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# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VI, No. 361, 8<sup>th</sup> Waning of Tagu 1381 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Wednesday, 15 April 2020

## State Counsellor participates in online Special ASEAN Summit, ASEAN+3 Summit on COVID-19



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attends the Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19 yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

State Counsellor and Chairperson of the National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi participated in the video conferences of the Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19 at 7:30 am and the Special ASEAN Plus

Three (APT) Summit on COVID-19 at 1:30 pm yesterday from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw.

The Special ASEAN Summit and Special ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Summit were chaired by Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of Viet Nam in his capacity as Chair of ASEAN. The

Special ASEAN Summit was attended by Leaders of the ASEAN Member States and the Secretary-General of ASEAN. The Special ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Summit was attended by Leaders of the ASEAN Member States, Leaders of the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea, the Direc-

tor-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Secretary-General of ASEAN.

At the Special ASEAN Summit and Special ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Summit, the Leaders shared their national efforts as well as experiences and best practices in the prevention, control and treatment

of COVID-19. The Leaders also exchanged views on promoting public awareness and people's participation in preventing and controlling COVID-19, strengthening exchange of real-time information on the situation on the ground and response measures taken by each country,

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## State Counsellor stresses need to fight COVID-19 in unity on her FB Account

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi stresses the need to fight COVID-19, the common enemy, with unity on her Facebook Account yesterday as follows:

During the last 24 hours, an-

other (21) infected persons have been discovered.

Because we have estimated in advance that the infection rate of the virus would increase this week and in the coming week, we have alerted the people accord-

ingly. This is because I want all of you to be mentally prepared. As far as health care is concerned, the Union Government has made preparations to the best of its ability.

As the number of infect-

ed persons increase, anxieties have also increased. I'm sure you must have heard that there have even been cases where some people have tried to escape from quarantine. If you have been infected, you cannot escape by

running away. The best is to find out as early as possible and take treatment as early as possible. COVID-19 can be cured. The earlier you know, the sooner you can get treatment.

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## State Counsellor stresses need to fight COVID-19 in unity on her FB Account

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You will have more chances of successful treatment. That is why trying to escape is very dangerous for the individual concerned. It is also very dangerous for others.

As anxieties increase, so does anger. Don't use the energy we need to fight COVID-19 to fight amongst each other. Beginning from the fact that a group of people got infected in Insein, the Yangon Region government had to take follow-up

actions; it is very regrettable that our people had differences of opinions. Please try to get rid of your anger. As the chairperson of the Central Committee to Prevent, Control and Treatment of COVID-19, I take responsibility to deal with this matter in a fair and just manner.

All the people should focus their energy to fight the common enemy COVID-19 in unity to achieve success. At this time, the most important thing is to effectively implement the quaran-

tine protocols. Our government departments and civil service personnel have our hands full. The efforts being put in by the youths with metta (loving-kindness) and goodwill constitute a tremendous support. I am very grateful to these good sons and daughters of our country.

I wish all of you to be cooled and refreshed by Metta in this year's Thingyan devoid of water-play.

*(Translated by Kyaw Myaing)*



**Aung San Suu Kyi** ✓

State Counsellor

Message



... At this time, the most important thing is to effectively implement the quarantine protocols. Our government departments and civil service personnel have our hands full.

## Announcement on free motivation services for people in Community Based Facility Quarantine, other quarantine

WHEN the 14-day quarantine programme is carried out nationwide in efforts to prevent the COVID-19 disease spread, the people in the quarantine might be under stress due to the restrictions brought by the quarantine. Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is performing the motivation services, and those wishing to have consolation with the ministry

may contact it with confidence. The Social Welfare Department's employees from Nay Pyi Taw Council, Union Territory, regions and states who received a special consoling training will provide the services from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm every day.

With the coordination of the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and

Resettlement, the programme is sponsored by telecommunication operator: MPT, Mytel, Telenor and Ooredoo in this time of COVID-19 crisis.

Information related with those who receive consolation will be confidential, and will provide them with further assistance if necessary.

Contact numbers are as follow.

Sr	State/ Region	MPT	Mytel	Telenor	Ooredoo
1.	Kachin	09-889900011	09-661015555	09-770771000	09980000101
2.	Kayah	09-889900022	09-661025555	09-770772000	09980000102
3.	Kayin	09-889900033	09-661035555	09-770773000	09980000103
4.	Chin	09-889900044	09-661045555	09-770774000	09980000104
5.	Sagaing	09-889900055	09-661055555	09-770775000	09980000105
6.	Taninthayi	09-889900066	09-661065555	09-770776000	09980000106
7.	Bago	09-889900077	09-661075555	09-770777000	09980000107
8.	Magway	09-889900088	09-661085555	09-770778000	09980000108
9.	Mandalay	09-889900099	09-661095555	09-770779000	09980000109
10.	Mon	09-889911177	09-661105555	09-770771001	09980000117
11.	Rakhine	09-889911188	09-661115555	09-770771100	09980000118
12.	Yangon	09-889911122	09-661125555	09-770770001	09980000112
13.	Shan	09-889911133	09-661135555	09-770770010	09980000113
14.	Ayeyawady	09-889911144	09-661145555	09-770770011	09980000114
15.	Nay Pyi Taw	09-889911155	09-661155555	09-770770099	09980000115
	Head Office	09-889911166	09-661005555	09-770770100	09980000116

Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement

## Announcement for 21 days facility quarantine and 7 days home quarantine

1. The Ministry of Health and Sports had earlier announced the 14-day facility quarantine, followed by another 14-day home quarantine, for prevention of COVID-19 infection from the foreign visitors and the positive patients.
2. However, the World Health Organization (WHO) has announced that the transmission of disease is possible before two days and until 28 days of symptoms, and that the infection of disease is possible during these periods. A research conducted in China has shown that strict and systematic quarantine for 21 days could contain the outbreak of disease up to 98.7%. Moreover, some regional countries are practicing a total of 28-day for both hospital/facility quarantine and home quarantine. Especially, the 28-day quarantine period is found in the countries with only limited laboratory tests.
3. Out of 28 positive cases for COVID-19 in Myanmar, some positive patients are the imported cases and the closed persons with them. Moreover, the lab tests of National Health Laboratory and the contact tracings at Regions/State have showed that some confirmed patients and some quarantined persons for more than 14 days were still tested positives.
4. Therefore, the Ministry of Health and Sports has extended the 14-day facility quarantine to the 21-day community based facility quarantine/hotel quarantine and 7-day home quarantine, totaling 28-day quarantine.

*The Ministry of Health and Sports  
(Translated by Aung Khin)*

## “People are the key”

# State Counsellor participates in online Special ASEAN Summit, ASEAN+3 Summit on COVID-19

FROM PAGE-1

providing appropriate assistance and support to the nationals of ASEAN Member States affected by the pandemic in each country or in third countries, establishing the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund, deepening cooperation in joint research and development of vaccines and anti-viral medicines, enhancing human resources and capacity for public health system while ensuring the safety of public health workers, intensifying collaboration for adequate provision of medicines, essential medical supplies and equipment in the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19, strengthening public health cooperation measures to contain the pandemic in the region, deepening collective actions to mitigate the economic and social impact of the global pandemic, extending mutual support to facilitate smooth flow of the essential commodities and goods particularly urgent medical equipment in time of difficulty, and developing post-pandemic recovery plan.

In her statement, the State Counsellor apprised the Summits of the measures taken by the Government for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19, its response to address the health and socio-economic impacts of the global pandemic through “Whole-of-Government” approach as well as the Government’s rigorous efforts in mobilizing the strength of the people and seeking the public participation. The State Counsellor shared her experience by emphasizing the importance of four “P” namely Political leadership, Preventive measures, Peoples’ participation and the support of Partners to contain the virus and to lessen socio-economic implication, and expressed her appreciation to the ASEAN partners, Plus Three partners and other partners for their supports extended to Myanmar in the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19.

In the fight against the global pandemic, the State Counsellor also stressed the need to strengthen collaboration and collective action among Member States in fully operationalizing available resources and existing mechanism, strengthening preparedness and response capacities of individual health systems of Members States, fostering collective efforts to minimize the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, facilitating smooth flow of vital medical supplies, essential commodities and services to support the health and well-being of our peoples, providing adequate supports and updated information



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi attends the Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19 yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

in time of difficulty by the host countries for the health, well-being, safe and secured movements of migrant workers

In the Declaration, the ASEAN Leaders resolved to strengthen public health cooperation measures to contain

tries; to take collective action in mitigating the economic and social impact from the pandemic; to remain committed to keeping ASEAN’s markets open for trade and investment and strengthening the resiliency and sustainability of regional supply chains, especially for food, commodities, medicines, medical and essential supplies.

In the Joint Statement of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Summit, the Leaders resolved to strengthen exchange of real-time information and measures taken by each country, sharing of experiences and best practices and provision of mutual technical support in the prevention, containment and control of COVID-19; to enhance national and regional capacities to prepare for and respond to pandemics; to strengthen scientific cooperation in epidemiological research; to encourage mutual support and assistance between ASEAN and the Plus Three countries in the development of human resources and capacity for the public health sector; and to enhance cooperation to provide appropriate support and assistance to nationals of the APT countries.

