Thaphanseik dam provides irrigation for over 20,000 acres of summer crops in three townships of Shwebo District, Sagaing Region, said U Aung Kyi Win, deputy head of Sagaing Region Agriculture Department.

"Thaphanseik dam was earlier planned to distribute water for 70,000 acres of summer rice crop. As the dam cannot provide irrigation for the summer rice crop, the farmers will cultivate over 70,000 acres of sesame and green grams instead. For now, the dam is distributing water for 20,000 acres in three townships through the irrigation system. The sesame is primarily selected for cultivation. The number of acres is not confirmed in detail," said U Aung Kyi Win.

The irrigation water supply started from the first week of March in Tanse, Yeu and Dabayin townships in Shwebo District. The summer sesame and green grams’ acreage is likely to reach over 70,000. Thaphanseik dam began to distribute water from 7 February in the region. Thaphanseik dam covered over 300,000 acres of summer rice crop in the previous years. This year, the dam cannot contribute water to the summer rice crop. Consequently, more monsoon rice crops will be grown. — Lulay/GNLM
Tatmadaw medical teams provide healthcare in township hospitals

THE Tatmadaw medical teams consisted of Tatmadaw doctors, specialists, and nurses continued providing the 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 health-care, osteoporosis, obstetrics, gynaecology, hypertension and heart disease to the patients in Thazi Township Hospital, Hanza hospital, Yinnabin hospital, Tagaung Public Hospital in Thabeikgyin Township, Sintgaing hospital in Kyaukse township, Yintaw hospital in Pyawbe township, Kyauktaga Public Hospital, Wai Laung hospital in Tagaung Public Hospital, Donzayit Hospital in Shweegyin Township, and Latpadan township hospital yesterday.

Official 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 supports of Tatmadaw.

— MNA

Monks, nuns, civil service personnel and locals vaccinated against COVID

ACCORDING to the instruction of Chairman of the State Administration Council, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing during his visit to Cocogyun, locals and civil service personnel in Cocogyun were COVID-19 vaccinated on 20 March.

The COVID-19 vaccination was also conducted to the people over the age of 65, including monks, nuns and civil service personnel in Laukkai, Kalaw, Hopong, Monghyi townships in Shan State; Loikaw and Hlawlale townships in Kayah State; Hmawby township in Yangon Region; Kyunggone township in Ayeyawady Region and Kyauktaga township in Bago Region.

Chairpersons of the respective region administration councils and officials from the respective regional commands encouraged and coordinated them as necessary.

Tatmadaw has been working together with civilian doctors who did not participate in the CDM campaign to conduct COVID-19 immunization across the country.

— MNA

Security teams stand guards in quarters for safety of people

ACCORDING to the officials, security forces are standing guards in quarters of respective cities and townships across the country to ensure the safety of people.

In doing so, the security teams, including Fire Brigades and security forces, have taken their respective duties for 24 hours starting from 14 February.

— MNA

Mandalay resumes public services and open markets

Mandalay Zaycho Market, Diamond Plaza and Yadanaarbon Market were reopened and alive with the local shoppers and sellers, and officials are also conducting safety measures for them in the markets as per the COVID-19 health rules and regulations.

Due to the incitements of unscrupulous and terrorist groups whose intention is to undermine the rule of law and stability of the State based on the Civil Disobedience Movement, local hospitals, train services, air travel and bus services were suspended, and banks and markets were shut down.

With the management of the Mandalay Region Administration Council and the cooperation of the security forces, public services and markets have opened in accordance with the stability and the rule of law in the region.

— MNA

People make worships at religious places across Myanmar

RELIGIOUS devotees visited respective pagodas, temples and religious sites for praying and making worships across the country when reopened on 8 February after the closure of these places for several months due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pilgrims, including monks and nuns, arrived at Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon, Maha Muni Buddha Image in Mandalay and Upatassanti Pagoda in Pubbha Thiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw to pay homage to the pagodas in line with the COVID-19 protective measures.

Moreover, other religious devotees prayed and made their worships at the respective sites of their faith.

— MNA

Locals, security forces remove roadblocks in Yangon region

UPON the request of the locals, security forces and officers from the township development committee and volunteer residents conducted a collective cleaning of the streets which groups of terrorists blocked in Thakayta Township and other townships in Yangon Region yesterday.

The disturbances such as tires, sandbags, woods, bricks, and iron rods that were put on the streets to block public transport, security forces, and fire trucks were removed. The Deputy Minister for Home Affairs and officials from the Yangon command inspected and coordinated them as necessary.

— MNA

Benefits from working together

If we want the whole country to develop, we need to combine all our human, financial and material resources and work strenuously together. Only then shall we benefit. It will be of no benefit if the Bamars, the Karens, the Shans, the Kachins and the Chins are divided, each going their own way. We will enjoy benefits only if we work together. And you will find that out only if you try it out.

(Extract from a speech delivered by General Aung San on 11 February 1947 in Panglong at a dinner with Sawbwas)
Muse trade zone running as almost usual

MUSE border trade zone is running as almost usual. Around 1,000 import and export trucks are trading daily, said U Min Thein, vice-chairman of the Muse Rice Wholesale Centre (MRWC).

Presently, Myanmar exports more than 700 truckloads of rice, broken rice, green gram, various pulses, including peanuts, onion, chilli, fisheries products, foodstuffs, watermelon, and muskmelon to China through the Muse border trade zone. “These days, the most exported items to China are watermelon and muskmelon. Recently, Myanmar has exported 437 truckloads of watermelon and muskmelon and 323 truckloads of other exported items. It is now the harvest season, and we export the crops mostly to China,” U Min Thein explained.

Besides, about 200 trucks carrying construction materials, electronic apparatuses, medical supplies, foodstuffs and fertilizers from China are entering Myanmar. The import and export trading is running as usual, and Muse border trade does not meet any trade barriers. But there may be some transaction problem to be back to the normal situation because of the private banks’ shutdown, he added. “The Muse border trade is operating as almost normal but not as usual because of the private banks’ closure and the financial issue,” said U Min Thein.

Currently, the banks are closed, so it is not easy to make the Muse border trade’s cash flow. So, the payment is being made with the use of the Hundi money transfer system. The Hundi money transfer system is an informal exchange system in which paying someone in one location allows a payment to be made by an agent in a distant location and a commission usually applied to the transfer.

Hundi business is weak to some extent because of the private banks’ closure, said U Min Thein. The Minister explained that the Ministry of Finance is discussing the limits of the Hundi business in solving the problem.

Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn meets hoteliers and officials in Ayeyawady Region

UNION MINISTER for Hotels and Tourism U Maung Maung Ohn met Chairman of the Ayeyawady Region Administration Council U Ye Myint to discuss tourism development activities in the region on 20 March in Pathein in Ayeyawady Region.

During the meeting, they discussed the resumption of hotels and tourism as per the COVID-19 rules and regulations in the region for the benefits of locals, businesses, and the country. COVID-19 vaccination to hotel staff, and tourism activities promotion.

