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Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Home Affairs

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Declaration of Unlawful Association

THE Chairman of the State Administration Council is of the opinion that the aims and acts of the illegally-organized Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hlut-taw-CRPH and its members, its affiliated groups and illegitimate CRPH-related individuals have constituted a danger to the rule of law, peace and stability of the State and public peace.

Therefore, the Chairman of the State Administration Council, as per Section 16 of the Unlawful Associations Act, has declared the above-mentioned committee and its affiliated groups as an Unlawful Association in accord with the stipulations in Section 15, subsection (2) of the Unlawful Associations Act.

By order,

Lieutenant-General Soe Htut
Union Minister
Ministry of Home Affairs

Thaphanseik dam secures over 20,000 summer crop acres in Shwebo District



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 select-

ed 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 Dabay-in 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 8 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

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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)

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 healthcare, osteoporosis, obstetrics,

gynaecology, hypertension and heart disease to the patients in Thazi Township Hospital, Hanza hospital, Yinmabin hospital, Tagaung Public Hospital in Thabeikkyin Township, Sintgaing hospital in Kyaukse township, Yintaw hospital in Pyawbwe township, Kyauktaga Public Hospital, Wai Laung hospital in Taungtha Township, Kyaukpadaung Hospital, Donzayit

hospital in Shwegyin Township and Latpadan township hospital yesterday.

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 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 peo-

ple over the age of 65, including monks, nuns and civil service personnel in Laukkai, Kalaw, Hopong, Mongbyai townships in Shan State; Loikaw and Bawlake townships in Kayah State; Hmawby township in Yangon Region; Kyunggone township in Ayeyawady Region and Kyauktaga township in Bago Region.

Chairpersons of the re-

spective 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 Yadanarbon 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 intension 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 mar-

kets 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 Uppatasanti 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

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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)

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 Patheingyi 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 Resort. At the meeting, the Union Minister said his ministry has instructed to open hotels following the COVID-19 rules and regulations. Accord-



MoHT Union Minister discusses tourism development activities with hoteliers and officials in Patheingyi on 20 March. PHOTO: MNA

ing to the Enchanting Myanmar Health and Safety Protocols (HSP), training courses will be given to hotel staff and issued a certificate after the inspection.

Director-General for the

Directorate of Hotels and Tourism U Maung Maung Kyaw discussed the plan to prioritize Chaungtha Beach which will be likely to be the most-visited area in the country when the

domestic tourism industry is revitalized; notifications to open hotels that the Ministry of Health and Sports has inspected and to work together to preserve the environment and beauty of the

beach as well as for the safety of tourists and staff in the current situation.

The officials from the hotelier association and the Regional Administration Council discussed the inspection conducted by the relevant teams to reopen hotels, suspension of loan assistance by the State and further loan assistance. The Union Minister coordinated the meeting as necessary.

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. — MNA

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 musk-

melon 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 fertilizer 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 the difference settled between the agents later on, according to the MRWC.

Hundi business is weak to protect transactions and less secure. Besides, they charge too much for services. — NN/GNLM

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, Botahtaung, 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

Sr	Township and number of polling station	Township Sub-commission list	List from Immigration 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	53 polling stations in Yankin Township of Yangon Region	56,028	33,383	1,934	67	1,934
2	238 polling stations in North Okkalapa Township of Yangon Region	273,481	127,355	23,763	837	16,828
3	38 polling stations in Botahtaung Township of Yangon Region	33,288	25,327	712	6	324
4	287 polling stations in Hlinethaya (West) Township of Yangon Region	278,219	138,314	52,925	235	8,058
5	180 polling stations in Kungyangon Township of Yangon Region	89,932	87,007	15,768	178	4,372

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, Botahtaung, Hlinethaya (West) and Kungyangon townships of Yangon Region in accord with Section 53 of the Hluttaw Election Law.

4. A total of 796 polling stations in five townships took out 802,706 ballots and used 452,424 ballots. There remained 310,985 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

Sr	Subject	Total polling station	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Yankin	53	63,689	36,704	26,985	23,111	4,224	350
2	North Okkalapa	238	297,657	177,176	120,481	107,617	27,398	14,534
3	Botahtaung	38	36,146	23,229	12,917	12,530	574	187
4	Hlinethaya (West)	287	299,006	146,322	152,684	133,672	19,012	
5	Kungyangon	180	106,208	68,993	37,215	34,055	3,679	519
	Total	796	802,706	452,424	350,282	310,985	54,887	15,590

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 36,704 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:

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/Village-tract ballots	57,746	35,575	22,171	18,147	4,224	200
2	Township advance ballots	1,129	1,129				
3	Township remaining ballots	4,814		4,814	4,964		150
	Total	63,689	36,704	26,985	23,111	4,224	350

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.