Present at the Special Summits were Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaug Tun, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin and Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe. — MNA

... The State Counsellor shared her experience by emphasizing the importance of four “P” namely Political leadership, Preventive measures, Peoples’ participation and the support of Partners to contain the virus and to lessen socio-economic implication, and expressed her appreciation to the ASEAN partners, Plus Three partners and other partners for their supports extended to Myanmar in the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19.

in the region, deepening cooperation in digital economy and digital finance during the outbreak of COVID-19, and strengthening ASEAN Community building efforts amidst the challenges posed by COVID-19.

The Declaration of the Special ASEAN Summit on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and Joint Statement of the Special ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Summit on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) were adopted during each Special Summit.

the pandemic and protect the people including through exchange of information and response measures, sharing of experience and best practices; to intensify cooperation for adequate provision of medicines, essential medical supplies and equipment; to bolster national and regional epidemic preparedness and response; to provide appropriate assistance and support to the nationals of ASEAN Member States affected by the pandemic in each other’s country or in third coun-

# Total number of COVID-19 cases reaches 63 Tuesday

## Update of COVID-19 cases in Myanmar until 14 April

1. The National Health Laboratory (Yangon) took laboratory tests on the specimens of 309 persons on 13 April 2020. The laboratory tests on 22 patients were tested positive of COVID-19, while the remaining 288 persons were tested negative. The update has been published on 14 April 2020.
2. Facts about these 22 confirmed cases are detailed in the Table.

Case No.	Aged	Gender	Address	Close Contact with COVID-19 positive patients	Hospital for medical treatment	Admission Date	Laboratory Result	Remark
42	43	Female	Bahan, Yangon	Case-024 and Husband of Case-026	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	Patients were quarantined at an isolation place, while their specimens were under laboratory tests.
43	41	Female	Mayangon, Yangon	Case-024 and Husband of Case-026	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
44	32	Female	Mayangon, Yangon	Case-024 and Husband of Case-026	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
45	54	Male	Mayangon, Yangon	Case-024 and Husband of Case-026	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
46	44	Male	Bahan, Yangon	Case-024 and Husband of Case-026	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
47	50	Female	South Okkalapa, Yangon	Case-024 and Husband of Case-026	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
48	31	Female	South Okkalapa, Yangon	Case-024 and Husband of Case-026	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
49	35	Male	South Okkalapa, Yangon	Case-024 and Husband of Case-026	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
50	41	Male	South Okkalapa, Yangon	Case-024 and Husband of Case-026	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
51	49	Male	South Okkalapa, Yangon	Case-024 and Husband of Case-026	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
52	40	Female	South Okkalapa, Yangon	Case-024 and Husband of Case-026	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
53	31	Male	Myothit, Magway	No	People's Hospital, Magway	14 April	Positive	
54	7	Female	Insein, Yangon	Case-034,035,036,037 and 041	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	Received medical treatments as PUIs at Insein Hospital, while specimens were under lab tests.
55	40	Male	Insein, Yangon	Case-034,035,036,037 and 041	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
56	33	Female	Insein, Yangon	Case-034,035,036,037, 041, 054,055,056 and 057	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
57	39	Female	Shwepyitha, Yangon	Case-034,060 and 061	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
58	46	Female	Insein, Yangon	Case-034,035, 036,037 and 041	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
59	23	Female	Insein, Yaogon	Case-034,035, 036,037 and 041	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	While as a PUI at Insein hospital for medical treatment, specimens were under lab test
60	39	Male	Shwepyitha, Yangon	Case-034 and 061	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
61	38	Male	Insein, Yangon	Case-034,035, 036,037 and 041	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	
62	30	Female	Mayangon, Yangon	Case-024	Waibargi Hospital, Yangon	14 April	Positive	While as a PUI at North Okkalapa People's Hospital for medical treatment, specimens were under lab test
63	65	Male	Hlinethaya, Yangon	Case-024	Home Quarantine	9 April	Positive	He will be transferred to a local hospital for receiving treatment.

\* Remaining 90 are tested negative in Covid-19 lab results.

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Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye holds a video conference yesterday to coordinate the protection, containment and response to COVID-19 concerning IDP camps across the nation. PHOTO: MNA

## SWRR Ministry discusses COVID-19 preparations in IDP camps

UNION MINISTER for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye held a video conference yesterday to coordinate the protection, containment and response to COVID-19 concerning IDP camps across the nation.

The Union Minister said they have prepared COVID-19 response plans for IDP camps in Kachin State, Shan State, Rakhine State and Kayin State and they have approval from the National Central Committee on Protection, Containment and Treatment of COVID-19.

He said they have coordi-

nated with UN humanitarian agencies and they have reviewed expenditures concerning implementation of action plans. He said although there are many tasks at hand for staff in the field right now, the situation is important to require them to try hard. He urged them to give daily reports on COVID-19 measures in the IDP camps. Next, Deputy Minister U Soe Aung discussed preparations for COVID-19 in the IDP camps and the directors-general explained preparations for the states and regions as well.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

# Food aid distributed to people across the country

### Yangon Region Social Affairs Minister distributes supplies in Dala Township

MAHA Nada Maritime Co Ltd donated food supplies for 2,000 households without regular income in Dala Township, Yangon Region, for the long Thingyan holidays.

Yangon Region Minister for Social Affairs U Naing Ngan Lin and officials distributed the donations in Kanaung Danitaw village yesterday morning. They also handed over supplies to police officers in Dala Township and were assisted by Yangon Region (1) Hluttaw representative U Tun Yin, Yangon Region (2) Hluttaw representative U Htwe Tin, township officials and donors. —Naing Lin Kyaw (Dala)



A man receives food aid from authorities in Dala Township. PHOTO: NAING LIN KYAW

### Yangon Region distributes basic supplies

OFFICIALS in Yangon Region have distributed the five basic household supplies of rice, cooking oil, salt, lentils and onions for households without regular income.

So far, they have distributed to 57,249 households in Eastern District, 26,984 households in Western District, 111,149 households in Southern District, and 74,991 households in Northern District. —MNA



A local man accepts food aid from Shan State authorities. PHOTO: IPRD

### Shan State distributes household supplies

THE Shan State government and KBZ Bank are donating supplies and protective equipment to medical institutions daily.

On 13 April, 1,000 rice bags and 5,000 eggs were donated on Kengtung Township, 20 PPE suits, hand gel and goggles donated to Taunggyi Maternal and Child Hospital, 200 masks and 360 eggs to BEHS (2) Ayetaryar, and similar donations were made to Kalaw and Bawsai, Naungtayar region and Pinmi Golf Club Aungpan.

Shan State Chief Minister Dr Lin Htut donated 200 soap bars, 1,200 gloves, 100 goggles, 144 sanitizer bottles to hospitals and clinics during his inspection into northern and southern districts of Shan State. He also donated 20 PPE suits and 1,000 masks hospital staff in Yangon by delivery. Donors donated 3,600 eggs from Win Gahtay farm yesterday morning and 8 volunteers from Shwe Pa-O Yaung Taw Phwint group and 15 office staff assisted in distribution. —Soe Nyunt Shwe (IPRD)

### Lewe Tsp distributes household supplies

LEWE Township authorities began distributing 5 household supplies on 10 April and aim to finish distribution to all 38,498 households without regular income by 16 April.

Distribution is also underway in Shwechi ward, Pyinmana, where local residents were grateful for the support from the nation.—Han Lin Naing

### Rakhine State distributes household supplies to 12 Tsps

OFFICIALS in Rakhine State began distributing household supplies on 10 April and have distributed to 12 townships with 5 remaining.

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and state ministers assisted in distributing the supplies in Sittway Township to households without regular income. There are 261,489 households without regular income in all 17 townships in Rakhine State. Distribution to 83,946 households in Sittway and Yethedaung townships were completed yesterday and distribution to 20,588 households in Ponnagyun and Pauktaw townships will continue.

Distribution to all 80,059 households in 5 townships in MraukU District, 27,174 households in Maungtaw District, 30,148 households in Kyaukpyu District were also complete yesterday. —Tin Tun (IPRD)



Rakhine authorities hand over food aid to local people. PHOTO: TIN TUN

### Household supplies distributed to local people in Dekkhinathiri Township

OFFICIALS distributed basic household supplies to 4,758 out of 6,187 households in Dekkhinathiri Township yesterday.

Rice, salt, onions, lentils and cooking oil were distributed to 841 households in Dekkhinathiri ward, 475 houses in Shwe Ingyin ward, 759 houses in Yanaung Myin village-tract, 330 houses in Kyuntat Pwe village-tract, 537 houses in Kyarpin village-tract, 393 houses in Chaing village-tract, 446 houses in Ywarma village-tract, 901 houses in Doe Nwe village-tract, 652 houses in Kuhniltlonesesu village-tract, and 853 houses in Shwekenet village-tract. —MNA

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Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

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Food aid distributed to people across the country

Myawaddy distributes supplies to 2500 households

ON the fifth day of distribution of basic household supplies to households without regular income, officials completed distribution to 2500 households in Myawaddy District, Kayin State, yesterday.

