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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VI, No. 281, 14th Waning of Pyatho 1381 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Thursday, 23 January 2020

State Counsellor meets with locals in Leshi, Bamauk townships in Sagaing Region

STATE Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Chairperson of the Committee for Development of Rural Areas and National Races, held public meetings with the local people in Leshi of Naga Self-Administered Zone and Bamauk township in Sagaing Region yesterday.

The State Counsellor, accompanied by Union Ministers U Min Thu, U Ohn Win and Dr Myint Htwe; Deputy Ministers Maj-Gen Aung Thu and U Hla Maw Oo, Chief of Myanmar Police Force Lt-Gen Aung Win Oo and officials, left Homa-lin for Leshi by helicopters.

During a public meeting with the locals in Leshi Township, the State Counsellor said. "Although I arranged to visit here last year, the weather did not favour me to do so. This year I made it a point to be here so here I am. I want to meet with the local people. Every corner of the country has equal value for us," the State Counsellor said.

She added, "Difficulties of local people could be imagined from aerial view of the region. I want to see better living conditions of national people who are living in small houses on the mountain slopes for the livelihoods because it is important for the future of our country.

The value of a country can be determined on how much its people feel secure about their lives. Therefore, we want our children to attend



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi poses for a documentary photo together with youths in Bamauk Township in Sagaing Region yesterday.

PHOTO: MNA

our meetings. Children should have political knowledge. They need to understand politics is concerned with all. No one can stand alone. Human beings are interdependent. So, we need to live in harmony with peacefully.

A weakness of our country is that total peace has not prevailed until now since it has regained independence. The entire country was not completely free from armed clashes. The

government is trying to stop the armed conflicts. Instability in any corner of the country has negative impacts on other areas of the country.

The situation of a country can be compared with a person. A pain on the pointing finger can be suffered although it is not a severe disease of the body.

Likewise, it is important to believe that every citizen has

their own value wherever they are living in any circumstances. Self-confidence is required to gain trust from others. Trust-building is emphasized in peace-making efforts.

However, those who lack self-confidence hardly trust others. Our citizens need to have capacity to develop self-confidence and to have normal relationship with others. Those who have no self-confidence,

but worry for themselves, never have good relationships with others. So, we must work together to get rid of worries. Children should not be left behind in this process.

Children have to learn how to associate with each other, in addition to learning lessons from the teachers, at schools. They have to follow classroom rules and disciplines.

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National Environmental Conservation & Climate Change Central Committee holds ninth coord meeting



Vice President U Myint Swe addresses the ninth coordination meeting of the National-Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee at the Forest Department in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

The National-Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee held its ninth coordination meeting at the Forest Department in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning, where the committee's patron Vice President U Myint Swe delivered a speech.

In his speech, the Vice President said the central committee was formed with 25 members and assigned 26 tasks on 2 June, 2016. It was reformed with 28 members on 6 September, 2019. The central committee formed 6 working committees and the supervising committees of Nay Pyi Taw Council and the states/regions to assist in implementing its directives.

The Vice President said 8 coordination meetings have been held and 104 decisions made in the three and a half years since its formation and has accomplished 57 of those decisions while 47 decisions are in the implementing process with 15 would take a longer term. He urged everyone to cooperate to accomplish the remaining processes quickly as doing so will bring the benefits that much quicker as well.

The Vice President said some of the committee's remarkable achievements include producing the National Environmental Policy, Myanmar Climate Change Policy, Myanmar Climate Change Strategy (2018-2030), and Myanmar Climate Change Action Plan (2018-

2030). He said these will serve as fundamental guidelines and framework for implementing the Myanmar Sustainable Development Project.

The Vice President said the Office of the Union Government has approved the National Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan (2018-2030) to implement a waste management system that reduces waste production, recycles and repurposes them.

The deadline for drafting the environmental management programme for industrial businesses, a topic under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation's priority industrial sector (9), has been extended to 29 January, 2020.

He said they were also working on the National Green Business Development Strategic Framework in order to better manage negative side effects generated from businesses that extract natural resources, to ensure these businesses have sustainable finance, and to raise the skills of civil servants involved in the process.

The Vice President urged all relevant ministries and sub-na-

tional committees to draw up action plans for the 2020-2021 FY regarding the climate change and waste management strategies so as to ensure the long-term environmental conservation goal stays on track.

He said public awareness campaigns and capacity building initiatives must be continuously conducted to ensure the public and private businesses are involved in environmental conservation. He also said relevant

government departments and supervising committees should always evaluate whether there is adherence to environmental conservation rules and regulations and to take proper action for non-compliance.

The Vice President said the deadline for drafting the environmental management programme for industrial businesses, a topic under the Ministry of Natural Resources and

Environmental Conservation's priority industrial sector (9), has been extended to 29 January, 2020. Thus, the Nay Pyi Taw Council and the state/regional governments should work together with relevant ministries to aid the industrial businesses in their region to finalize their environmental management programme in time.

The Vice President said we need to continually monitor the global environmental conservation issues and climate change situation so as to respond to them effectively and accordingly. He said there are already policies and frameworks to tackle the two major global issues of climate change and marine pollution, including plastic pollution. He said they should be paired with the policies and strategies mentioned earlier.