Afterwards, the Union Minister arrived at Chaungtha Beach and met departmental officials, Deputy Chairmen and officials from the Myanmar Hotelier Association at Azura Beach and met departmental officials in Ayeyawady Region.

During his visit to Chaungtha Beach, the Union Minister also opened the Azura Beach Resort and inspected the hotel’s preparation to be opened under the COVID-19 health guidelines. He also visited Ngwe Saung Beach and instructed the hoteliers and officials to meet the COVID-19 rules and regulations requirements to reopen hotels and inspected the preparation of Aureum Palace Hotel for reopening with the COVID-19 health guidelines.

Muse trade zone running as almost usual

Hundi money transfer system is an informal exchange system in which paying someone in one location allows a payment to be made by an agent in a distant location and the difference set-tled between the agents later on, according to the MRWC.

Hundi business is weak to some extent because of the private banks’ closure, said U Min Thein. The Minister explained that the Ministry of Finance is discussing the limits of the Hundi business in solving the problem.

The demonstrations have turned into violence

ALTHOUGH there have been fewer protests, violent acts emerged in some areas, such as burning public property and factories. So, security forces had to handle the situation very hard. The protesters raided police stations and administrative offices and burned factories.

Meanwhile, the shooting had to disperse the protesters, resulting in some security forces and protesters’ casualties. Therefore, martial law was imposed in Shwepyitha and Hlinethaya townships in Yangon on the night of 14 March. The martial law imposition was extended to the townships of Dagon Myothit (South and North), North Okkalapa and Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) yesterday morning. Control measures were taken only through democratic means and with patience. However, there have been disturbances and insults even to monk folk. Behind the protests are instigators and financial supporters. So, the demonstrations have turned into violence.

(Excerpt from the speech to the 6/2021 meeting of the State Administration Council made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 16 March 2021)
Announcement of Union Election Commission
20 March 2021

1. The Union Election Commission inspected voter lists and withdrawal, receipt, use and ground stocks of ballots used in the multiparty democracy general election held on 8 November 2020 in Yankin, North Okkalapa, Botataung, Hlinethaya (West) and Kungyangon townships of Yangon Region.

2. Findings of voter lists in respective townships were as follows:

Findings on voter lists in each township

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Township and number of polling station</th>
<th>Township Subcommission list</th>
<th>List from Immigration department</th>
<th>Those involved in voting list without citizenship scrutiny cards</th>
<th>Those involved in voter list more than three times holding one CSC</th>
<th>Those involved in voter list more than two times holding one CSC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>53 polling stations in Yankin Township of Yangon Region</td>
<td>56,028</td>
<td>33,383</td>
<td>1,994</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>238 polling stations in North Okkalapa Township of Yangon Region</td>
<td>273,481</td>
<td>127,355</td>
<td>23,763</td>
<td>827</td>
<td>16,828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>38 polling stations in Botataung Township of Yangon Region</td>
<td>33,288</td>
<td>25,327</td>
<td>712</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>287 polling stations in Hlinethaya (West) Township of Yangon Region</td>
<td>278,219</td>
<td>138,314</td>
<td>52,925</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>8,958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>180 polling stations in Kungyangon Township of Yangon Region</td>
<td>89,932</td>
<td>87,007</td>
<td>15,768</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>4,372</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. The Union Election Commission together with those from respective township election sub-commissions, commanders of Township Police Forces, heads of Township Immigration and Population Departments and township administrators opened ballot boxes and inspected withdrawal, receipt, use and ground stocks of ballots used in the election for the Pyithu Hluttaw in Yankin, North Okkalapa, Botataung, Hlinethaya (West) and Kungyangon townships of Yangon Region in accord with Section 53 of the Hlutaw Election Law.

4. A total of 796 polling stations in five townships took out 802,706 ballots and used 452,424 ballots. There remained 310,282 ballots instead of 150,282 ballots. The difference was 54,887 ballots and it found 15,590 extra ballots. Loss and shortage of ballots and illegally extra ballots were found at respective townships. As ballots were printed in set amount for respective constituencies, numbers of extra ballots were seen as illegally printed ones. The findings in each township were as follows:

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw in each township

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Total polling station</th>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Exact remaining</th>
<th>Remaining on the ground</th>
<th>Difference Missing</th>
<th>Extra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yankin</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>63,689</td>
<td>36,704</td>
<td>26,985</td>
<td>23,111</td>
<td>4,224</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>North Okkalapa</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>297,657</td>
<td>177,176</td>
<td>120,481</td>
<td>107,617</td>
<td>27,398</td>
<td>14,534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Botataung</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38,146</td>
<td>25,327</td>
<td>12,917</td>
<td>12,530</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hlinethaya (West)</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>299,006</td>
<td>146,322</td>
<td>152,684</td>
<td>133,672</td>
<td>19,012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kungyangon</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>106,208</td>
<td>68,993</td>
<td>37,215</td>
<td>34,055</td>
<td>3,679</td>
<td>519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>802,706</td>
<td>452,424</td>
<td>350,282</td>
<td>310,985</td>
<td>54,887</td>
<td>15,590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. According to the ground inspection, 53 polling stations in 15 wards of Yankin Township in Yangon Region took out 63,689 ballot papers and used 35,704 receipts of ballot. There remained 23,111 ballot papers on the ground instead of 26,985. It was found that extra ballot papers and missing ballots were found at respective polling stations. The findings on scrutiny were as follows:

Findings on ground inspection in respective wards of ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw in each township

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Exact remaining</th>
<th>Remaining on the ground</th>
<th>Difference Missing</th>
<th>Extra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ward/Village-tract ballots</td>
<td>57,746</td>
<td>35,575</td>
<td>22,171</td>
<td>18,147</td>
<td>4,224</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Township advance ballots</td>
<td>1,129</td>
<td>1,129</td>
<td>4,814</td>
<td>4,964</td>
<td>4,814</td>
<td>4,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Township remaining ballots</td>
<td>4,814</td>
<td>4,814</td>
<td>37,215</td>
<td>34,055</td>
<td>3,679</td>
<td>519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63,689</td>
<td>36,704</td>
<td>26,985</td>
<td>23,111</td>
<td>4,224</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Fifty-three polling stations in 15 Wards of Yankin Township lost 4,224 ballot papers and used 200 extra ballots. There remained 4,964 ballots at the township election sub-commission instead of 4,814. So, a total of 150 extra ballots were found there.