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

Sr	Ward	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	No 1 ward	1,900	1,296	604	604		
2	No 2 ward	4,300	2,646	1,654	1,611	43	
3	No 3 ward	1,750	873	877	358	519	
4	No 4 ward	2,100	1,099	1,001	799	202	
5	No 5 ward	5,000	2,930	2,070	1,680	390	
6	No 6 ward	2,100	1,474	626	726		100
7	No 7 ward	1,650	1,039	611	503	108	
8	No 8 ward	5,775	2,864	2,911	1,469	1,442	
9	No 9 ward	3,000	2,146	854	954		100
10	No 11 ward	6,171	3,646	2,525	2,355	170	
11	No 12 ward	8,450	5,724	2,726	2,327	399	
12	No 13 ward	4,800	3,328	1,472	1,322	150	
13	No 14 ward	3,100	2,012	1,088	998	90	
14	No 15 ward	2,650	1,708	942	792	150	
15	No 16 ward	5,000	2,790	2,210	1,649	561	
	Ward total	57,746	35,575	22,171	18,147	4,224	200
	Township advance ballots	1,129	1,129				
	Township remaining ballots	4,814		4,814	4,964		150
	Township total	63,689	36,704	26,985	23,111	4,224	350

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 107,617 ballots on the ground instead of 120,481. Extra and missing ballots in respective polling stations were as follows:

Sr	Subject	With-drawal	Used	Exact remain-ing	Re-main-ing on the ground	Difference	
						Miss-ing	Extra
1	Ward/Village-tract ballots	288,912	175,081	113,831	94,617	27,398	8,184
2	Township advance ballots	2,095	2,095				
3	Township remaining ballots	6,650		6,650	13,000		6,350
Total		297,657	177,176	120,481	107,617	27,398	14,534

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:

Sr	Ward	With-drawal	Used	Exact remain-ing	Re-main-ing on the ground	Difference	
						Miss-ing	Extra
1	No 1 ward	10,053	6,445	3,608	4,026		418
2	No 2 ward	19,937	14,157	5,780	4,173	1,607	
3	Ka ward	10,875	6,719	4,156	3,830	326	
4	Kha ward	7,929	4,867	3,062	2,886	176	
5	Gange ward	6,296	4,085	2,211	3,117		906
6	Gagyi ward	8,348	5,388	2,960	3,453		493
7	Nga ward	18,499	9,396	9,103	5,702	3,401	
8	Sa ward	7,205	5,403	1,802	3,010		1,208
9	Hsa ward	10,844	6,419	4,425	1,781	2,644	
10	Za ward	8,611	6,103	2,508	2,598		90
11	Zyamyinzwe ward	9,848	8,888	960	4,257		3,297
12	Nya ward	22,722	13,444	9,278	4,713	4,565	
13	Ta ward	14,500	11,148	3,352	4,924		1,572
14	Hta ward	45,240	25,836	19,404	10,894	8,510	
15	Kyaukyaydwin ward	7,890	4,995	2,895	1,813	1,082	
16	Tadargyi ward	4,950	3,097	1,853	1,603	250	
17	Paywetseikkon ward	2,800	1,828	972	1,172		200
18	Waibargi Myothit ward	13,193	7,289	5,904	2,621	3,283	
19	Shwepaukkan Myothit ward	59,172	29,574	29,598	28,044	1,554	
Ward total		288,912	175,081	113,831	94,617	27,398	8,184
Township advance ballots		2,095	2,095				
Township remaining ballots		6,650		6,650	13,000		6,350
Township total		297,657	177,176	120,481	107,617	27,398	14,534

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

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

Sr	Subject	With-drawal	Used	Exact remain-ing	Re-main-ing on the ground	Difference	
						Miss-ing	Extra
1	Ward/Village-tract ballots	34,250	22,094	12,156	11,873	470	187

2	Township ballots	1,896	1,135	761	657	104	
Total		36,146	23,229	12,917	12,530	574	187

12. Three wards in Botahtaung Township lost 470 ballot papers at polling stations. Polling stations in eight wards used 187 ballots more than the ballots issued by the Union Election Commission. There remained 657 ballots instead of 761 ballots. Hence, 104 ballots were shortage and missing.

13. Findings on ground inspection for ballots of Pyithu Hluttaw in respective wards of Botahtaung Township were as follows:

Sr	Ward	Total polling stations	With-drawal	Used	Exact remain-ing	Re-main-ing on the ground	Difference	
							Miss-ing	Extra
1	No 1 ward	1	1,350	899	451	451		
2	No 2 ward	7	6,400	4,532	1,868	1,633	235	
3	No 3 ward	3	2,550	1,848	702	710		8
4	No 4 ward	3	3,400	2,220	1,180	1,187		7
5	No 5 ward	3	3,200	1,873	1,327	1,139	188	-
6	No 6 ward	3	3,050	1,797	1,253	1,333		80
7	No 7 ward	4	2,700	1,457	1,243	1,196	47	
8	No 8 ward	5	3,450	1,907	1,543	1,566		23
9	No 9 ward	2	1,700	1,104	596	649		53
10	No 10 ward	5	5,300	3,600	1,700	1,714		14
11	Yeyeikthar ward	1	600	445	155	156		1
12	Seikkan Mithasu Yeiktha	1	550	412	138	139		1
Ward total		38	34,250	22,094	12,156	11,873	470	187
Township ballots			1,896	1,135	761	657	104	
Township total			36,146	23,229	12,917	12,530	574	187