Pyithu Hluttaw representative U Sein Bo, Kayin State Hluttaw representative U Aik Kyan Kham and U Thant Zin Aung, District Administrator U Tayzar Aung and Township Administra-

tor U Phyo Zaw Ko Ko assisted in the distribution.

On the first day, the supplies were distributed to 200 houses in Myawaddy Township, 1150 houses on the second day, 1100 houses on the third and 500 houses on the fourth. —Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)

Authorities in Myawaddy distribute basic food supplies to local people. PHOTO: HTEIN LIN AUNG



Gov't distributes foodstuffs to no-regular-income people in S-Okkalapa Township

A team led by the township administrator and the Hluttaw representative distributed five kinds of foodstuffs provided by the government to the people with irregular income in South Okkalapa Township starting from 12 April.

The team distributed the foodstuffs yesterday to the people from Wards 11 and 14. There are more than 36,000 households in South Okkalapa Township. Among them, over 9,900 households are people with no regular income. So, the team distributed

rice, cooking oil, salt, bean and onion to 9,900 families. As of yesterday, the team has already distributed these five items of foodstuffs to 1,048 families.

To prevent the people from being crowded, the team comprising township administrator U Nyein Chan Aung, Pyithu Hluttaw representative Dr Saw Naing, and the officials distributed the foodstuffs wearing the masks and making people queue in line with three feet away from each other. —Nay Htet Aung

(Translated by Hay Mar)



A woman receives basic food supplies from local authorities in South Okkalapa Township yesterday. PHOTO: NAY HTET AUNG

Food, masks provided to civilian staff, their families in Mandalay



Mandalay Region Government giving food aid to the civilian staff and their families. PHOTO: AUNG SAN

MANDALAY Region Government provided foodstuffs and masks to the civilian staff and their families, who are serv-

ing at the costs of their lives in prevention and treatment of Covid-19.

Those foodstuffs and masks were provided for their welfare in the general administration department office meeting hall, Aungmyaythazan Township at 2 pm yesterday.

The chief minister provided rice, cooking oil, chick-pea, instant noodle, snacks, coffee and masks to all staff from the general administration department in Aungmyaythazan Township.

The chief minister provided 15 bags (each bag containing eight baskets), 23 visses of cook-

ing oil, 23 visses of a chick-pea, 460 packs of instant noodle, 92 packs of snacks, 230 packs of coffee mix and 1,380 masks to 46 staff members from the general administration department.

On 13 April, these foodstuffs and masks were provided by Dr Zaw Myint Maung, Chief Minister of Mandalay Region Government, to the 3,374 staff members from the general administration department and 4,500 health staff members from the Health Department for their welfare. —Aung San

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Maritime trade up \$2.3 bln in 2019-2020FY H1

The value of Myanmar's maritime trade for the period between 1 October and 3 April in the 2019-2020 fiscal year totalled US\$14.6 billion, an increase of over \$2.3 billion compared to the year-ago period, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

While maritime exports were valued at \$5.64 billion, im-

ports were registered at \$8.96 billion. Compared to the same period in the 2018-2019 fiscal year, imports were higher by \$1.4 billion, while exports registered an increase of \$883 million.

Meanwhile, the value of trade through the border crossing was estimated at \$5.7 billion, an increase of \$380.85 million.

The country's total external trade reached \$20.33 billion, which was higher than the \$17.67 billion recorded in the year-ago period. Myanmar exports agricultural products, fishery products, minerals, livestock, forest products, finished industrial goods, and other products, while 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 and includes the Yangon inner terminals and the outer Thilawa Port. —Ko Htet

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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## SEZs rake in \$91.857 mln investments in 2019-2020FY H1

FOREIGN investments of US\$91.857 million have flowed into the Special Economic Zones (SEZs), under the Special Economic Zone Law, as of 3 April in the 2019-2020 financial year since October 2019, according to the figures released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

Since its establishment, a total of 110 enterprises from 18 countries and four local businesses have ploughed in over \$1.93 billion as of end-March, 2019 in the zones, the investment source has indicated.

While the manufacturing sector has absorbed the largest share of foreign investments, FDI has also flowed into the trading, other services, transportation and logistics, real estate, and hotel sectors.

Japan has topped the list of foreign investors so far, accounting for 34.57 per cent of the overall investment, followed by Singapore and Thailand. FDI has also flowed into the SEZs from the Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, the UK, Australia, the UAE, Malaysia, Austria, China (Taipei), Panama, China, Brunei, Viet Nam, France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.

Myanmar is currently implementing three Special Economic Zones — Thilawa, Kyaukpadaung, and Dawei. Out of the three, Thilawa is leading towards better infrastructure and successful businesses.

At present, more than 80 businesses are operating in the Thilawa SEZ. The SEZ has employed more than 12,000 permanent workers, including permanent and construction workers, according to the management

committee.

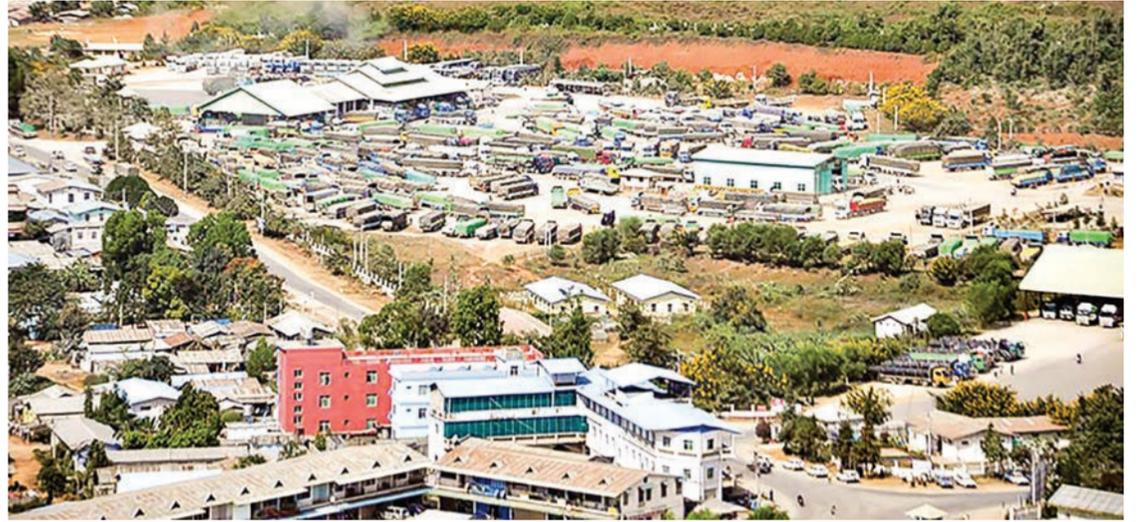
An annual report of the Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings Public Limited for 2017-2018 stated that 97 per cent of Thilawa Zone A and 61 per cent of Zone B have been sold. More than 60 per cent of businesses in Thilawa is domestic-oriented manufacturing enterprises, while 40 per cent are export-oriented manufacturers, said the company in its press statement in June this year.

A company exporting at least 75 per cent of the production in value is registered as a Free Zone investor and is exempt from paying corporate tax for 7 years from the time it starts commercial operations. Companies such as logistics, which support export-oriented manufacturing, can also be listed as free zone companies. Domestic-oriented manufacturing companies are regarded as promotion zone companies, and they are eligible for a five-year holiday on corporate tax.

There are other tax incentives for the free zone and promotion zone investors on the importation of capital goods, raw materials and merchandise, and consigned goods and vehicles. Further details about the tax system are available on <http://www.myanmarthilawa.gov.mm>.

Myanmar has already attracted foreign direct investment of more than US\$2.788 billion between 1 October and 6 March in the 2019-2020 financial year, including the expansion of capital by existing enterprises and investments in the SEZs, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA). — Ko Htet  
*(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

## Total border trade up by \$360 mln



Trucks seen at 105-mile trade zone Muse, northern Shan State. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

THE total trade value at 18 border trade camps has risen by US\$360 million as of 3rd April of this fiscal year despite the export sector drop by \$99 million, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

From 1 October to 3 April of 2019-2020FY, the total border trade value has amounted to \$5.73 billion, an increase of \$360 million compared with the same period last year.

The total border trade value as of 3 April this FY included \$3.78 billion in export and \$1.94 billion in import. Compared with the last FY, the export earnings dropped by \$99 million while the import

value increased by \$459 million. This time last year, the border trade was valued at \$5.37 billion.

Myanmar conducts border trade with China through Muse, Lwejel, Kampaiti, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung borders. The country carries out border trade with Thailand through Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthaung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Maese borders. The cross-border trade camps between Myanmar and Bangladesh are Sittway and Maungtaung, whereas the country trades directly with India via the Tamu and Reed borders.

Among all the border cross-

ings, the Muse border sees the largest volume and value of border trade with an estimated value of more than \$2.62 billion this FY followed by Hteekhee with \$1.06 billion and Myawady with \$653 million. The border trade value at the Lwejel, Chinshwehaw, Hteekhee, Myeik, Tamu and Reed stations decreased this FY.