Findings on ground inspection in respective wards of ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw in Yankin Township were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Exact remaining</th>
<th>Remaining on the ground</th>
<th>Difference Missing</th>
<th>Extra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>No 11 ward</td>
<td>6,171</td>
<td>3,646</td>
<td>2,525</td>
<td>2,355</td>
<td>179</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>No 12 ward</td>
<td>8,450</td>
<td>5,724</td>
<td>2,726</td>
<td>2,357</td>
<td>399</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>No 13 ward</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>3,328</td>
<td>1,472</td>
<td>1,322</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>No 14 ward</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>7,012</td>
<td>1,988</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>No 15 ward</td>
<td>2,650</td>
<td>1,708</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>782</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>No 16 ward</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>2,790</td>
<td>2,210</td>
<td>1,649</td>
<td>561</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ward total</td>
<td>57,746</td>
<td>35,375</td>
<td>22,171</td>
<td>18,147</td>
<td>4,224</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Township advance ballots</td>
<td>1,129</td>
<td>1,129</td>
<td>4,814</td>
<td>4,964</td>
<td>4,814</td>
<td>4,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Township remaining ballots</td>
<td>4,814</td>
<td>4,814</td>
<td>37,215</td>
<td>34,055</td>
<td>3,679</td>
<td>519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Township total</td>
<td>63,689</td>
<td>36,704</td>
<td>26,985</td>
<td>23,111</td>
<td>4,224</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings on ground inspection for ballots of Pyithu Hluttaw in North Okkalapa Township

8. A total of 238 polling stations in 19 wards of North Okkalapa Township in Yangon Region took out 297,657 ballot papers and used 177,176 ballots. It was scrutinized that there remained 167,617 ballots on the ground instead of 129,481. Extra and missing ballots in respective polling stations were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Ward/Village-tract ballots</th>
<th>Withdrawn</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Exact remaining on the ground</th>
<th>Re-remaining</th>
<th>Difference Missing Extra</th>
<th>Extra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No 1 ward</td>
<td>10,053</td>
<td>6,445</td>
<td>3,608</td>
<td>4,026</td>
<td>418</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No 2 ward</td>
<td>19,937</td>
<td>14,157</td>
<td>5,780</td>
<td>4,173</td>
<td>1,607</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ku ward</td>
<td>10,875</td>
<td>6,719</td>
<td>4,156</td>
<td>3,830</td>
<td>326</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kha ward</td>
<td>7,929</td>
<td>4,867</td>
<td>3,062</td>
<td>2,866</td>
<td>176</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gane ward</td>
<td>6,296</td>
<td>4,085</td>
<td>2,211</td>
<td>3,117</td>
<td>906</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Gagyi ward</td>
<td>8,348</td>
<td>5,388</td>
<td>2,960</td>
<td>3,453</td>
<td>493</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nga ward</td>
<td>18,499</td>
<td>9,396</td>
<td>9,103</td>
<td>5,702</td>
<td>3,401</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sa ward</td>
<td>7,205</td>
<td>5,403</td>
<td>1,802</td>
<td>3,018</td>
<td>1,208</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Hsa ward</td>
<td>10,844</td>
<td>6,419</td>
<td>4,245</td>
<td>1,781</td>
<td>2,444</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Za ward</td>
<td>8,011</td>
<td>6,103</td>
<td>2,508</td>
<td>2,598</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Zyamynzwe ward</td>
<td>9,484</td>
<td>8,888</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>4,257</td>
<td>2,927</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nya ward</td>
<td>22,722</td>
<td>13,444</td>
<td>9,278</td>
<td>4,713</td>
<td>4,565</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Ta ward</td>
<td>14,500</td>
<td>11,148</td>
<td>3,352</td>
<td>4,924</td>
<td>1,572</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Hta ward</td>
<td>45,240</td>
<td>25,836</td>
<td>19,404</td>
<td>10,894</td>
<td>8,510</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kyaukkyawdwin ward</td>
<td>7,800</td>
<td>4,995</td>
<td>2,805</td>
<td>1,813</td>
<td>1,082</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tadargyi ward</td>
<td>4,950</td>
<td>3,097</td>
<td>1,853</td>
<td>1,603</td>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Paywseltokkun ward</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>1,823</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>1,172</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Waibargyi Myothit ward</td>
<td>13,193</td>
<td>7,289</td>
<td>5,904</td>
<td>2,021</td>
<td>3,283</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Shwepauckdan Myothit ward</td>
<td>59,172</td>
<td>29,574</td>
<td>29,598</td>
<td>28,044</td>
<td>1,554</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward total</td>
<td>288,912</td>
<td>175,081</td>
<td>113,831</td>
<td>94,617</td>
<td>27,398</td>
<td>8,184</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings on ground inspection for ballots of Pyithu Hluttaw in Botataung Township

9. A total of 27,398 ballots went missing at 238 polling stations in 19 wards of North Okkalapa Township with using 8,184 extra ballots. There remained 13,000 ballots on the ground in hand of the township election sub-commission instead of 6,650. It found 6,350 extra ballots.

10. Findings on ground inspection for ballots of Pyithu Hluttaw in respective wards of North Okkalapa Township in Yangon Region were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Ward/Village-tract ballots</th>
<th>Withdrawn</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Exact remaining on the ground</th>
<th>Re-remaining</th>
<th>Difference Missing Extra</th>
<th>Extra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No 1 ward</td>
<td>1,350</td>
<td>899</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>451</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No 2 ward</td>
<td>7,600</td>
<td>4,532</td>
<td>1,968</td>
<td>1,633</td>
<td>235</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>No 3 ward</td>
<td>2,550</td>
<td>1,848</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>No 4 ward</td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>2,220</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>1,187</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>No 5 ward</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>1,873</td>
<td>1,327</td>
<td>1,139</td>
<td>188</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>No 6 ward</td>
<td>3,050</td>
<td>1,797</td>
<td>1,253</td>
<td>1,333</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>No 7 ward</td>
<td>2,700</td>
<td>1,457</td>
<td>1,243</td>
<td>1,194</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>No 8 ward</td>
<td>3,450</td>
<td>1,907</td>
<td>1,543</td>
<td>1,566</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>No 9 ward</td>
<td>2,700</td>
<td>1,104</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>No 10 ward</td>
<td>5,300</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>1,714</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings on ground inspection for ballots of Pyithu Hluttaw in Hlinethaya (West) Township

14. The ground inspection mentioned that 287 polling stations in 11 wards and four village-tracts of Hlinethaya Township in Yangon Region took out 299,906 ballots and used 146,322 ballots. There remained 133,672 ballots instead of 152,684. Extra and missing ballots were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Ward/Village-tract ballots</th>
<th>Withdrawn</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Exact remaining on the ground</th>
<th>Re-remaining</th>
<th>Difference Missing Extra</th>
<th>Extra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ward/Village-tract ballots</td>
<td>297,500</td>
<td>145,356</td>
<td>152,144</td>
<td>152,144</td>
<td>332</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Township advance ballots</td>
<td>966</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Township remaining ballots</td>
<td>540</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward total</td>
<td>299,906</td>
<td>146,322</td>
<td>152,684</td>
<td>133,672</td>
<td>19,012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings on ground inspection for ballots of Pyithu Hluttaw in Botataung Township

11. A total of 38 polling stations in 12 wards of Botataung Township in Yangon Region took out 36,146 ballot papers and used 23,229 ballots. It was scrutinized that there remained 12,917 ballots on the ground instead of 12,530. Extra and missing ballots in respective polling stations were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Ward/Village-tract ballots</th>
<th>Withdrawn</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Exact remaining on the ground</th>
<th>Re-remaining</th>
<th>Difference Missing Extra</th>
<th>Extra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ward/Village-tract ballots</td>
<td>34,250</td>
<td>22,094</td>
<td>12,156</td>
<td>11,873</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### FROM PAGE 5