Findings in ground inspection on ballots for 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 299,006 ballots and used 146,322 ballots. There remained 133,672 ballots instead of 152,684. Extra and missing ballots were as follows:

Sr	Subject	With-drawal	Used	Exact remain-ing	Re-main-ing on the ground	Difference	
						Miss-ing	Extra
1	Ward/Village-tract ballots	297,500	145,356	152,144	133,132	19,012	
2	Township advance ballots	966	966				
3	Township remaining ballots	540		540	540		
Total		299,006	146,322	152,684	133,672	19,012	

15. It was found that 287 polling stations in 11 wards and four village-tracts in Hlinethaya Township lost 19,012 ballots. A total of 540 remaining ballots were seen as original form.

16. Findings on ground inspection in wards/village-tracts of Hlinethaya (West) Township for Pyithu Hluttaw were as follows:

Sr	Ward/Village-tract	With-drawal	Used	Exact remain-ing	Re-main-ing on the ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	No 9 ward	19,870	11,412	8,458	7,822	636	
2	No 13 ward	10,800	5,193	5,607	4,312	1,295	
3	No 14 ward	18,950	10,606	8,344	6,629	1,715	
4	No 16 ward	22,150	11,074	11,076	10,368	708	
5	No 19 ward	26,950	13,463	13,487	10,806	2,681	
6	Apyin Padan Village	14,450	7,146	7,304	6,838	466	

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Sr	Ward/Village-tract	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
7	Atwin Padan Village	18,000	7,956	10,044	9,499	545	
8	Kalargyisu Village	16,000	8,324	7,676	6,782	894	
9	No 10 ward	15,800	8,457	7,343	5,952	1,391	
10	No 11 ward	20,600	10,081	10,519	9,015	1,504	
11	No 12 ward	15,300	8,505	6,795	6,430	365	
12	No 17 ward	3,250	1,646	1,604	1,604		
13	No 18 ward	21,150	11,116	10,034	7,559	2,475	
14	No 20 ward	38,980	17,311	21,669	19,564	2,105	
15	Ahlae Village	35,250	13,066	22,184	19,952	2,232	
Ward total		297,500	145,356	152,144	133,132	19,012	
Township advance ballots		966	966				
Township remaining ballots		540		540	540		
Township total		299,006	146,322	152,684	133,672	19,012	

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:

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/Village-tract ballots	96,900	68,623	28,277	25,117	3,679	519
2	Township ballots	9,308	370	8,938	8,938		
Total		106,208	68,993	37,215	34,055	3,679	519

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:

Sr	Ward/Village-tract	Total polling stations	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Myoma ward	4	2,900	2,223	677	681		4
2	Kanma/Magye ward	5	2,750	2,037	713	663	50	
3	Zaypine ward	1	450	365	85	85		
4	Taungbatpine ward	5	3,550	2,470	1,080	976	104	
5	Minpine ward	2	1,300	839	461	411	50	
6	Tawpulwae ward	1	1,050	834	216	216		
7	Sanpya ward	3	2,350	1,709	641	641		
8	Kamarpar Village-tract	6	3,850	2,910	940	940		
9	Taikkya Village-tract	3	1,650	1,244	406	456		50
10	Suukalat Village-tract	2	850	680	170	170		
11	Seikkya Village-tract	2	1,100	802	298	296	2	
12	Nyaunggu Village-tract	2	900	647	253	203	50	
13	Tawkhayan Anauk Village-tract	6	3,550	2,759	791	791		
14	Tawkyauung Village-tract	6	2,350	1,637	713	604	109	
15	Tawkhayanlay Village-tract	5	3,900	2,525	1,375	1,375		
Ward/ Village-tract total		180	96,900	68,623	28,277	25,117	3,679	519
Township remaining ballots			9,308	370	8,938	8,938		
Township total			106,208	68,993	37,215	34,055	3,679	519