Myanmar's major export items are farm, animal, marine, forest, mining, CMP and other products. Myanmar mainly imports capital goods, industrial raw materials, personal goods and CMP raw materials. —Zwe

*(Translated by Hay Mar)*

## FDI up \$800 mln in 2019-2020FY H1 against previous fiscal

By Nyein Nyein

MYANMAR has attracted more than US\$3.2 billion in foreign direct investments in the first half of the current fiscal, an increase of \$800 million compared with the corresponding period of the previous FY, said DICA Director-General U Thant Sin Lwin.

Between 1 October and 3 April, FDI of \$3.27 billion flowed into the country, including the expansion of capital by existing enterprises. According to a press statement issued by the DICA, 154 foreign enterprises have obtained permits from the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) and endorsements from regional and state Investment Committees in the current fiscal.

In the year-ago period, FDI of \$2.4 billion had flowed in from 150 enterprises.

"The number of permitted or endorsed enterprises this year was four higher than last year. Additionally, the Covid-19 consequences have not affected the foreign investments," he said

on 7 April. The proposals submitted to MIC include CMP businesses. At present, such kind of labour-intensive enterprises is facing financial hardship, disputes between the employers and employees and the closure of factories. The manufacturing enterprises and businesses that need large labour force are prioritized. MIC is endeavouring to clear those kinds of projects so fast that they can start running in the post-Covid-19 period, he continued.

Moreover, MIC showed readiness to accept the projects regarding the production of the masks, pharmaceuticals and medical types of equipment, in responding to the activities of prevention, control and treatment of Covid-19. Additionally, to create jobs for residents, MIC is discussing with the related departments to prioritize and clear the proposals of the labour-intensive businesses and infrastructure projects, the DICA director-general said at a meeting held on 3 April.

MIC and the respective investment committees gave nods to 18 foreign projects at that meeting. Those enterprises will execute manufacturing, agriculture, transport and communication, hotels and tourism, and other services businesses, pumping in \$294.545 million and creating over 10,000 jobs for residents, as per the DICA's data.

Myanmar targets to attract \$5.8 billion of FDIs in the current fiscal year. The Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations is inviting responsible businesses so the country benefits, he said.

"The Myanmar Investment Promotion Plan (MIPP) was drawn up with the assistance of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and it is now under implementation. As per the MIPP, Myanmar aims to reach an FDI target of \$200 billion in 20 years," Union Minister U Thant Tun of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations.

*(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)*

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# Let's work together for common good

WITH the rising numbers of the COVID-19 cases these days, the virus is stirring fears and anxieties in individuals and communities in our country.

As we have anticipated that, the Union Government has already informed the people earlier that the number patients can rise in April, one month after the first case of confirmed patients with Coronavirus, according to experiences in other countries which are witnessing the global pandemic with high numbers of patients. We have found 21 patients with Coronavirus infection on Monday.

The warning is also a message to the people not to be anxious nor fearful. Our awareness and readiness are the key in protecting us from possible infection from the COVID-19 disease.

Beyond our challenges over health-care systems and mechanisms for responding to infectious disease, the path of the coronavirus will also undoubtedly test our principles, values and shared humanity in the face of the common challenge.

Whenever a challenge happens, it depends upon us to determine how to turn challenges into opportunities.

Today is the time for us to show our compassion, loving-kindness and unity. Our unity is our strength, and we can defeat the pandemic, our common enemy.

During this very important time, we highly request all people to cooperate in the quarantine process and to share the burden of quarantine with the governmental employees who are battling against this virus and protecting the health of people on the frontlines.

At the same time, we would like to express our thanks to the volunteers nationwide participating in prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19.

Let's work together for the common good.



## Asia virus latest: India extends lockdown; Singapore lifts teacher Zoom ban

HERE are the latest developments in Asia related to the novel coronavirus pandemic:

### India nationwide lockdown extended

India's nationwide lockdown, the biggest imposed in the world over the coronavirus pandemic, will be extended until at least May 3, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said.

The current three-week-old lockdown of the nation of 1.3 billion people had been scheduled to end at midnight Tuesday.

"From the economic angle, we have paid a big price," Modi said in a nationwide address. "But the lives of the people of India are far more valuable."

### Singapore allows teachers to use Zoom again

The city-state is allowing teachers to resume using Zoom, the video-conferencing platform said, following its suspension for online lessons last week after gatecrashers interrupted a class and made lewd comments.

Zoom—which has exploded in popularity but faces growing security concerns—said it had taken steps to address the education ministry's concerns, including giving officials control over teacher accounts.

Singapore meanwhile reported 386 new coronavirus cases, its biggest increase in a single day, as the city-state battles a growing second wave

of infections.

### Australia, New Zealand flatten virus curve but keep lockdowns intact

Australia and New Zealand brushed aside calls for an easing of tough restrictions on travel and public gatherings despite their success in curbing the spread of COVID-19.

The number of new coronavirus cases in the neighbouring nations has fallen dramatically in the last two weeks, raising hopes that difficult social distancing measures may be relaxed.

Tasmania, meanwhile, ordered an investigation into reports of an "illegal" dinner party

attended by medical workers that caused an outbreak of COVID-19 and forced two hospitals in the Australian island state to close.

### ASEAN leaders meet online

Vietnam will urge Southeast Asian leaders to set up an emergency fund to tackle the coronavirus at a summit held online, as the pandemic ravages the region's tourism and export-reliant economies.

Hanoi is chairing an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) meeting on COVID-19, with the country touting its success so far in containing the virus with extensive quarantines and social distancing.

### Markets rise on China trade data

Asian markets posted gains as better than expected Chinese trade data suggested a rebound from the economic devastation wrought by the coronavirus pandemic.

### China reports more imported cases

China reported 89 new coronavirus infections, 86 of which were imported from overseas.

The country where the virus emerged last year has largely brought its domestic outbreak under control, but faces a growing second wave of infections brought in from overseas by

returning nationals.

### World's smallest woman in India stay-at-home virus appeal

The world's shortest woman took to the streets in central India to call on people to stay at home, after police appealed for help enforcing a coronavirus lockdown.

Jyoti Amge, who is just 62.8 centimetres tall (just over two feet tall), encouraged people to wash their hands and wear a mask and gloves when they leave their homes as she made appearances across Nagpur city, in Maharashtra state. — AFP



# Thingyan Legends and Thingyan Bulletins

Maha Saddhamma Jotika dhaja, Sithu Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

THIS year 2020, Myanmar Sakarit, 1381-82 Buddha's Sasana Sakarit 2563-64, songram or Thingyan Festival lasts five days namely the Eve on 12 April the Descent Day [Akyat day] 13 April the Descent Day [Akat days] 14 and 15 April, Ascent Day [Atet Day] April 16. Songram, a Sansrut word meaning change, change from Cold season to Warm season, old natural environment to new sutural environment. Old leaves fall and blown away. New leaves, new buds, new blooms appear. New plant sprout from earth. New avian and ferrestrial and aquatic creatures being born.

There are many legends of Thingyan of them two are well-known. Four Brahma gods from heavenly kingdom came down to earth. They could not resist the temptation to eat sweet earth. So they lost the light from their bodies. They prayed for light. So Sun and Moon appeared. Burmans [၁၀၁] were descendants of these Brahmas. Mientin [Chinese] was the name of the country [မြန်မာပြည်].

The next Legend is the descent of Sakka Deva [Thagya Min] to Earth to inspect if humans are behaving good or bad. Thagyar Min is accompanied by

two devas Vithugyone and Matali. Vithugyone is constructor and Register Matali is the driver of Thagya Min. On the day of descent of Thagya Min to Earth [Akyat Day] all human on Earth welcome him with atar o [Earth water pot with Thagyan of leaves representing 7 days of the week. The humans pray saying they behave well Vithugyone the Register carries two books (1). Gold Book into which good humans' names are recorded (2). Dog skin Book into which bad humans' name are recorded. These two Books are presented on Doompes Day for reward and punishment.

Inspection Day [Akyat Day] take one or two days. On the Ascent Day [Atet Day] humans sendoff Thagya Min by pouring clear scented water from the Atar O, and the bouquet of Thingyan leaves in front of their houses.

The day following the ascent day is called New Year Day. But not necessarily to be exact according to calendar on that Day humans clean up their shrines, houses and surroundings. They also clear up pagodas and monasteries. They shampoo and bathe the old people who give them blessings.

There are other legends and meanings of Songram Thingyan or changes.

First in summer the Sun moves from the Tropic of Capri-

corn in South to Tropic of Cancer to North. Myanmar is directly under Tropic of Cancer. So Myanmar summer is very warm. Another meaning of change is changes of duty. The legend of this meaning is as follows:

Sakka Deva and Athi Brahma Deva had a heated controversy on the solution of a Mathematic problem. They agreed to put at up to Professor Kawalamyine on Earth. They also agreed that the winner should cut off the head of the loser. Kawalamyine after examination found that Saka Deva's solution was correct when upon Saka Deva cut off the head of Athi Brahma Deva and fixed the head of the head of Maha Beingala Elephant God. Thus Maha Perme Deva appeared. Elephant headed Deva.