**Findings on ground inspection for ballots of Pyithu Hluttaw in Kungyangon Township**

17. The ground inspection stated that 180 polling stations in seven wards and 43 village-tracts of Kungyangon Township in Yangon Region took out 106,208 ballots and used 68,993 ballots. It was found that there remained 34,055 ballots instead of 37,215 ballots. Extra and lost ballots were found in respective polling stations. Findings on inspection on extra and missing ballots were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Ward/Village-tract</th>
<th>Total polling stations</th>
<th>With-drawn</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Exact remaining</th>
<th>Remaining on the ground</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Extra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ward/Village-tract ballots</td>
<td>106,208</td>
<td>68,993</td>
<td>37,215</td>
<td>34,055</td>
<td>3,679</td>
<td>519</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Township ballots</td>
<td>9,308</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>8,938</td>
<td>8,938</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Township remaining ballots</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>540</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Township total</td>
<td>299,006</td>
<td>146,322</td>
<td>152,684</td>
<td>133,672</td>
<td>19,012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. A total of 3,679 ballots went missing at 180 polling stations in seven wards and 43 village-tracts in Kungyangon Township with 519 extra ballots. Findings on ground inspection for ballots of Pyithu Hluttaw in respective wards/village-tracts of Kungyangon Township were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Ward/Village-tract</th>
<th>Total polling stations</th>
<th>With-drawn</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Exact remaining</th>
<th>Remaining on the ground</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Extra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Myoma ward</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2,900</td>
<td>2,223</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kama/Myagye ward</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2,750</td>
<td>2,037</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Zaypine ward</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Taungbatpine ward</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3,550</td>
<td>2,470</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>978</td>
<td>104</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Minpine ward</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tawpuwae ward</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>216</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sanpya ward</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2,350</td>
<td>1,769</td>
<td>581</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kamarpar Village-tract</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3,850</td>
<td>2,910</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>940</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Taikkyi Village-tract</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,650</td>
<td>1,244</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Suukalat Village-tract</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>170</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Seikkyi Village-tract</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nyaunggu Village-tract</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Tawkhayyan Anauk Village-tract</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3,550</td>
<td>2,759</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>791</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Tawkayun Village-tract</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2,350</td>
<td>1,637</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>109</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Tawkhayyani Village-tract</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>2,525</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. A total of 751 of 971 voters were involved on the voter list without citizenship scrutiny cards and cast votes at No 3 polling station of Tawkayun Village-tract of Kungyangon Township in groups. Those casting votes were not in conformity with qualification of voters mentioned in respective Hluttaw Election Law, and their citizenship, associate citizenship and naturalized citizenship were not scrutinized and their names were inserted into the voter list allowed to cast votes. (Three sample sheets of allowed Form-1 voter lists were attached to.)

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**Union Election Commission**
Myanmar mineral exports down by $555 mln over five past months

THE value of Myanmar’s mineral exports has drastically fallen to US$465.8 million as of 13 March in the current financial year 2020-2021 since 1 October. It reflects a severe drop of $555 million against a year-ago period, the Ministry of Commerce’s data indicated.

The mineral exports hit over $1 billion in the corresponding period of last FY. The coronavirus impacts led to the slump in mineral exports this FY. The heightened COVID-19 measures also shut down the events like gem emporium and expo last year, a trader said.

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

Due to the limited extraction of natural resources, exports of forest products and minerals had dropped significantly in the previous years. Permits for mining blocks were suspended in 2016. However, after a period of two years, Myanmar’s mining sector has now been opened to local and foreign investors, according to the ministry. Within two years of implementing the Myanmar Mines Law the Mines Department has approved more than 140 out of 3,000 proposed mining blocks. Many more blocks are to be granted the permit.

The Myanmar Mines Law was enacted on 24 December 2015. However, the law came into force when the rules were issued on 13 February 2018. The ministry undertakes the screening process of the proposals for medium and large-scale mining blocks. As per the regulatory changes in 2018, regional and state governments are given the power to process applications for artisanal and small-scale mining blocks. Under the new regulations, foreign firms can invest in large blocks covering up to 500,000 acres (about 202,000 hectares).

In contrast, local firms can invest in all kinds of blocks. Investors can seek a permit to mine minerals such as gold, copper, lead and tin. The licences cover prospecting, exploration, and production.

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

In the FY2018-2019, mineral exports were pegged at just $1.465 billion. Myanmar’s mineral products constitute 10 per cent of overall exports. About 80 per cent of mineral products are shipped to external markets through sea trade. At the same time, 20 of them are sent to neighbouring countries through border trade channels. — KK/GNLM

Maritime trade drop by $3.76 bln in current FY

THE value of Myanmar’s maritime trade for the period between 1 October and 13 March in the 2020-2021 financial year sank to US$9.06 billion, a drastic drop of over $3.76 billion compared to the year ago period, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

While maritime exports were valued at $3.67 billion, imports were registered at $5.38 billion. Compared to the same period in the 2019-2020 budget year, imports fell by $2.4 billion, while exports decreased by $1.34 billion.

Meanwhile, the value of trade through the border this FY was estimated at $4.99 billion, a decrease of $66.65 million as against a year ago period.

Both sea trade and border trade dropped amid the coronavirus impacts. The neighbouring countries tightened border security and limited the trading time to contain the spread of the virus. Pandemic-induced container shortage pushed up the freight rates to almost triple in Myanmar, causing delays for traders.

Additionally, according to the Myanmar Mercantile Marine Development Association, some ocean liners suspended cargo transport from Myanmar.

“The halt of ocean liners will undoubtedly affect the maritime trade. The cargo transport will double or triple if we conduct the trade with small ships,” said an official of the association.

The country’s total external trade reached $11.987 billion, which plunged from $14.13 billion recorded in a year ago period.

Myanmar’s sea trade generated $26 billion from an overall trade value of $36 billion in the last FY2019-2020.

The Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry has been exempting tax barriers for the businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The exemption period for withholding tax on exports will be extended until 30 April 2021, according to its notification dated 19 March.

The MoPFI earlier granted relief on a two per cent withholding tax on exports between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021. At present, the negative impacts of the pandemic are exacerbating, and so, the withholding tax will be extended until 30 April 2021.

Moreover, international trade transactions cannot be done during the meantime amid the closure of private banks.

The Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce notified on 3 March that exporters and importers do not require to seek licences for 37 HS code lines for exports and 72 lines for imports between 8 March and 9 April 2021 to facilitate the trade.

Export items with licence exemption include onion, garlic, rice, broken rice, raw sugar, refined sugar, natural rubber and cotton, while the exemption covers the following import goods; sliced fish (salmon and tuna), flour, soybean seed, palm oil, food commodity, cement, gasoline, diesel, pharmaceuticals, fertiliser and lubricant.

However, tax cut and licence exemption will not tackle the trade slowdown amid the current political changes, an exporter shared his opinion.

Regardless of maritime trade disruption, border trade with China and Thailand remained strong.