16	Htiphar Village-tract	4	1,600	1,056	544	496	48	
17	Daydanaw Village-tract	3	2,000	1,052	948	396	552	
18	Pegon Village-tract	2	800	620	180	180		
19	Mannkaleik Village-tract	5	2,400	1,850	550	445	105	
20	Mayan Village-tract	3	1,400	1,175	225	225		
21	Yaytein Village-tract	2	700	514	186	236		50
22	Warkauktaw Village-tract	3	1,450	1,050	400	400		
23	Thonkhwa Village-tract	4	1,800	1,291	509	409	100	
24	Thabyusan Village-tract	3	1,300	818	482	332	150	
25	Ingalon Village-tract	6	2,900	2,099	801	804		3
26	Kawtdon Village-tract	3	1,250	899	351	351		
27	Kanhlarshae Village-tract	5	2,750	2,206	544	544		
28	Kayinchaung Village-tract	3	1,000	788	212	212		
29	Kahnyingon Village-tract	5	3,300	2,324	976	678	298	
30	Kyakhatkongyi Village-tract	3	2,000	1,407	593	443	150	
31	Kyakhatkonglay Village-tract	4	1,700	1,286	414	414		
32	Kantmalar Village-tract	3	1,200	587	613	363	250	
33	Khalauktayar Village-tract	6	3,350	2,251	1,099	848	251	
34	Hnetgyidaung Village-tract	3	1,000	718	282	280	2	
35	Tawkhayan ashae Village-tract	4	2,150	1,439	711	511	200	
36	Taunggon Village-tract	5	2,550	1,903	647	547	100	
37	Tawkuashae Village-tract	3	1,900	1,488	412	410	2	
38	Tawkuanauk Village-tract	6	2,000	1,353	647	647		
39	Tawpyar Village-tract	1	650	485	165	177		12
40	Tawlan Village-tract	3	2,050	1,282	768	564	204	
41	Tawkhalu Village-tract	3	1,400	1,145	255	255		
42	Dayaelu Village-tract	3	1,700	1,242	458	408	50	
43	Weelakhat Village-tract	5	3,350	2,281	1,069	869	200	
44	Pakauk Village-tract	2	1,200	781	419	269	150	
45	Hmawby Village-tract	3	1,450	929	521	371	150	
46	Maeyagon Village-tract	2	800	456	344	344		
47	Letkhotkon Village-tract	4	2,500	1,424	1,076	776	300	
48	Wetkeik Village-tract	8	4,050	2,839	1,211	1,611		400
49	Thaekontan Village-tract	2	750	452	298	298		
50	Thaungkhon Village-tract	3	2,000	1,452	548	496	52	
Ward/ Village-tract total		180	96,900	68,623	28,277	25,117	3,679	519
Township remaining ballots			9,308	370	8,938	8,938		
Township total			106,208	68,993	37,215	34,055	3,679	519

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 Tawkayanlay 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.)

Myanmar mineral exports down by \$555 mln over five past months

THE value of Myanmar's mineral exports has drastically fallen to US\$495.9 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,



Myanmar's mineral products constitute 10 per cent of overall exports.

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, miner-

al 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



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

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 Ma-

rine 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 \$14.3 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 Commerce's statistics indicated.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, fishery products, minerals, livestock, forest products, finished industrial goods, and other products. At the same time, it imports capital goods, consumer goods, and raw industrial materials.

The country currently has nine ports involved in sea trade. Yangon Port is the main gateway for Myanmar's maritime trade. It includes the Yangon inner terminals and the outer Thilawa Port. — MM/GNLM

MoPFI extends exemption period for withholding tax on exports

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 up to 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 ex-

ports 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, fertilizer 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

Like in other developing countries, our destinations reliant on local and foreign travellers have been the hardest hit since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now, hopes for a recovery of the travel and hospitality sector are pinned on a silver bullet: the nationwide vaccination programme.

As the travel sector reopens, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism is taking steps towards vaccinating staff of hotels who have direct contact with travellers.

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.

The resumption of the travel sector on the ground can save jobs, help the country's economy and satisfy the desire to travel again.

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.

International Theravāda Buddhist University: Prestigious Buddha

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 103 Mahā Era, on the full-moon day of Vesākha (May), the Buddha attained the Supreme Enlightenment. Two merchants from Suvaŕābhūmi, "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 Hantharwady 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 come 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 Mahātheras at six Buddhist Councils.

(ii) Myanmar has a reservoir

of learned Buddhist monks and scholars who are well-versed in Tipiŕāka. 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 Tipitaka 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 Saŕgha Mahā Nāyaka Committee, the highest authority of Sāsana affairs in Myanmar. As a first step to implement this idea, the site for the University was well chosen. It is located on the beautiful precinct of the sacred Dhammapāla Hill near the Sacred Tooth Relic Pagoda, Yangon, Myanmar. The area of the campus is about 67.870 acres.

Therefore, in order to share the genuine Theravāda Piŕāka, as approved successively by the six Buddhist Councils, with the people of the world, the arrangements were made to establish International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University with the following objectives:

(a) to share the genuine Theravāda Buddhism (the teachings of Buddha) with the people of the world.

(b) to study and comprehend the canonical texts of Theravāda Piŕāka as approved successively by the six Buddhist Councils.

(c) to abstain from evil deeds and practise good deeds.

(d) to promote the four modes of sublime living (Brahma-Vihāra), which would lead to the establishment of peaceful and prosperous world.

(e) to train more missionaries endowed with good morality who are well-versed in Pitaka literature and meditational practices.