Athi Brahma's head was a problem. It was thrown upon Earth. Earth would burn to ashes her. If thrown into occasions all occasions would dry up. Atlast Saka Deva chose 7 devis of 7 days of the week and assigns the duty of holding Athi Brahma Deva in then hands by turn every year. So Thingyan is the change of duty of holding Athi Brahma Deva head by turn among 7 devis of the week.

Thingyan Bulletin [၁၀၂] is very important for all Myanmar ethnic nationalities. It is the calendar for religious, social



and cultural festivals. Dates and periods of lent, End of Lent etc. the seasons of summer, rain and winter: Weather fore cast, cultivation, harvest and storage of crop dates, forecasting storm, earthquake, security of rim. Political situation at home and abroad peace or revolution, change of Government, change of heads of state outbreak of disasters-starvation, contagious diseases and armed conflicts and war. As shown in this article Thingyan

Bulletins issued by State Board of Thingyan Bulletins, Saka Deva's Vehicle this year is Snake. He holds an axe and a chundaung in his hands. Axe is used in construction chundaung is a hook to pluck fruits of flowers from the high trees. It is also the symbol of human attempt at solving difficult problems and meeting challenges.

Thingyan Bulletin is issued by State board of Thingyan Bulletin composed of astrologers,

astronomer: Professors of Vedas, metrologists, Seismologists and weather forecasters and wise prophets. Better to read Thingyan Bulletin yourselves. The gist of it is Myanmar as well as the world would face many challenges including great diseases. But through good will, and co-operation all humans of the world and Myanmar would survive. We all need to keep metta loving kindness to one another.



## Announcement by Central Bank of Myanmar

1. Following the reception of applications for a foreign bank licence on 20 January 2020, the Foreign Bank Licencing Committee, together with the international consultant firm Roland Berger Pte Ltd., has evaluated each application based on detailed quantitative and qualitative criteria, such as prudent, capability and market development. After due consideration, the Licencing Committee has decided to grant preliminary approval to prepare for commencement of operations in Myanmar to the following seven foreign banks (in alphabetical order:

- (a) Bank of China Hong Kong (Branch Licence)
- (b) Cathay United Bank (Branch Licence)
- (c) Industrial Bank of Korea (Subsidiary Licence)
- (d) KB Kookmin Bank (Subsidiary Licence)
- (e) Korea Development Bank (Branch Licence)
- (f) Mega International Commercial Bank (Branch Licence)
- (g) Siam Commercial Bank (Subsidiary Licence)

2. In addition, the Central Bank of Myanmar has decided to grant approval to Kasikorn Bank for an equity participation in Ayeeyarwaddy Farmers Development Bank Limited.

3. The full announcement can be read on [www.cbm.gov.mm](http://www.cbm.gov.mm).  
The Central Bank of Myanmar  
(Translated by Aung Khin)

**Myanmar Daily Weather Report**  
(Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 14th April, 2020)

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

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2020:** Rain or thundershowers are likely to be scattered in Taninthayi Region and isolated in Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway and Bago Regions, Kachin, Shan, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Kachin, Shan, Chin, Kayah, Kayin and Mon States.

**FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2020:** Partly cloudy.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2020:** Partly cloudy.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING**

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# Coronavirus: latest global developments

PARIS (France) — Here are the latest developments in the coronavirus crisis:

## More than 120,000 dead worldwide

More than 120,000 people have died worldwide from the coronavirus in 193 countries and territories, according to an AFP tally at 1100 GMT Tuesday based on official sources.

There have been 1,923,390 reported infections since the virus emerged in China in December. The United States has the most deaths of any country with 23,649 fatalities and 582,594 reported infections. Italy follows with 20,465 deaths, Spain with 18,056, France 14,967 and Britain 11,329.

## Plunging growth

Britain's economy could shrink by a historic 13 per cent in 2020 in the case of a three-month coronavirus lockdown, according to a scenario by the fiscal watchdog the Office for Budget Responsibility.

The French government says its economy is expected to contract eight per cent this year, reflecting the impact of an extended lockdown. Its budget deficit was forecasted to go up to nine per cent of GDP and its debt pile to soar to 115 per cent of GDP.



A firefighter disinfects a sarcophagus stretcher after transporting a patient to the Montpellier University Hospital which houses a COVID-19 test center on April 14, 2020 during the 29th day of a lockdown in France aimed at curbing the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic caused by the new coronavirus. **PHOTO: AFP**

## India extends lockdown

India's extends its nationwide lockdown, the biggest in the world covering 1.3 billion people, until 3 May.

India's official toll of 10,363 cases and 339 deaths is considered to be an underestimate due to a lack of testing.

## French confinement prolonged

President Emmanuel Ma-

cron announces that France's lockdown will be extended to 11 May, after which schools and businesses are set to gradually reopen.

He says in an address to the nation the epidemic is "beginning to steady... (and) hope is returning".

## Easing in Italy, Austria

In Italy, where a strict lockdown has been extended to 3 May,

some businesses, such as bookshops and laundrettes, are allowed to reopen in some regions.

Austria on Tuesday also reopens small shops and public gardens.

Spain has restarted construction and factory work, but lockdown restrictions in place since 14 March remain for much of the nation's 47 million people.

## New York: 'worst is over'

In New York State, where the virus has killed more than 10,000 people, governor Andrew Cuomo says the "worst is over."

President Donald Trump says: "It looks like we're plateauing" and that he is "very close" to having a detailed plan for reopening the US economy.

## Vaccine needed to end virus: WHO

The novel coronavirus is 10 times more deadly than swine flu and only a safe and effective vaccine will fully halt its spread, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

"Ultimately, the development and delivery of a safe and effective vaccine will be needed to fully interrupt transmission," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus says.

## Help for poor countries

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) announces immediate debt relief for 25 poor countries to help them free up funds to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

## Avignon festival cancelled

The annual theatre festival in the southern French city of Avignon, the world's most famous celebration of drama, set for 3-23 July, is cancelled.

— AFP ■

## China approves trials for two more coronavirus vaccines

BEIJING (China) — China has approved clinical trials for two more experimental vaccines to combat the novel coronavirus, officials said Tuesday, as the world's scientists race to beat the pandemic.

The vaccines use inactivated coronavirus pathogens, and the approvals pave the way for early-stage human trials, Wu Yubin, an official from China's Ministry of Science and Technology told a regular press briefing.

China's state food and drug administration on Monday approved one vaccine developed by a Beijing-based unit of Nasdaq-listed Sinovac Biotech, Wu said. Another vaccine, being developed by the Wuhan Institute of Biological Products and the Wuhan Institute of Virology, was approved on Sunday, he added.

China now has three different clinical trials for three possible coronavirus vaccines in the works. Beijing approved the first

trial for a vaccine developed by the military-backed Academy of Military Medical Sciences and Hong Kong-listed biotech firm CanSino Bio on 16 March.

That day the US drug developer Moderna said it had begun human tests for their vaccine with the US National Institutes of Health.

"Vaccination of subjects during the first phase of clinical

trials and the recruitment of volunteers for the second phase of clinical trials began on April 9," Wu said. "It's the world's first novel coronavirus vaccine to initiate Phase II clinical studies."

There are currently no approved vaccines or medication for the COVID-19 disease, which has killed more than 120,000 people worldwide and infected nearly two million.— AFP ■



A researcher works on virus replication in order to develop a vaccine against the coronavirus COVID-19. **PHOTO: AFP**

## G-7 to provide debt relief to poor nations amid virus outbreak

TOKYO — Finance chiefs from the Group of Seven industrialized nations agreed Tuesday to provide debt relief to help developing countries finance emergency measures against the spread of the new coronavirus.

The G-7 finance ministers and central bank governors said after a videoconference they would suspend debt payments owed by "the most vulnerable and poorest countries" to others if all Group of 20 economies support the move.

"Ministers and governors support multilateral efforts to assist these countries and stand ready to provide a time-bound suspend on debt service payments," they said in a summary issued by the chair, the United States. "The scale of this health crisis is generating unprecedented challenges for the global

economy."

The debt moratorium plan is aimed at helping developing countries free up funds to take steps to contain the pneumonia-causing virus and support economic activities which are expected to minimize the effect on the global economy.

The ministers and governors also reaffirmed their pledge to "do whatever is necessary to restore economic growth and protect jobs, businesses" as the virus spread is poised to put the global economy in negative growth.

The world economy is projected to contract by 3.0 percent in 2020 from a year before due to the virus pandemic, suffering the worst setback since the Great Depression in the 1930s, the International Monetary Fund said Tuesday.— Kyodo News ■

## Pacific clean-up after homes 'blown to smithereens' by superstorm

SUVA (Fiji) — Tens of thousands of people remain homeless in Vanuatu a week after Tropical Cyclone Harold pummelled the impoverished Pacific nation, smashing houses and destroying crops, aid workers said Tuesday.

The cyclone careened through the South Pacific last week, peaking as a Category Five superstorm that gouged a trail of destruction across the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji and Tonga.