Withholding tax exemption will help smooth border trade businesses, a trader from Muse said. — HH/GNLM
Time to build travel sector back better

The resumption of the travel sector on the ground can save jobs, help the country’s economy and satisfy the desire to travel again. It can work on the ground with communities, regional authorities and the travel industry coming up with a transformative plan that is workable and helps drive traveller behaviour change maintaining mandatory health guidelines. Other health measures will also remain vital, including mandatory masks wearing, pre-departure and arrival temperature screening at airports, bus terminals, and social distancing. If vaccination uptake in destinations is low, these measures will become even more important.

As we look to recover from this profound crisis, the safe restart of tourism is essential. Safety is at the top of the mind for travellers and services as travel services resume and travel destinations are reopened. Resuming the travel sector must come along with developing new tourist destinations as our country is rich in tourism resources, and tourism is a lucrative business that contributes a lot to the country’s development.

With an unprecedented opportunity to transform the relationship of the tourism sector with people, nature, the climate and the economy, our travel sector is going to build back better. The pandemic has given us a chance for a reset — we should make the most of the opportunity.

As societies and industries are now also looking to rebuild and reemerge from the crisis, we must ensure that our region-wise master plans for travel recovery are safe and responsible. It must be a shared responsibility between visitors, local communities, business owners, employees and local governments.

It is time to seriously work on ways we can open up again and accept that a certain level of risk comes with greater freedom of movement.

THERAVĀDA Buddhism has been flourishing in Myanmar since ancient times. Myanmar especially plays a leading role among the Theravāda Buddhist countries. The first arrival of Buddha Sāsana, this "Land of Pagodas", was associated with the history of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda.

According to the Myanmar chronicles, Buddhism arrived in Myanmar in the lifetime of the Buddha, more than 2600 years ago. In the year 1033MahāAra, on the full-moon day of Vesākha (May), the Buddha attained the Supreme Enlightenment. Two merchants from SuvaōOebhulī, "Golden Land" as Lower Myanmar was then known, arrived in Bodhgaya and made offerings to the Buddha. At their request, the Buddha gave them eight strands of hair from His head. The sacred hair relics were enshrined in a Cetiya which is now known as Shwe Dagon Pagoda. The two merchant brothers were the first ones to take refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma. This event was mentioned in the Shwedagon stone inscription, set up by King Dhamma Ceti (CE 1472 - 1492) of Hanthawaddy Kingdom.

The idea of establishing an International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University near the Sacred Tooth Relic Pagoda was first suggested by the leader of the State. He was aware of the problems faced by the foreigners who came to Myanmar to study Theravāda scriptures and meditation. Added to these problems is the language barrier, which they could not overcome. With a view to solving these problems for the sake of foreigners and promoting Theravāda Buddhism throughout the world, he expressed his desire for establishing an International Buddhist University for those who would like to make an in-depth study of Theravāda Dhamma both in theory and practice.

This vision perfectly matched with the state of Theravāda Buddhism in Myanmar at that time for the following reasons:

(i) Myanmar is one of the leading Theravāda Buddhist countries, and it has preserved Lord Buddha’s original teaching being approved by Mahayānīshas at six Buddhist Councils.

(ii) Myanmar has a reservoir of learned Buddhist monks and scholars who are well-versed in Tipiṭaka. With more than four hundred thousand monks, Myanmar has more than two thousand monasteries specialized in Theravāda scriptural studies and more than six hundred meditation centres.

(iii) There are more than six thousand learned monks who are teaching Tipiṭaka scriptures and more than one thousand meditation masters in Myanmar.

The idea of establishing an International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University was greatly welcomed and accepted by the State Suvaōgala Mahā Niyaka Committee, "Tatmadandikā" as Lower Myanmar was then known, arrived in Bodhgaya and made offerings to the Buddha. At their request, the Buddha gave them eight strands of hair from His head. The sacred hair relics were enshrined in a Cetiya which is now known as Shwe Dagon Pagoda. The two merchant brothers were the first ones to take refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma. This event was mentioned in the Shwedagon stone inscription, set up by King Dhamma Ceti (CE 1472 - 1492) of Hanthawaddy Kingdom.

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With an unprecedented opportunity to transform the relationship of the tourism sector with people, nature, the climate and the economy, our travel sector is going to build back better. The pandemic has given us a chance for a reset — we should make the most of the opportunity.

As societies and industries are now also looking to rebuild and reemerge from the crisis, we must ensure that our region-wise master plans for travel recovery are safe and responsible. It must be a shared responsibility between visitors, local communities, business owners, employees and local governments.

It is time to seriously work on ways we can open up again and accept that a certain level of risk comes with greater freedom of movement.
In accordance with the objectives and basic principles laid down by the University, the project was launched by forming the necessary committees, namely the Committee for Drafting University Act, Rules and Regulations, the Committee of the Patron Sayadaw, the University Curriculum Committee and the Committee for Writing University Constitution.

Meanwhile, progress was achieved at every front in the preparation period. Construction and renovation of the buildings on the campus moved ahead at an amazing speed. Administrative buildings, residences for monk faculty members, hostels for nuns and female students, hostels for monks and male students were renovated. The rooms were fully furnished so that students could pursue their studies comfortably and quietly. An ordination hall, the Uposatha-Kamma, and for the monks for the observance of the Uposatha-Kamma, was also constructed on the campus. The landscaping and greening of the campus were also taken care of.

Under the patronage of the first TipiOakadha Mahāthera of Myanmar, two State Pariyatti Sāsana Universities were opened for Buddhist monks who have a desire to pursue the study of Buddhist Canonical Texts and to propagate the Theravāda Buddha Dhamma within the country. On the other hand, the International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University was inaugurated on 9th December 1998. It is located on a beautiful site near the Sacred Tooth Relic Pagoda, Yangon, Myanmar.

Those local and foreign students, who had received the diploma, graduate and post graduate degrees, will be able to propagate the genuine Theravāda Dhamma, which is expounded by the Buddha. Moreover, local students will be able to explain the genuine Theravāda Dhamma to the foreigners who are visiting Myanmar.

For sharing genuine Theravāda Buddhism, there are four faculties comprising the following departments:

1. Faculty of Pariyatti
   (a) Department of Vinaya Studies
   (b) Department of Suttanta Studies
   (c) Department of Abhidhamma Studies
   (d) Department of Buddhist Culture and History
   (e) Department of Pārājikajī Studies
   (f) Department of Myanmar Language

2. Faculty of Puñippatti

3. Faculty of Buddhist Mission

4. Faculty of Theravāda Buddhist Missionary

Within two years, four lecture halls were constructed in beautiful Myanmar architectural style. Each lecture building was meant for one faculty using the upper floor for lectures and the ground floor for faculty members. The lecture halls were big enough for sixty students and were equipped with up-to-date audio-visual teaching aids. A new administrative complex with offices and library was also constructed on the campus. The landscaping and greening of the campus were also taken care of.

Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University building.
International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University:...