(f) to teach and train local and international students who are willing to study Theravāda Pitaka in its pristine form.

(g) to collaborate with local and foreign universities, and also to cooperate with other universities that will support the objectives of the University.

(h) to send missionaries to for-



International Theravāda Buddhism M

eign countries for the propagation of Theravāda Buddhism.

To implement those objectives, the basic principles are also laid down as follows:

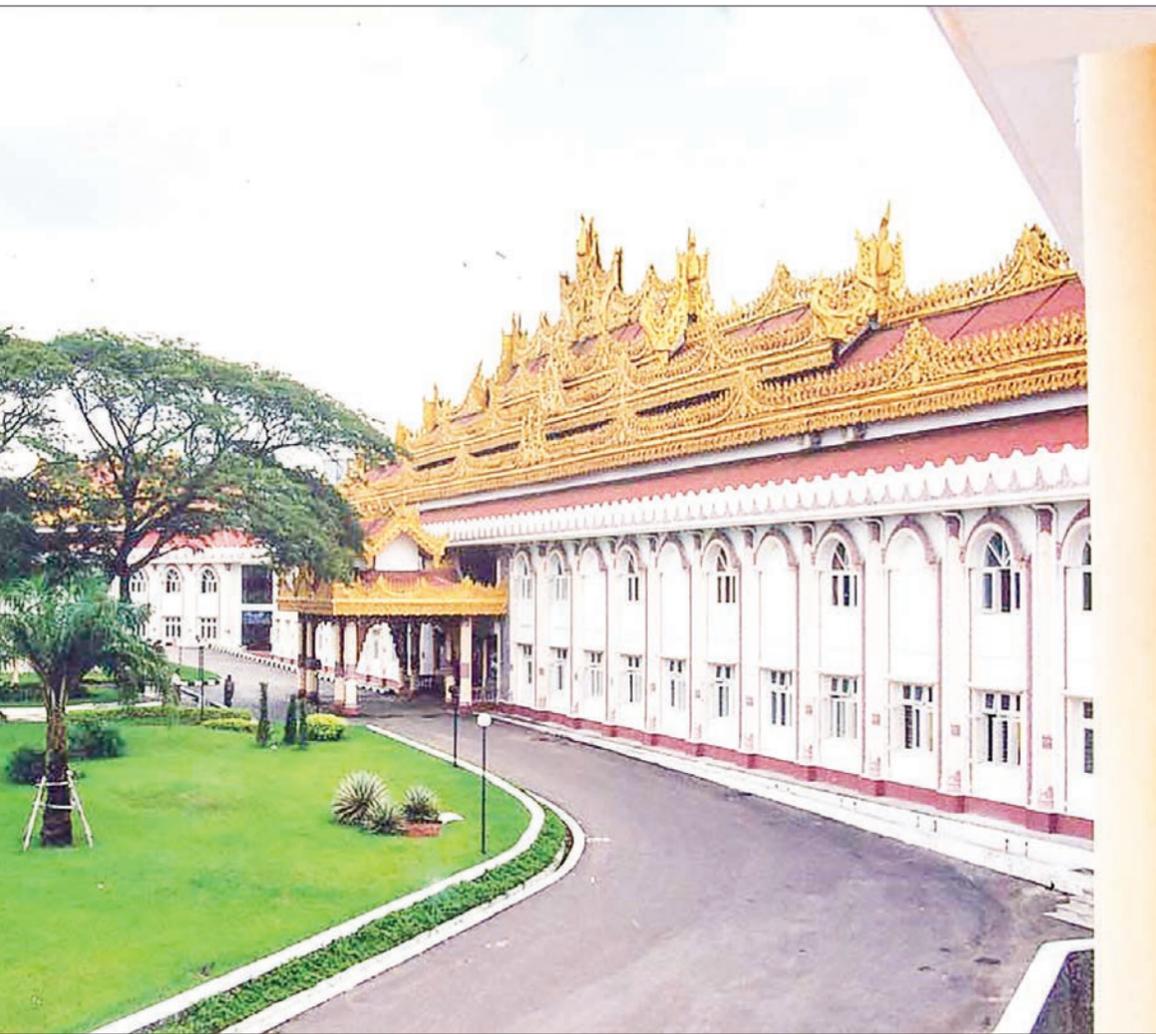
(a) The laws, bye-laws, procedures, rules and regulations, and directives relating to the International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University must be in accord with Dhamma-Vinaya of Pariyatti Sāsana, namely Theravāda Pitaka Pāli Texts, Five Nikāyas and Aŕhathakāthās.

(b) The teaching system and methods must be upgraded in stages so as to make the students or candidates be able to study and comprehend the original canonical texts of Theravāda Pitaka Pāli Texts, Atthakathās and Rikāsas approved successively by the six Buddhist Councils.

(c) Plans will be made to upgrade the University with a view to becoming a modern and well-developed University in respect of the structure and teaching.