With aid efforts hampered by coronavirus-related travel restrictions, World Vision said up to 35 per cent of Vanuatu's 300,000 population were in temporary shelters after losing their homes.

"Shelter at this time remains absolutely the most pressing issue," World Vision's Vanuatu director Kendra Gates Drousseau told AFP.

She said in some areas the destruction was worse than the last Category Five system to hit the country, Cyclone Pam in 2015, which flattened the capital Port Vila and wiped out almost two-thirds of the country's economic capacity.

"After Pam, people were able to pick up the pieces pretty quickly, put a tarp on the roof and replant the garden," she said.

"What we're seeing from



Tropical Cyclone Harold caused widespread damage in Vanuatu. PHOTO: AFP

Harold is that houses have been blown to smithereens, there's nothing to pick up."

She said there was extensive damage on the islands of Pentecost, Ambae and Santo, where Vanuatu's second-largest town, Luganville, took a direct hit.

The death toll in Vanuatu stands at three, although Gates Drousseau said that could rise as information filtered in from hard-hit remote areas.

In the Solomons, 27 people died when they were washed from the deck of an inter-island ferry, while the Red Cross said there was one fatality in Fiji.

No deaths were recorded

in Tonga, where at least three tourist resorts and more than 400 homes were badly damaged.

Mark Lowcock, the UN head of humanitarian affairs and emergency relief, pledged US\$2.5 million towards drinking water, food, shelter and healthcare in Vanuatu. "The government and first responders in Vanuatu did an excellent job of making people safe ahead of the storm hitting and meeting immediate needs after it hit," he said in a statement.

"As the extent of the destruction becomes clear, this UN funding will ensure aid supplies are maintained and reach the people who need it." — AFP ■

## Tornadoes bring death, destruction in southern US

WASHINGTON (United States) — Tornadoes ripped through the southern United States, killing at least 32 people and leaving behind splintered buildings and downed powerlines, officials and US media said Monday.

Twisters caused catastrophic damage Easter Sunday and early Monday morning as storms moved through a region stretching from Texas to Georgia, prompting the National Weather Service to issue its highest level of tornado alert.

Images showed lines of smashed, roofless houses where tornadoes had blasted through, many homes just piles of rubble sitting atop foundations.

Aircraft parked at a regional airport in Monroe, Louisiana were piled on top of each other.

"By the grace of God, early reports show only a few minor injuries," Monroe Mayor Jamie Mayo said on Twitter, and the city's account later posted pictures of downed power lines.

In neighbouring Mississippi,

however, at least 11 people were killed, according to the state's emergency management agency.

The Weather Channel said at least 32 people had died across the region, combining local tolls.

There were nine people who died in South Carolina, the outlet reported, citing the state's governor Henry McMaster, and they reported one death in North Carolina. Seven people were reported to have been killed when tornadoes hit a mobile home park near the Georgia-Tennessee border.

"There's been loss of life, there's been significant loss of property," Tennessee Governor Bill Lee said Monday, according to the Chattanooga Times Free Press. The National Weather Service in the state found damage caused by winds estimated to be up to 145 miles (235 kilometres) per hour.

The Weather Channel reported one person in Arkansas was killed when a tree fell on a house, plus two other deaths in Alabama.

### 'Horrible, destructive power'

US President Donald Trump offered his "warmest condolences" to those affected.

"My administration will do everything possible to help those communities get back on their feet," he said, promising that the Federal Emergency Management Association was already offering assistance. "It's a tough deal," he said. "It was a bad grouping of tornadoes — something incredible, the horrible, destructive power." Over 1.3 million electricity customers were without power after the storms went through, reported PowerOutage.US. The governors of Mississippi and Louisiana declared states of emergency. "The damage is devastating," Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards said on Twitter. Mississippi Governor Tate Reeves tweeted that he had declared a state of emergency "to protect the health and safety of Mississippians in response to the severe tornadoes and storms hitting across the state." — AFP ■

## US eyes virus 'plateau' as world weighs cautious reboot

WASHINGTON (United States) — Coronavirus deaths in the hard-hit United States were flat for a second consecutive day, with New York's governor saying the "worst is over" as many countries weigh a gradual reopening of their shattered economies.

Since emerging late last year, the coronavirus pandemic has killed around 120,000 and infected nearly two million, tipping the world towards a fierce economic recession as more than half of the globe hunkers down at home.

As countries reach different stages of the coronavirus curve, debate is raging over whether to return to normal life and possibly risk a second wave of infections.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi told his 1.3 billion citizens their lockdown would remain in effect until 3 May at least and France's President Emmanuel Macron extended his tight measures by another month.

But Italy and Austria are reopening some shops and Spain is restarting construction and factory work while powerhouse Germany weighs restarting Europe's top economy.

In Washington, Trump stunned reporters by playing a campaign-style self-congratulatory video and bashing the media during a briefing in which he claimed to have saved "tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands of lives."

The US death toll has hit 23,200 — by far the worst-affected country — but the president said: "It looks like we're plateauing, and maybe even in many cases coming down."

He has repeatedly stressed he wants to open the world's largest economy as swiftly as possible and is expected to announce a plan this week on how to jump-start stalled business.

The US president appeared to be supported by the latest figures from Johns Hopkins University showing 1,509 deaths in the country over the past 24 hours — almost identical to the previous day.

In New York, where the virus has killed more than 10,000 people and seen unclaimed victims buried in unmarked mass graves, Governor Andrew Cuomo said the nightmare might be coming to an end.

"The worst is over if we continue to be smart going forward. I believe we can now start on the path to normalcy," Cuomo told reporters, as Trump said only the president had "the ultimate authority" to reopen businesses.

The economic impact in the US and elsewhere could be seen as officials in the southern city of Houston wrapped food in plastic bags and threw them into cars.

"We went to the stores and they are closed. Yes, we had problems to buy food," said sales assistant Catalina Mendoza Cabrera. — AFP ■



Paramedics take a homeless woman to hospital in Los Angeles, California. PHOTO: AFP



China has largely brought the disease under control within its borders and the March fall in trade was far lower than expected. **PHOTO: AFP**

## Stock markets rise as China data beats forecasts

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Stock markets mostly rose Tuesday as better-than-expected Chinese trade data lifted the economic gloom wrought by the coronavirus pandemic.

Oil prices fell, despite US President Donald Trump claiming that producers were mulling a global daily output cut of 20 million barrels.

And the dollar dropped against main rivals, helping to push gold above \$1,700 an ounce — the highest level for more than seven years — traders said.

“Markets continue to react in an odd way, mostly ignoring all the bad figures that have come their way and focusing on the positives, such as the China figures,” said Chris Beauchamp, chief market analyst at IG trading group.

Asian stock markets kicked off the day with gains after official data showed Chinese exports fell 6.6 per cent and imports slid 0.9 per cent in March on a yearly basis.

But Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics warned “the worst is still to come” for China’s export businesses, with more economic headwinds likely in the months ahead as major trading partners battle their coronavirus outbreaks.

Investors will now await the release of China’s quarterly GDP figures on Friday, with forecasters predicting a 6.2-per cent contraction.

Shanghai’s main stocks index finished 1.6-per cent higher and Hong Kong returned from a four-day break to close up 0.6 per cent Tuesday.

“The data coming out of China is a rough leading indicator for the rest of the world,” noted Jasper Lawler, head of research at London Capital Group.

“The smaller exports drop is a clue that China’s first-quarter growth figures released on Friday could also surprise on the upside.”

After a strong start, European bourses tailed off approaching the half way stage, while London slipped into a slight loss.

The computer system of the Frankfurt Stock Exchange Xetra, on which several European exchanges depend, was meanwhile the victim of a computer failure.

Financial data services showed the DAX 30 index unchanged since 0730 GMT, up 1.1 per cent.

The Paris CAC 40 was flat, with news that France’s economy is expected to shrink by a worse-than-expected eight per cent this year after President Emmanuel Macron extended a coronavirus lockdown until 11 May.

Britain’s economy could collapse by 13 per cent in 2020 in the case of a three-month coronavirus lockdown, according to a scenario published by UK fiscal watchdog the Office for Budget Responsibility.

On the corporate front Tuesday, JPMorgan Chase reported a huge decline in first-quarter earnings after setting aside nearly \$8.3 billion for loans vulnerable to the economic devastation from coronavirus shutdowns.

South Africa’s central bank has meanwhile slashed its main interest rate by a full percentage point, the second such cut in less than a month, and predicted its economy would shrink by 6.1 per cent in 2020.

### ‘Oil uncertainty’

Markets’ focus was meanwhile firmly also on oil.

“There is still a lot uncertainty over whether the reduction in output will be enough,” said Neil Wilson, chief market analyst at trading website Markets.com

“The biggest uncertainty for oil is how quickly does demand recover in the medium term? Indeed, this is the central question for risk assets in general,” he added.

Oil producing nations at the weekend thrashed out a compromise to cut output by nearly 10 million barrels per day from May, while Trump said the final figure could end up being double that level.