FROM PAGE 9

(a) Department of Dhammānuloma Studies
(b) Department of Samatha Studies
(c) Department of Vipassanā Studies
3. Faculty of Religions and Missionary Works
(a) Department of Comparative Studies of Religions
(b) Department of Missionary works
(c) Department of Vipassanā Studies
3. Faculty of Religions and Missionary Works
(a) Department of Comparative Studies of Religions
(b) Department of Missionary works
(c) Department of Research
4. Faculty of Foreign Languages and Translation
   (a) Department of English
   (b) Department of French
   (c) Department of German
   (d) Department of Arabic
   (e) Department of Japanese
   (f) Department of Chinese
   (g) Department of Hindi
   1. One-year diploma course: Diploma in Buddha Dhamma, Dip. (B.Dh.)
   2. Two-year ordinary degree course: Bachelor of Arts in Buddha Dhamma, B.A. (B.Dh.)
   3. Three-year M.A. course: Master of Arts in Buddha Dhamma, M.A. (B.Dh.)
   4. Four-year PhD course: Doctor of Philosophy in Buddha Dhamma, PhD. (B.Dh.)

Each academic year consists of two semesters. The first term starts in June and ends in October. The second term starts in December and ends in March. Vacation is in April, May and November.

Anyone, regardless of gender, race, religion and creed, having educational qualifications prescribed by the University, can apply for admission to the University. Any applicant for a Diploma in Buddha Dhamma will have to meet the following requirements:

1. The foreign monks, nuns and laypeople must have passed at least the matriculation or equivalent. For the laymen and nuns who are Myanmar citizens must have their first degree B.A. or B.Sc. Myanmar monks must have passed the Dhammānulomā examination.

2. The candidates need to sit for an entrance examination prescribed by the University. (The candidates can sit for the entrance examination at the International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University in Yangon or the Myanmar embassies in foreign countries.)

3. They should have some knowledge of Theravāda Buddhism; fluency in spoken and written English is desirable.

The students who passed the entrance examination are admitted to the University. Students, monks, nuns and laypersons from foreign countries are provided with free accommodation and food. Textbooks and lecture handouts are also distributed free of charge as Dhamma Dāna.

Academic staff includes Mahātheras, theras and laypersons; they are religious title holders, Doctorate and post-graduate degree holders. Deans, professors and lecturers are well-versed in Pāli Texts, Pāli literature, Myanmar literature and foreign languages, and they are experienced teachers. The medium of instruction is English.

Regarding the academic matters, the syllabus and curriculum were drawn up by experienced Rectors, Professors and scholars. The students have to learn not only the Pāli and Paññā but also languages such as Myanmar for foreign students and English for local students. Post-graduate students, foreign and local, have to learn one of the languages such as French, German, Japanese and Chinese. Sanskrit is also an elective subject.

The International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University is not only a learning centre to learn Theravāda Pāli Texts and commentaries (Pariyatti), but also a place to study the practical aspect of Buddha’s Teachings (Paññā); that is, meditation. All students, foreign and local, have to practise insight meditation in the Mahāsabhā Meditation Hall of the University for two hours every week.

In order to acquaint with the meditation methods of well-known Myanmar Mahātheras, and as a part of the curriculum, the excursion trips are arranged for international students studying in the Diploma course to the meditation centres in Yangon every week. They are also sent to the pagodas, museums, places of interest in Yangon, and famous pagodas in other cities. For those who are staying in Myanmar during the vacation, the arrangements are also made to practise meditation at meditation centres in Yangon and other cities.

With regard to the library facilities, the ITBMU Library has 25670 books, including PTS Series (from Pāli Text Society, London), the International Encyclopedia on Buddhism (75 volumes), Encyclopedia of Buddhism (6 volumes), Encyclopedia of Religions, Ethics and latest books on Buddhist literature by famous Theravāda Buddhist monks, and other Encyclopedias among others.

The academic staff and the students have easy access to the Library of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture. It is situated in the precinct of Kabar Aye Pagoda, close to the International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University campus.

One-year diploma course in Buddha Dhamma was introduced in December 1998. A two-year degree course was started in the following year.

This University is to be proud of due to the fact that the Diploma Graduation has been held for 20 times, and the Convocation for eighteen times. During the twenty-two years, the Diploma in Buddha Dhamma has been conferred upon 557 international students and 571 Myanmar students. The University has also conferred the B.A. (B.Dh.) degree upon 346 international students and 400 Myanmar students.

The post-graduate course for M.A. (B.Dh.) was initiated in 2002-03 Academic Year starting in June 2002. The University has conferred the M.A. (B.Dh.) degree upon 87 monk students and 116 lay students. The doctorate, Ph.D. (B.Dh.), has been conferred upon 32 monks, nuns and laypersons since 2006-07 Academic Year.

Some graduates, especially monks, from this University are carrying out missionary works abroad and within the country. It is also hoped that other graduates, both local and foreign, of this University are working for the propagation of Buddhism in their own ways.

Some graduates from this University are also studying for their post-graduate degrees in some countries in India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and in the USA and Western countries.

The academic staff of the University has to perform both teaching and research. Teaching includes conducting tutorials, seminars, workshops, symposia and excursions to historical sites. Research works have been carried out by the academic staff individually as well as by the Department of Research.

Since the International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University has many learned Mahātheras who are well-versed in Pāli Texts, Pāli literature, and language, it was chosen as a focal point when the World Buddhist Summit was held in Yangon, Myanmar, in December, 2004.

Moreover, the International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University is probably the unique learning centre as its curriculum is based mainly on Theravāda Pitaka Pāli Texts, Atthakathās and Rīkās. Hence, there is reason to believe that it will remain a prestigious Buddhist University of Myanmar.

In conclusion, it can be firmly said that the International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University will keep on disseminating the Theravāda Buddha Dhamma, as set out in its main objectives, to share the genuine Theravāda Buddhism (the teachings of Buddha) with the people of the world.

Source: References
With friendly rivalries, eSports gain traction in corporate world

MICROSOFT software engineer Daniel Jost has found a way to take on his peers at Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Google in friendly fashion — through video game competition.

His team is the one to beat when it comes to using jet-powered cars to score points by knocking giant balls, soccer-style, into nets on virtual fields in Rocket League tournaments organized by the Corporate Esports Association (CEA).

“It feels similar to the company bowling or soccer league, it’s just being done in front of a computer screen instead of meeting at the bowling alley every Friday,” said Jost.

Matches are streamed online at an array of platforms such as Twitch and YouTube, with bragging rights and charity dollars on the line. Like video-game play overall, interest in company team matches has boomed during the Covid-19 pandemic as real-world options from soccer to softball stopped being viable. “It really is the corporate sports leagues in just a very slightly different form,” said Brad Tennenholtz, a cybersecurity industry veteran and co-founder in 2018 of the association with registration fees going to a charity chosen by the victors.

“My dad works at a steel mill in Cincinnati, Ohio, and plays on his corporate softball team,” CEA chief Tennenholtz said. —AFP

The French branch of Swedish retailing giant Ikea goes on trial

The French branch of Swedish retailing giant Ikea goes on trial Monday accused of running an elaborate system to spy on staff and job applicants using private detectives and police officers. PHOTO: AFP

Prosecutors say Ikea France set up a “spying system” across its operations across the country, collecting information about the private lives of hundreds of staff and prospective staff, including confidential information about criminal records.