(d) Based on International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University, a plan will be made to establish colleges, institutes, training schools and Meditation Centres.

International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University of Myanmar



International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University building.

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 Sayadaws, 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 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 TheravādapasāraŌi Sīmā, was also built and consecrated to be used by the monks for the observance of the Uposatha-Kamma, and for the ordination of the students.

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.

Under the patronage of the first TipiŌakadhara 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 has opened a new chapter in the history of the promotion and propagation of Theravāda Buddhism all over the world. With the beautiful campus, a high standard of scholarship and good facilities, International Theravāda Buddhist Missionary University is on its way to becoming a famous University propagating Theravāda Dhamma and producing outstanding missionaries. 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 PāĀi Studies
 - (f) Department of Myanmar Language
2. Faculty of PaŌipatti

SEE PAGE-10

Objectives of 76th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

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

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

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

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

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Heads of Service Organizations transferred

The State Administration Council has transferred the following persons as Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
1. Dr Theingi Shwe Rector Dawei University Department of Higher Education Ministry of Education	Rector Hinthada University Department of Higher Education Ministry of Education
2. Dr Ni Ni Oo Rector Myeik University Department of Higher Education Ministry of Education	Rector Maubin University Department of Higher Education Ministry of Education

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 21 March 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 22 March 2021: Rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Shan, Kayah, Kayin, Mon States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (3-6) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

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

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22 March 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22 March 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22 March 2021: Partly cloudy.

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

One-year diploma and three kinds of degree are offered for under-graduate and post-graduate students. They are as follows;

(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 degrees B.A. or B.Sc Myanmar monks must have passed the Dhammācariya examination.

2. The candidates need to sit for an entrance examination



Monk students seen sitting for exam at the ITBMU.

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 Pariyatti and PaŌipatti 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 (Patipatti), 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 Pali 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 University Library. The library holds a total of 31,260 books on Buddhist scriptures and literature, consisting of 9605 volumes in Myanmar and 21655 volumes

in English. It also houses some palm leaf manuscripts and about 1600 rare books.

There is also a reference section and audio-room for the students to assist in the study of Myanmar, Pāli, English and other languages.

The library facilities have been upgraded to an electronic library system. The students can search for their choice of books browsing the catalogue by using electronic facilities.

The computer room is provided for students as a teaching and learning aid. The Audio-video system and the internet are also accessible to the students as well as the teachers.

The academic staff and the students also 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, PhD (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, old or new, 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 tutorial, 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 a unique learning centre as its curriculum is based only 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

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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



Rocket League is among the most popular games in corporate eSports leagues. PHOTO: AFP

being viable. "It really is the corporate sports leagues in just a very slightly different form," said Brad Tenenholtz, a cybersecurity industry veteran and co-founder in 2018 of the association with

Terence Southard, a scientist with Jeff Bezos's space exploration endeavour Blue Origin. Company workers are free to form teams and sign up to compete in leagues set up by the CEA,

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 Tenenholtz said. —AFP ■

Ikea France goes on trial for spying on staff



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

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.

Ikea France, as a corporate entity, will be in the dock as well

as several of its former executives who risk prison terms.

French investigative publications Le Canard Enchaîné and Mediapart uncovered the surveillance scheme in 2012, and prosecutors got on the case after the Force Ouvrière union lodged a legal complaint.

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-Arja, known to Algerians as the Laaroda 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

NEWS IN BRIEF

Much of UK holds once-in-decade census largely online

MUCH of the United Kingdom on Sunday (Mar 21) will conduct a once-in-a-decade census, for the first time completed primarily online, which will ask about gender identity to help develop policy and services as well as "further equality".

The census will be held in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to gather detailed information on the country's population, their characteristics, education, religion, ethnicity, working life and health. It was postponed in Scotland until next year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so UK-wide results will be collated later.

The census - the 22nd in British history and last conducted in 2011 - is carried out to help inform decision-makers in national and local government, community groups, charities and businesses. —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 cakes topped with cream. It all started when Sutton-Jones, whose 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



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

dense forests of birch.

The two men were seen trudging through knee-deep 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 spear-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 ■

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



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 North Korean diplomat reads out a statement in front of the North Korean Embassy in Kuala Lumpur on March 21, 2021. PHOTO: KYODO

NORTH KOREA closed its embassy in Kuala Lumpur and its diplomats left Malaysia on Sunday after Pyongyang announced it was cutting diplomatic ties with the Southeast Asian country over the extradition of one of its citizens to the United States.

The North Korean announcement on Friday over the extradition of Mun Chol Myong,

who is wanted by U.S. authorities on money laundering charges, prompted the Malaysian government to give North Korean Embassy staff and their dependents 48 hours to leave the country.

The two countries had established diplomatic ties in 1973.

Before leaving the embassy on the fringes of the city center, Charge d'Affaires Kim Yu Song

read out a statement in which he slammed Malaysia for being "subservient" to the United States and laid all responsibility at Malaysia's feet.