Oil prices have crashed as the coronavirus outbreak sends demand off a cliff, with a Saudi-Russian price war compounding the crisis. — AFP

## Global economy to contract 3% in 2020 amid coronavirus pandemic: IMF

WASHINGTON — The global economy is projected to contract by 3.0 per cent in 2020 from a year before due to the coronavirus pandemic, a far more severe setback than during the 2008-2009 financial crisis, the International Monetary Fund said Tuesday.

The IMF slashed its projection by 6.3 percentage points from its estimate in January, when the spread of the coronavirus was just about to intensify in China. But the global economy could bounce back if the epidemic recedes in the second half of this year, with the IMF projecting 5.8 per cent growth next year.

The United States — now the epicenter of the pandemic that was first detected in China late last year — will see its economy shrink 5.9 per cent in 2020, the worst contraction since 1946. The Japanese economy is projected to contract by 5.2 per cent, the worst downturn since 2009, according to the IMF’s World Economic Outlook report.

The latest forecasts underscore the economic toll stemming from the highly contagious virus, which has prompted countries around the world to shutter businesses, cancel events and keep people at home in efforts to prevent its spread. More than 1.9 million people have been infected worldwide and over 120,000 people have been killed by the illness, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

“The COVID-19 pandemic differs markedly from past triggers of downturns...There is a de facto shutdown of a significant portion of the economy,” the Washington-based institution said, noting that the global economy has not faced “a crisis of this magnitude” since the Great Depression in the 1930s.

The IMF also pointed to the

“extreme uncertainty” around the global growth forecast, which would be affected by the intensity and efficacy of containment efforts, the extent of supply disruptions and changes in people’s behavior due to the pandemic, among other issues.

### “Risks of a worse outcome predominate,” it said.

Disruptions of economic activity are expected to concentrate in the April-June quarter of 2020 for most countries except China, which was devastated in the preceding quarter and is now gradually reopening for business amid signs that the outbreak is receding. Even with a sharp rebound over the remainder of the year and sizable fiscal support, the world’s second largest economy is projected to grow at a subdued 1.2 per cent in 2020.

### The eurozone is projected to log a negative growth of 7.5 per cent.

For 2021, growths for both the United States and the eurozone are projected at 4.7 per cent, while China is expected to hit 9.2 per cent growth and Japan 3.0 per cent, with all figures higher than in the January forecast.

But the IMF warned that the recovery of the global economy could be weaker than current estimates, touching on the risks of a second outbreak and uncertainties over the contagion that could lead to persistent voluntary social distancing and restrained consumer demand for services.

Growth in trade of goods and services across the world was revised downward by nearly 14 points from the January projection to a drop of 11.0 per cent in 2020, but upgraded 4.7 points to an 8.4 per cent rise in 2021.

— Kyodo News ■



International monetary fund logo is seen in an Android. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

## ASEAN leaders vow to maintain trade ties despite virus pandemic

HANOI/BEIJING — Leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations agreed Tuesday to make every effort to maintain their trade relations amid growing fears that the supply chain will be further disrupted in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic.

During their videoconference, the ASEAN leaders also

confirmed that the member countries will build a trust fund as part of a concerted effort to combat the new virus that causes the respiratory disease COVID-19.

The virtual summit was held as proposed by Indonesia, as the virus, first detected late last year in the central Chinese city of Wuhan, has spread world-

wide, dealing a crushing blow to social and economic activities across the globe.

“Most of the ASEAN leaders focused on two things,” Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, who attended the online summit along with President Joko “Jokowi” Widodo, told reporters.

“The first was their com-

mon efforts to fight against the COVID-19. The second was their cooperation to deal with the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak in socioeconomic sectors,” she said at a video press conference.

A joint declaration released after the special summit said, “We reaffirmed our determination and commitment...to act jointly and decisively to control

the spread of the disease while mitigating its adverse impact on our people’s livelihood, our societies and economies.”

Retno added the leaders of the 10-member bloc also agreed to bolster ties to deal with the virus in such areas as information, research, epidemiology and clinical treatment. — Kyodo News ■

## North Korea fires multiple suspected cruise missiles

SEOUL (South Korea) — North Korea fired several suspected cruise missiles Tuesday towards the sea, according to the South’s military, with analysts saying Pyongyang was demonstrating the breadth of its arsenal.

The “multiple projectiles” fired from Munchon in the east of the country were believed to be “short-range cruise missiles”, the Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

The test comes a day before the South holds parliamentary elections, and at a time when the world’s attention has been largely focused on the coronavirus pandemic, which Pyongyang insists it has so far escaped.

It also comes the day before the nuclear-armed North marks the 108th anniversary of the birth of founder Kim Il Sung, grandfather of the current leader Kim Jong Un.

In recent years Pyongyang has repeatedly tested ballistic missiles, which are propelled high above the Earth — often into space — before descending towards their targets at high

speed by the force of gravity.

The North’s arsenal includes intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) capable of reaching the entire US mainland.

In contrast, cruise missiles travel at low altitudes — sometimes just a few metres (feet) above the surface, making them hard to detect — and are powered throughout their flight.

Frequently highly manoeuvrable, they need sophisticated guidance systems to bring them to their targets.

Tuesday’s missiles travelled over the Sea of Japan, also known as the East Sea, before coming down in the water, the JCS said.

The North also flew multiple Sukhoi-variant and MiG fighter jets above the eastern coastal city of Wonsan, which fired multiple air-to-ground rockets, a spokesman added.

“South Korea and US intelligence authorities are closely analysing related issues,” the statement said. Pyongyang was demonstrating that it had “various options” when it came to weapons delivery systems, said

Cha Du-Hyeogn, senior researcher at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.

“Ballistic missiles demonstrate destructive power while cruise missiles show accuracy,” he told AFP.

“Until now North Korea has shown its force, and now it is demonstrating accuracy in striking targets.”

### “Treading carefully”

The North is subject to multiple UN Security Council sanctions over its banned weapons programmes.

It has carried out a series of weapons tests in recent months — often describing them as multiple launch rocket systems, while others have called them ballistic missiles. It has also fired cruise missiles in the past, as in June 2017 when it hailed the successful test of what it called a new type of surface-to-ship cruise missile.

Those missiles flew around 200 kilometres (125 miles) and were launched the week after two US aircraft carriers took part in naval manoeuvres in the Sea of



The latest test comes a day before North Korea marks the 108<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of founder Kim Il Sung, grandfather of current leader Kim Jong Un. **PHOTO: AFP**

Japan. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump traded mutual insults and threats of war during 2017, sending tensions soaring.

The South’s President Moon Jae-in used the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics in his country to broker a diplomatic rapprochement and a series of summits followed.

But talks between Pyongyang and Washington have been largely deadlocked since their Hanoi summit broke up in February last year amid disagreement on sanctions relief and what the North would be willing to give up in return. Tuesday’s missiles

travelled around 150 kilometres (96 miles) according to Seoul, and Go Myong-hyun — an analyst at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies — said the short range was likely to have been deliberately chosen by Pyongyang.

“North Korea is still deciding what kind of strategic position it should take between provocation and dialogue,” he told AFP.

“It is treading carefully. It is firing missiles to raise tensions, but the level of tension is not that high. “At this point, I wouldn’t be surprised if North Korea carries out more provocations, or if it suddenly says it is ready to talk.” —AFP ■

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY. NO. (051N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY. NO. (051N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT/AWPT where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Phone No: 2301185

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V KUO TAI VOY. NO. (208N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V KUO TAI VOY. NO. (208N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 15-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of TMIT/MIP where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S CONTINENTAL SHIPPING  
LINE

Phone No: 2301185

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ALVAN VOY. NO. (SCY 1077)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V ALVAN VOY. NO. (SCY 1077) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 14-4-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim’s Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

SHIPPING AGENCY DEPARTMENT  
MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY  
AGENT FOR: M/S LAND AND SEA  
INTERMODAL LOGISTICS SDN BHD LINE

Phone No: 2301185

# Builders grasp chance to apply for construction permits in Yangon City through online

Zin Lin Myint

**U**RBAN area of Yangon is wider and wider whereas newly-constructed buildings are mushrooming day by day. In constructing modern high-rise buildings, it was necessary to take a long time for seeking construction permits and for submitting applications at different levels. Currently, applicants are allowed for seeking construction permits through online system in Yangon City.

## Test running

“Yangon City Development Committee implements online service system while studying things how to carry out reform process for issuing permits of building construction in Yangon. International Finance Corporation-IFC which is member of the World Bank assists Yangon City Development Committee in realizing the online system for issuance of the construction permit. The Myanmar Architect Council and the Myanmar Engineering Council sought as-

sistance from IFC which conducted training to those who would participate in the service project. The online service was launched in August 2019,” said Daw Hlaing Maw Oo, Secretary of YCDC.

## Training given to some 1,500 staff members

YCDC started cooperation with IFC in May 2018 in operating the online service in Yangon. The system for issuance of building construction permit in Yangon was assessed in detail through the mapping. Training courses have been conducted for some 1,500 staff members eight times. Technicians and experts cooperate with YCDC in implementing the system to have smooth and easy access for users.