Since the media revelations broke the company has sacked four executives, but Ikea France, which employs 10,000 people, still faces a fine of up to 3.75 million euros ($4.5 million).

The 15 people also appearing before the court in Versailles near Paris include former store managers and top executives such as former CEO Stefan Vanoverbeke and his predecessor, Jean-Louis Baillot.

The group also includes four police officers accused of handing over confidential information.

The charges include illegal gathering of personal information, receiving illegally gathered personal information, and violating professional confidentiality, some of which carry a maximum prison term of 10 years. —AFP

Morocco farmers mourn loss of date palms in border standoff

MOROCCAN farmers in an isolated oasis on the Algerian border are bearing the brunt of regional tensions after Algiers expelled them from date groves they have worked for generations.

The border between the arch rivals has been closed since 1994, but Algeria had allowed some residents of the Moroccan frontier town of Figuig to cross into the date groves of Al-Dira, known to Algerians as the Alaroda oasis. In recent days, Algeria has withdrawn that right, deploying soldiers to enforce the move.

“Everybody feels wronged,” said Mohamed Jabbari, an unemployed 36-year-old who joined a protest in Figuig against the move.

“Agriculture is the only resource we have. There’s no work here, no factories.”

On Thursday, some 4,000 people — around half of Figuig’s population — attended an angry demonstration against Algeria’s decision. Morocco’s regional authorities organized a meeting to examine possible solutions to mitigate the impact of a decision they said was “temporary”.

—AFP

Many in Figuig are reliant on date palms for their livelihoods. PHOTO: AFP

London woman turns lockdown loaves into bakery success

WHEN Britain first entered lockdown in March last year, Sophia Sutton-Jones decided to try making sourdough bread.

A year later, she is running her own popular bakery. “I’d always thought about it, but I never had the courage to do it,” she told AFP. Now Sutton-Jones, 29, and her husband Jesse, 28, work alongside half a dozen staff members pulling hot loaves out of the oven, putting out flaky pastries and cutting slices of cafe topped with cream. It all started when Sutton-Jones’s father was also a baker, made a loaf of bread for a neighbour who was sheltering during the first national lockdown in March 2020.

“He talked to his friends about it,” she says. “Very quickly, we had 12 people waiting in front of our house.”

The couple, who sold kitchenware online before the pandemic, began to deliver orders by bicycle in their north London neighbourhood. —AFP
Putin pilots bumpy all-terrain rig on Siberian holiday

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin, during a holiday in Siberia with Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu, piloted an all-terrain vehicle through thick woodland and traversed a swaying rope bridge, Kremlin footage showed.

Putin routinely appears on state television participating in various outdoor pursuits to project the image of a healthy and robust leader capable of leading the country for many years to come.

His bare-chested exploits have conjured for many Russians an image of Putin, 68, as an in-shape role model.

Video released by the Kremlin from inside an all-terrain vehicle showed the president at the wheel of a vehicle that pulled branches from overhanging trees as it barrelled over snow-laden tracks through dense forests of birch.

The two men were seen trudging through knee-high snow and inspecting wooden ruins in a barren forest before taking careful steps across a rope bridge over a frozen river.

Putin, who loves to cultivate a virile man-of-action image, was shown in 2017 on holiday with Shoigu sea-fishing in a camouflage wetsuit, piloting a powerboat and catching some rays.

Last year he bestowed a 65th birthday honour on Shoigu, his loyal ally in the Syria conflict and companion on wilderness trips. — AFP

Evacuations ordered as Sydney’s biggest dam overflows after record rainfall

SYDNEY braced for its worst flooding in decades Sunday after record rainfall caused its largest dam to overflow and as deluges prompted mandatory evacuation orders along Australia’s east coast.

Emergency services ordered people living in low-lying areas on the city’s north-western fringes to flee to safety, as authorities warned of a potentially “life-threatening” situation in New South Wales state.

It came after the Warragamba Dam, which provides much of the drinking water for Sydney, spilled over Saturday afternoon - causing officials to warn the downstream Hawkesbury River was expected to peak at levels not seen since 1961.

“It is one of the biggest floods we are likely to see for a very long time,” Bureau of Meteorology flood operations manager Justin Robinson said. Floodwaters had already risen in several areas, prompting mass evictions, and official said another 4,000 people could be told to leave their homes in the coming days.

Authorities urged residents to heed the “dozens” of official warnings in place across affected areas, with State Emergency Service assistant commissioner Dean Storey saying those in evacuation zones “must leave immediately”. — AFP

N. Korea closes embassy, diplomats leave Malaysia as ties severed

The North Korean an-

PHOTO: KYODO

A North Korean diplomat reads out a statement in front of the North Korean Embassy in Kuala Lumpur on March 21, 2021. (Kyodo) zoom photo A

PHOTO: KYODO

NORTH KOREA closed its embassy, its citizens to the United States. In 2019, a Malaysian court ordered Mun Chol Myong, who is wanted by U.S. authorities on money laundering charges, to remain in Malaysia, saying he had done nothing wrong. Earlier this month, he lost his final appeal to Malaysia's top court. — Kyodo News

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Putin likes to cultivate a virile man-of-action image. PHOTO: AFP

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Saudi Aramco 2020 profits slump on lower crude prices

ENERGY giant Saudi Aramco on Sunday posted a 44.4 per cent slump in 2020 net profit due to lower crude prices, as the coronavirus pandemic weighed heavily on global demand.

Aramco, Saudi Arabia’s cash cow, has revealed consecutive falls in profits since it began in 2019. That has piled pressure on government, which depends on Aramco’s cash flow, to diversify the oil-reliant economy.

“Aramco achieved a net income of $49 billion in 2020,” the company said in a statement - down from $88.2 billion in 2019.

Saudi Arabia, the world’s biggest crude exporter, was hammered last year by the double whammy of low prices and sharp cuts in production.

Aramco’s chief executive Amin Nasser described it as “one of the most challenging years in recent history”.

The firm said “revenues were impacted by lower crude oil prices and volumes sold, and weakened refining and chemicals margins.

But compared to many of its loss-generating international peers, the company, which made its stock market debut in 2019, played up its “strong financial resilience” despite the challenges.

ECONOMIC STRESS

China stresses capital market opening-up, tighter IPO scrutiny

CHINA will further open up its capital market while preventing risks, and urge tighter scrutiny on companies seeking to promote reform on registration-based initial public offering (IPO) system, the head of the country’s securities regulator said Saturday.

“We will keep an open, supportive attitude toward the set-up of institutions as well as the launch of businesses and products,” said Yi Huiman, chairman of the China Securities Regulatory Commission, at a roundtable of the China Development Forum, noting that risk prevention is also essential.

While continuing to encourage normal cross-border liquidity flows, Yi warned against a large amount of hot money running in and out. “For any market, big inflows and outflows of hot money would be detrimental to healthy development and must be strictly controlled.”