"Not content with the putting of our innocent citizen in the dock by blindly favoring the U.S., the principal enemy of our state, the Malaysian authority delivered our citizen to the U.S. in the end, thus destroying the foundation of the bilateral relations based on the respect of sovereignty," Kim said.

The Malaysian Foreign Ministry has said the North Korean man was only extradited after due legal process had been exhausted.

In 2019, a Malaysian court ordered Mun to be extradited to the United States following his arrest earlier in the year. But he fought 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 ■

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 mass 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 ex-

pected 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 evacuations, and officials 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 ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

UK police arrest 36 at anti-lockdown protests

London police arrested dozens of people Saturday after thousands turned out in the British capital to protest against ongoing coronavirus lockdown restrictions, with the city's police force in the spotlight over its officer's conduct after a series of recent incidents. The Metropolitan Police Service said it had made 36 arrests, most for breaching months-old virus regulations that outlaw leaving home except for a limited number of reasons. —AFP ■

Greece to mark revolution bicentennial with 1821 allies

Greece will next week celebrate the 200th anniversary of the uprising that created its modern state, a romantic revolution that experts say captivated both elites and the masses around the world.

A national parade alongside Athens' central Syntagma Square on March 25 -- the date traditionally associated with the revolution -- will feature mounted troops in traditional costumes from the 1821 conflict and the 1912-13 Balkan Wars.

Nations who helped the Greeks in their near-decade-long struggle against the Ottoman Empire will also be represented. Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin and Prince Charles of Britain and his wife Camilla will be in attendance, the Greek prime minister's office said.

A new coronavirus lockdown forced French President Emmanuel Macron to pull out, but French Rafale and American F-16 jets will overfly the Greek capital, while the USS Eisenhower aircraft carrier will dock in Crete, a defence ministry source told AFP.

France has also loaned Greece an 18th-century tapestry of Raphael's Renaissance masterpiece The School of Athens, the French embassy said. —AFP ■

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 list their shares 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 Hui, 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". — Xinhua ■

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 disclosing earnings in 2019. That has piled pressure on government finances as Riyadh pursues multi-billion dollar projects 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 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. —AFP ■



Saudi Aramco's Abqaiq oil processing plant. PHOTO: AFP

Congested ports and supply chain woes hit US factories and stores



Fully loaded container ships sit anchored near the Port of San Francisco on March 09, 2021 in California. PHOTO: AFP

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 mi-

crochips 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 ■

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry No.3 Heavy Industrial Enterprise Invitation for Expression of Interest (EoI)

No.(7) Textile Factory (Myittha) is located near by Lan Khwa Village, beyond the Mile-Post No. (387/10) Myittha Township, Kyaukse District, Mandalay Division of Myanmar. The Government of Myanmar through the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry is willing to invite EoI proposal form interested local and international companies for yarn production and upgrading of spinning machineries for Public-Private-Partnership.

The interested companies can get these Eoi form during office hours at Planning Development, No. 3 Heavy Industrial Enterprise, Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry, Office No.37, Naypyitaw and Textile Mill Branch, No. (1), Thukhawadi Street, (6) Quarter, Yankin Township, Yangon:

- (a) Available date for Eor Form - (31-3-2021) to (28-5-2021)
- (b) Deadline for submission of EoI - (31-5-2021) (16:00hr)

For further detail information, please inquiry phone no. 95-67-408185, 95-67-408156, 95-67-408338 and email: textile.planning@gmail.com during office hours.

No. 3 Heavy Industrial Enterprise
Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry No.3 Heavy Industrial Enterprise Invitation for Expression of Interest (EoI)

No.(8) Textile Factory (Pyawbwe) is located near by Pyi Tha Ya Quarter, (9) Street, Infront of Mya Kyaing Taung Pagoda, About 500.8 km (313 miles) far from Yangon, Pyawbwe Township, Yamethin District Mandalay Division of Myanmar. The Government of Myanmar through the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry is willing to invite EoI proposal form interested local and international companies for yarn production and upgrading of spinning machineries for Public-Private-Partnership.

The interested companies can get these Eoi form during office hours at Planning Development, No. 3 Heavy Industrial Enterprise, Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry, Office No.37, Naypyitaw and Textile Mill Branch, No. (1), Thukhawadi Street, (6) Quarter, Yankin Township, Yangon:

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Moe Mynn Thu (LL.B, LL.M, M.Res)

Rouse Myanmar

For Elkem ASA

Email: myanmar@rouse.com

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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, Zweekapin in Karen, Reed Lake in Chin, Kyai-khtiyo 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 Ponnyashin 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, Myeik Archipelago in Taninthayi, Ayeyawady



National Development Fuelled by A **Thriving** **Tourism Industry**

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



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

departments concerned, with collaborated 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 Replication 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



meals and vegetable products, roads and bridges, and so on -- which naturally shall be called infrastructural elements -- and the people depending on them such as business owners, workers, and their families, all together make up quite a great percentage of the nation's population undeniably being connected to the tourism industry. This enormous body of animate beings and inanimate objects is caught in exhaustion, with no way of escaping, and find themselves

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

based on the number of hours spent teaching and studying respectively.