## Five steps

“Engineers and architects recognized by the Myanmar Engineering Council and the Myanmar Architect Council have to apply for the construc-

tion permits at YCDC through online. Those engineers and architects have been allowed to open their accounts in the system in order to apply for the permit. They must follow five steps as procedures of applications. With regard to the first step, the applicants must mention their profiles. The second step is to mention the facts about buildings. In respect of the third step, data from the first and second steps must be combined and attached to the applications. And, the data must be scrutinized and then it must be posted through online if all the facts are correct. The fifth step is related to the checking of office. If the relevant office approves the applications, the applicants must send payments,” said Daw Khin Thet Lwin, Assistant Director cum in-charge of the construction works.

## Applying technologies

Applicants must submit their applications through website [www.ybps.ycdc.mn](http://www.ybps.ycdc.mn) for



Photo shows mushrooming of high-rise buildings in Yangon City. **PHOTO: ZIN LIN MYINT.**

seeking construction permits for the buildings. In the past, if one wished to construct buildings, they would have put their signatures and seals on all papers of applications.

After submitting the applications, the applicants were difficult to know where their applications were. Currently, the online application system cuts the time of work procedures and

reduces the frequent meetings between staff members and applicants. Moreover, applicants can submit their applications at anytime. In fact, it is an effective, transparent and least cost process as part of applying the technologies.

“We don’t have time restrictions for submitting applications through online system. Users can apply for it at night or in



A high-rise building is under construction in Yangon. **PHOTO: YE HTUT TIN (NLM)**

the morning while doing other jobs as well as travelling here and there. As such, the online system can contribute towards conservation of environment,” said U Win Myint Than, No. 7 member of YCDC and in-charge of the building work group.

#### On-stop service

Currently, the Yangon City Development Committee is giving one-stop service to applicants who submit applications in person starting from 2014.

“We give services to applicants within 10 days through one-stop service if the cases comprise full of necessary documents. We expect the online system will be quicker than the on-paper system,” said Director U Nay Win of building work group of YCDC.

#### Chance to apply for construction permit through online

The test period will be set for six months in applying the online system to enable the builders to have easy access to construction permits in Yangon City. After the period, YCDC will review the weak points of the system and adopt the plan to add more smooth and clear points for betterment of the system. That is why city dwellers of Yangon will have the chance to apply for the construction permit soon.

The World Bank issues the Doing Business Report on a yearly basis to assess investment situations of each country. The report in 2020 mentioned Myanmar was standing 165th position among 190 countries

throughout the world. Availability of building construction permit is one of 10 indexes for assessing the measurements of indexes.

#### More confidence

Myanmar stood 81<sup>st</sup> position among 190 countries in 2019 because of slow process of issuing the building construction permits. But, the country rose to 41<sup>st</sup> in its positions in the World Bank Report in 2020.

If Myanmar can apply the online system for issuance of construction permits successfully, such a move will catch more attention of investors in the construction sector not only in Yangon City but also in the entire nation.

*Translated by Than Tun Aung* ■■■

## Prudential Myanmar and Yoma Bank sign Memorandum of Understanding to establish exclusive partnership for distribution of life insurance products to the people of Myanmar

**P**RUDENTIAL Myanmar Life Insurance Limited, a wholly-owned business unit of Prudential Corporation Asia, and Yoma Bank, one of the largest private banks in Myanmar, have signed a memorandum of understanding to establish an exclusive partnership to distribute life insurance solutions to customers in Myanmar, helping them meet their growing long-term protection needs.

Under the proposed partnership, it is envisaged that customers of Yoma Bank will have access to Prudential Myanmar’s savings and protection products via the bank’s extensive branch network.

With Prudential Myanmar’s significant investments in cutting-edge technology, combined with the nation-wide reach and market expertise of Yoma Bank, the partnership has the potential to create a truly digital, inclusive financial ecosystem through which Prudential Myanmar’s suite of solutions will be distributed.

Established in 1993, Yoma Bank is among the top-five biggest domestic banks in Myanmar with over 80 branches across 43 cities.

It is also one of the most progressive banks in terms of technology investments and a pioneer in mobile and digital banking. Last year, it became Myanmar’s first commercial lender to have a foreign shareholder after International Finance Corporation, a member of the World Bank Group, acquired a stake in the bank.

In November 2019, Prudential was granted a licence from the Ministry of Planning and Finance of Myanmar to operate a wholly-owned life insurance business in the country.

Prudential Myanmar will be offering simple and easy-to-understand protection and long-term savings products that will

help customers meet their financial goals.

The company will adopt a multi-channel and digital-enabled strategy with the aim to distribute its solutions to customers conveniently and seamlessly.

Prudential Myanmar and Yoma Bank have a shared focus to raise the awareness of life insurance among the people of Myanmar and ensure it is accessible to all.

Demand for life insurance products in Myanmar is expected to grow strongly in the coming years, supported by a sizeable population of around 53 million and a fast-growing middle class, which is expected to account for 19 million people by 2030.

Mr. Dean Cleland, CEO of Yoma Bank, said, “This event marks another step in Yoma Bank’s continued efforts to develop relevant financial services to people of Myanmar.

We look forward to building on our distribution strength and harnessing the expertise of a global life insurer with demonstrated capabilities in bancassurance distribution partnerships to broaden the depth and breadth of our offerings and services to our customers.”

Mr. Asit Rath, CEO of Prudential Myanmar, said, “We look forward to working with Yoma Bank as our strategic partner in Myanmar. Yoma Bank is one of the most innovative and digital-oriented banks in the country.

We are confident that our proposed partnership will allow us to reach more people in this growing market and help them achieve their financial aspirations and life goals.

Prudential Myanmar is now one step closer in our mission to provide life insurance to everyone, everywhere at a click. We look forward to a successful and symbiotic partnership.” —GNLM



A building is under construction in Yangon. PHOTO: YE HTUT TIN (NLM)



A building is under construction in Yangon. PHOTO: YE HTUT TIN (NLM)

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# AFC extends postponement of competitions due to COVID-19

THE Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has announced further postponements of all its football competitions scheduled to take place in May and June until further notice due to the coronavirus pandemic, according to the confederation's website on Tuesday.

The AFC's decision came to ensure the safety and wellbeing of players, participating teams, officials, fans and all stakeholders.

Due to the coronavirus, the AFC had earlier postponed its matches in March and April after holding a series of meetings in Delhi, Doha, Dubai and Kuala Lumpur. The AFC also said they will continue to engage in and consult with the Participating Member Associations in the AFC Club Competitions and will explore all possible options to complete the 2020 AFC Champions League and AFC Cup Group Stages. — Kyaw Khin ■



Yakubu Abubakar (L) of Myanmar's Shan United vies for a ball with Hussein El Dor (R) of Indonesia's PSM Makassar during their AFC Cup Group H football qualification match at Madya Stadium in Jakarta on 26 February 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

# Fellaini out of Chinese hospital after coronavirus scare



Belgium international Marouane Fellaini is the CSL's only player known to have contracted the novel coronavirus. **PHOTO: AFP**

SHANGHAI (China) — Former Manchester United star Marouane Fellaini was discharged on Tuesday after three weeks in a Chinese hospital being treated for coronavirus, his club said.

The 32-year-old Shandong Luneng midfielder, the only player known to have contracted the disease in the Chinese Super League (CSL), will now spend 14 days in quarantine for further observation.

The Belgium international said on March 22 that he had tested positive for the virus, having just returned to China, but

assured fans that he was feeling fine.

While in hospital in the city of Jinan, Fellaini posted videos of himself on Instagram exercising in his room.

"Fellaini was assessed and was deemed to have recovered, and was discharged today," Shandong said in a brief statement.

China, where the outbreak emerged in December, says that it has curbed the illness at home but is now worried about a second wave of infections from overseas.—AFP ■

# Asian football body extends virus shutdown indefinitely

HONG KONG (China) — The Asian Football Confederation announced Tuesday the indefinite postponement because of the coronavirus of all matches scheduled for May and June, plunging the AFC Champions League into further disarray.

The region's premier club competition was put on hold in March as the pandemic spread, and the latest reshuffle means the 32-team group stage will have to be completed in July before the already-postponed knock-out rounds start a month later.

"Following the continued

preventive measures and travel restrictions put in place by several governments, the Asian Football Confederation has decided today to postpone all matches and competitions scheduled to take place in May and June until further notice," an AFC statement said.

"As one of the first confederations in world football to undertake precautionary measures in light of the COVID-19 outbreak, the latest decision reinforces the AFC's commitment to ensure the safety and wellbeing of players, participating teams, officials, fans

and all stakeholders." Less than two of the six rounds of group-stage matches have been completed so far, meaning the competition will face severe congestion even if it returns in July.

The extended shutdown also affects the two-legged women's Olympic qualifying play-off between China and South Korea, which had already been moved to June 1 and 9.

June qualifiers for the men's 2022 World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup had already been postponed.—AFP ■



The draw for the Asian Football Confederation playoff and group stages was made at AFC headquarters in Kuala Lumpur in December, but so far less than two of the first six rounds have been played. **PHOTO: AFP**