He also urged cooperation with U.S. regulators to properly address the issues concerning China concept stocks, saying that “disagreements can only be resolved through negotiation”.

Meanwhile, Yi cited that “the registration-based IPO system doesn’t mean looser vetting requirements”.

Trade Mark Caution

El kem ASA, a company organized under the laws of the Kingdom of Norway and having its principal office at Drammensveien 169, 0277 Oslo, Norway, is the owner and sole proprietor of the following trademark:

MICRODENSE

(Rog: Reg. No. IV/492/2021) (3rd February 2021)

Use in respect of - “Chemical additives for the use in oil well fluids and oil well cement.” (International Class 1)

Any unauthorized use, imitation, infringement, or fraudulent intention of the above trademark will be dealt with according to law.

Moe Mynn Thu (LLB, LL.M, M.Rea)
Rouge Myanmar
For El kem ASA

Email: myanmar@rouse.com

Dated: 22nd March 2021

Congested ports and supply chain woes hit US factories and stores

THE cold snap that gripped the United States in February not only caused chaos in Texas and the south-west, it also triggered a shortage in plastics that has disrupted a supply chain already under strain from a lack of microchips and growing congestion at ports as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

So factories have had to shut their doors and consumers are feeling the crunch.

At Toyota, a petrochemicals shortage affected production at plants in Kentucky, West Virginia and Mexico.

Honda cited supply chain issues “related to the impact of Covid-19, congestion at various ports, semiconductor shortages and severe winter weather” to justify the temporary closure of five of its factories in Canada and the United States.

Consumers are also being affected.

Nike said Thursday that its sales of shoes and sportswear were being affected by congestion at ports around the country.

— AFP
A man by nature is a social animal and prefers living in a community to live in solitude. As an escape from stress encountered during daily struggles at work, the emotional strain of being in the working environment, and weariness born out of an uneasy employer-employee relationship at workplaces, we tend to go on vacation to places all over Myanmar during holidays or when we want to relieve work fatigue.

Some of the tours enticing those who travel the country are Myitsone in Kachin, Moe Bye dam in Shan, Zwekabin in Karen, Reed Lake in Chin, Kyakhtiyo in Mon, MraukU in Rakhine, and Inle Lake in Shan. They would also include pilgrimage tours to such sacred pagodas as Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon, Shwemawdaw Pagoda in Bago, Myathalun Pagoda in Magway, Sun U Ponnya Shin Pagoda in Sagaing, Maha Myat Muni Pagoda in Mandalay, Dawei Shin Koe Shin Pagodas in Tanintharyi, Mawtinzun in Ayeyawady, and also recreational trips to such places as Indawgyi Lake in Kachin, Moeik Archipelago in Tanintharyi, Ayeyawady

BY KHIN MAUNG (HOTELS/TOURISM)
TRANSLATED BY – ABLE SAN WIN

National Development Fuelled by A Thriving Tourism Industry

Ngwesaung, Chaung Thar, and Ngapali in Rakhine.

As per their religious beliefs, these work-weary people would take short trips to destinations in adjacent towns and cities or longer tours, either in groups or individually, as a temporary getaway from their jobs to escape the workplaces' emotional strain to refresh their tired hearts.

During these times, families, relatives, employees from government or private organizations, and people all over the world find themselves under the threat of Covid-19 disease: having to spend all day every day stuck in their homes all year round has led to hinder all-round development in economy, education, social affairs and politics. Facing difficulties in such daily social affairs as work opportunities, sources of income and business dealings, people lost the joy, freedom and peace they previously enjoyed, grew distrustful, hostile and impatient towards each other. Days turned to months and then into a year since animosity has taken the place of serenity in our daily lives: a cure has yet to be found; the void remains unfilled, and there is no escape in sight to a relaxed state of mind. With religious doctrines, all but forgotten, strained relationships, tension, and discord become the norm in our social life. As such, everyone – young and old – long to leave behind these times where we get through every day full of worry and misery.

Hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, tour guides, and people who make their living from services such as agriculture, livestock farming or meat shop businesses in tourist destinations, those who are in the land, water or air transport services for tourists, machinery, and other associated businesses are crucial factors in Myanmar tourism industry. These people, machines,
in a situation where it is difficult just to survive.

In search for a getaway with the recreation of a free and fair social environment in mind, one could go the way of obtaining the latest Covid-19 treatment drugs to help win the fight against the pandemic; visiting the Coronavirus-free regions; living with Covid-19 while totally mindful of its dangers and properly following the rules in place; or, just going on vacations come what may with no restraints, focusing solely on unwinding oneself. Among these many ways of escaping to relaxation, however, the route chosen should be that which is best for the people and their community. It is high time we started taking cautious, measured steps towards breathing life back into the tourism industry as soon as possible.

In preparation for kick-starting touring businesses, Covid-19 Relief Package (1) Tourism 101 Refresher Training Courses for the lower class people including those who make their living from providing transport services by motorboats, horse-carts, slow-moving vehicles, craftsmen, hawkers, and tray-vendors, all of whom are a part of the tourism industry in all states and regions where tourism business have been hit hard by Covid-19 and economy is in decline; and Covid-19 Relief Package (2) Hotel Services Refresher Training Courses for the hotel staff from respective Hotel Zones have been delivered, under the guidance of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, the supervision of Directorate of Hotels and Tourism, and the management of the departments concerned, with collaborative contribution from Myanmar Tour Guides Association, Myanmar Hotelier Association and Myanmar Hospitality Professionals Association. Likewise, ASEAN Standard Tour Guide Upgrading Course for the National Tour Guide training course has been launched as per the Covid-19 Relief Package (3).

Covid-19 Safe Service Master Trainer (TOT) courses have been opened in all states and divisions to produce trainers capable of delivering the required training, and evaluators, in implementing the Enchanting Myanmar Health and Protocol program for the post-Covid-19 resumption of the tourism industry. Trainers who have finished this TOT course have set up Replica Courses on Hazard Prevention in seven industries which are hotel and guesthouse businesses, restaurants, transport businesses, tour companies, tour guides, travel destinations and tourist attractions souvenir shops in concerned all states and divisions. A programme was implemented, during the launch of these courses, to provide stipends to instructors and students.

Dos and Don'ts that will be necessary when resuming the tourism industry and its associated businesses in the post-Covid-19 era.

In making a united effort with participation, collective analytical consultation and supervision from professionals from concerned fields, and with contributions of business owners and employees, we would need to work attentively and sensibly under the slogan “A rule followed is a danger avoided”, no matter what obstacle stands in the way, to revive our tourism industry. As we start these businesses, instead of letting the momentum immediately die out by overestimating our capabilities, we should have discussions and manage our efforts to minimize any disasters while launching these businesses. It should be a collaborative effort from all parties involved.

Since human beings who make their living from tourism, such as business owners, workers, and inanimate objects such as machinery, are profoundly awaiting new dawn when the tourism industry will again come to life, it is hereby advised to operate coordination...
Man City late shows books place in FA Cup semi-finals

Zverev wins Acapulco title after slow start against Tsitsipas

Zidane mystified by France continuing to exclude ‘spectacular’ Benzema