With participation from the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Hotels and Tourism associations, support from partner organizations, and the training engaged by trainers who have finished the Covid-19 Safe Service Master Trainer and Inspector Training courses, the Ministry is launching online educational programmes to spread knowledge about Hazard Prevention skills and the

and as per the Covid-19 regulations that are currently in place to bring about the revival of the tourism industry, so that we could use tourism to alleviate some difficulties faced by the local community, to work towards enlivening the slogan "Tourism for People, Tourism for Peace, Tourism for Development", for the purpose of utilizing tourism to strengthen the nation and to achieve national development.



AFC U-23 Asian Cup to be launched in Uzbekistan

THE AFC U-23 Asian Cup 2022 will be held in Uzbekistan from 6 to 25 September, following the AFC football authorities' decision set up in the previous week.

"The tournament, which was won by South Korea when

it was held in Thailand last year, will begin its Qualifiers later this year from 23 to 31 October 2021 in a centralized format with the venues to be decided and communicated in due course.

Taking into considera-

tion the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and to safeguard the health and wellbeing of players, teams, officials and all stakeholders, the AFC Executive Committee also approved the cancellation of the AFC Futsal Club Cham-

pionship UAE 2021", AFC officials stated.

Authorities originally determined that China would have hosted the tournament as a preparatory competition ahead of the 2023 AFC Asian Cup, but it was announced

on 15 October 2020 that they would withdraw from hosting the tournament due to scheduling conflicts, stadium completion timelines ahead of other international events and challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic. —GNLM

Man City late shows books place in FA Cup semi-finals



Manchester City's German midfielder Ilkay Gundogan (centre) celebrates scoring his team's first goal with teammates during their English FA Cup quarter-final match against Everton at Goodison Park in Liverpool, north west England on March 20, 2021. PHOTO: AFP

MANCHESTER City's quest for an unprecedented quadruple of trophies remains intact after seeing off Everton 2-0 to reach the FA Cup semi-finals on Saturday as Southampton also booked their place in the last four.

City were far from their flowing best at Goodison Park, but

goals in the final six minutes from Ilkay Gundogan and Kevin De Bruyne booked City's place in the semi-finals for the fourth time in five seasons. Pep Guardiola described the clash as the toughest his side have had since November as they recorded a 25th win in 26 matches in all competitions.

"It was the toughest game since the last international break we had. We have been incredible in terms of results and performances (over that period)," said Guardiola. "Tonight was so difficult, they have experienced players behind the ball with two up for the counter-attack. —AFP ■

Zverev wins Acapulco title after slow start against Tsitsipas

SECOND-SEEDED Alexander Zverev shook off a slow start to beat top-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-4, 7-6 (7/3) Saturday and win the ATP hardcourt tournament in Acapulco, Mexico.

Germany's Zverev, ranked seventh in the world, had lost his last five matches against the world number five from Greece.

Early on it seemed Zverev might be heading for another defeat as he dropped his first service game on the way to trailing 4-1 in the opening set.

But he stepped it up to save three break points in the sixth game, holding serve to launch a run of five straight games that saw him pocket

the set.

A tight second set saw Zverev gain the first break for a 5-4 lead and a chance to serve for the match.

Tsitsipas saved one match point on the way to regaining the break when Zverev double-faulted on break point -- one of his eight double faults in the contest.

From there it was a fierce battle to the tiebreaker, Tsitsipas saving six break points to hold for a 6-5 lead and Zverev saving a set point on the way to making it 6-6.

Zverev converted his third match point to seal the victory and go one better than his runner-up finish to Australian Nick Kyrgios in Acapulco in 2019. —AFP ■

Zidane mystified by France continuing to exclude 'spectacular' Benzema

MADRID — Zinedine Zidane admitted he is still baffled by Karim Benzema's exclusion from the French national team after the striker starred again in Real Madrid's 3-1 victory over Celta Vigo on Saturday (March 20).

Benzema continued his scintillating form at Balaidos by scoring twice to make it 10 goals in his last 10 games, before he set up Marco Asensio to add a third in injury-time.

Many in Zidane's squad

will now join up with their national teams on Monday but Benzema will remain in Madrid, with the 33-year-old still sidelined by France after his alleged role in a plot to blackmail Mathieu Valbuena in 2015.

"How can you understand it? I don't understand it, you don't understand it, there are many people who don't understand it," Zidane said after the game.

"What he did today was spectacular." —AFP ■



Real Madrid's French forward Karim Benzema (centre) celebrates after scoring a goal during their Spanish League match against Celta Vigo at the Balaidos stadium in Vigo on March 20, 2021. PHOTO: AFP