will sit out Wednesday’s World Cup qualifier against North Macedonia with Manchester City midfielder Ilkay Gundogan set to take over as captain.

“Manuel Neuer will stay with the team even though he’s not playing. Ilkay Gundogan will be captain if he starts,” Germany head coach Joachim Loew said Tuesday.

Germany have won their Group J qualifiers against Iceland and Romania with Loew targeting a hat-trick of wins in Duisburg.

With Neuer rested, Barcelona’s Marc-Andre ter Stegen will make his first Germany appearance since November 2019.

Having named unchanged starting sides for the win over Iceland and Sunday’s 1-0 victory in Bucharest, Loew is look-

ing at his options.

Chelsea striker Timo Werner may start after two appearances off the bench while Moenchengladbach midfielder Florian Neuhaus is pushing for a place in the starting side.

North Macedonia lost 3-2 to Romania in their opening qualifier before thumping minnows Liechtenstein 5-0 on Saturday at home in Skopje.

While Loew insists the Germans are not taking their opponents lightly, he wants to keep the visitors goalless as Germany seek three straight clean sheets for the first time in four years.

Leverkusen teen Florian Wirtz, 17, could make his debut after two games on the bench.

Loew admits Iceland, Romania and North Macedonia are “not the calibre” of teams Germany will face at the Euro 2020 finals.—AFP ■

Chelsea vs Porto Champions League tie to be played in Seville



Both legs of the Champions League quarter-final between Portuguese club Porto and Premier League side Chelsea will be played in Seville, Spain, due to Covid-19 travel restriction. PHOTO: AFP

BOTH legs of the Champions League quarter-final between Portuguese club Porto and Premier League side Chelsea will be played in Seville, Spain, due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, UEFA confirmed on Tuesday.

The matches will be played at Sevilla’s Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan stadium, with the first leg on

April 7 and the return on April 13.

Portugal was removed from the British government’s list of countries on a travel ban red list earlier this month but anyone entering the UK from there is still required to self-isolate for 10 days.

It is just the latest European tie this season to be impacted by travel restrictions related to the

pandemic. Ironically the first leg of Chelsea’s last-16 tie against Atletico Madrid was moved from Spain to the Romanian capital Bucharest. Spain this week eased restrictions on people entering the country from the UK for certain reasons, including participants in high-level sporting events.—AFP ■



THE captain’s armband that Cristiano Ronaldo flung to the ground in disgust after Portugal were controversially denied a late winner at the weekend in the World Cup qualifier against Serbia was put on auction on Tuesday in a bid to help a sick child.

With the scores level at 2-2 in Belgrade, Ronaldo thought he had scored the crucial goal in stoppage time when the ball appeared to cross the goalline before Stefan Mitrovic cleared. But without technology in use, the goal was not awarded. A fuming Ronaldo was booked for his protests and at the final whistle,

as he stormed from the pitch, he threw his captain’s armband to the ground. One of the stewards at the stadium picked it up and immediately contacted a regional sports channel with the idea of auctioning it for charity. The man, who requested anonymity, told AFP he suggested raising funds required to treat a six-month-old baby, Gavrilko Djurdjevic, who is suffering from a rare disease. “He (Ronaldo) threw the armband three metres away from me, and the idea immediately occurred to me that this (sale) could be a good opportunity,” the man told AFP by phone.—AFP ■