He then concluded his speech by urging attendees to work together to hasten all ongoing processes, ensure effective implementation and provide assistance and guidance where needed.

Next, Central Committee Secretary and Director-General of the Environmental Conservation Department U Hla Maung Thein explained the progress of implementing decisions of the previous meeting, the progress of the working committees' actions and future plans.

Following this, central committee member Deputy Minister Dr Ye Myint Swe explained the implementation process of the

climate change policy, strategy and action plan, and the implementation progress of the Global Geopark.

Next, Deputy Attorney-General U Win Myint explained the enactment of national environmental conservation and climate change laws and bylaws and future plans.

Attendees then discussed matters related to their assigned duties and responsibilities to which the Vice President, Deputy Minister, Deputy Attorney-General and other officials responded.

Afterwards, U Hla Maung Thein submitted the 17 decisions produced by the meeting, which were approved, and the Vice President delivered the closing speech.

Present at the meeting were central committee members Deputy Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Dr Ye Myint Swe and Deputy Attorney-General U Win Myint and other members, the chairpersons of Nay Pyi Taw, State/Regional-Level Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Supervising Committees including Nay Pyi Taw Council member U Tin Tun and state/regional ministers, officials of the 6 working committees, permanent secretaries, directors-general, representatives from NGOs, CSOs and private businesses, department heads and other officials—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

State Counsellor meets with locals in Leshi, in Sagaing Region

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Any school child is prohibited from playing while others are learning lessons in the classroom. It is a disturbance in the classroom, and teachers would prevent such behavior. Therefore, going to school is also meant to learn for close association with others. Parents need to understand this.

Everybody is responsible for living harmoniously with their community. Elder persons must teach this to the younger generation, while they are serving as a role model. Children are learning automatically from their close community without getting special trainings.

Children are quick learners of strange behaviours. Adult persons need to know it. They must be role models for the young generations. Some elder persons lack this knowledge. So, we need to live harmoniously. Only then, the new generation of the country would be able to establish good relationships with each other."

The State Counsellor added that the situations in Leshi have revealed how much efforts need to be put for the development of the country.

"It is very difficult to survive along the mountain slopes. Our people have been living here for hundreds of years. We need to develop and change these situations for them. However, it is also important not to forget traditional customs," she added.

"I still remember that there



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi arrives in Leshi in Sagaing Region yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

were two Naga traditional spears in our home. They were hung on the wall in cross positions. I knew that these spears were the commemorative gifts of Naga ethnic people to our parents. Thus I felt the Naga people are our close relatives. Love and affection of our parents with Naga people have permeated us," the State Counsellor said.

"Our ethnic national races must be friendly with each other. People from different faiths are living in this tiny township. However, they are seen living harmoniously. This is the strength for our country. Although the town is small, the hearts of its residents are big. They are so broad-minded that they could establish a

peaceful community of diverse faiths. We need to convey this message to the other parts of the country," she added.

"In some places, different communities are arguing about races, faiths and languages, although they should create unity in diversity. This is Union spirit. Some persons do not understand Union spirit, and they focus only on the interest of their close community. Then, the world becomes very restricted. People in Leshi should not only focus on their area. All the people, including young persons, should have global perspective, without traveling around the world."

"I visited Homalin, Pinlebu and Nanyun townships yesterday

before Leshi. I found it interesting that the ethnic young people in these areas are more active than their counterparts in other regions, especially young men. Why is that so? In other regions, young men were found to be shy embarrassing having to talk in public more so than young women. It can be assumed that good social practices have shaped them into active persons,"

The State Counsellor continued saying that every region has unique features to be proud of, whether they might be noticed or not. People were also urged to recognize these valuable characteristics. Don't feel depressed for living and growing up on the mountain slopes. Everybody has

significant values.

She also said, "No two people are alike in the world. So, value yourselves. Make the best for yourselves. Our government has offered to help you develop your lives."

"We want to provide healthcare assistance in building the capacity of individuals. I would like to request all the people to join us. Without participation of the people, no nation will develop."

"People in developed countries are very active and energetic. They did not have more developed brains when they were born. However, their strenuous efforts turned them into more capable persons. We are trying to find ways how we could help our people. We are meeting with people to find this solution."

The State Counsellor said she preferred public meetings outside the halls to create more space for the young people who wanted to join the meeting and raise their questions."

After the speech of State Counsellor, the Union Minister and the senior government officials replied to questions posed by the local people about opening a vocation training school, building a hydropower plant, assignment of midwives and medical doctors for rural health clinics, upgrading roads, distribution of drinking water, telecommunications, construction of town community hall, development projects, putting Khamti and Homalin into the Naga Self-Administered Zone, possible assistance of the government for students who did not complete matriculation level, transportation and infrastructure development and unfair employment processes for local staff positions.

The State Counsellor gave instructions to give priority for making drinking water available and construction of community hall for Leshi Township. She also explained available national healthcare services, building up a Democratic Federal Union, assistance for young people who did not complete matriculation exam, collecting the data of unemployment rate, scrutinizing appointment of local staff, assistance of local people to the civil service personnel from other regions, infrastructural development and responsibilities of local



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with local people in Leshi Township in Sagaing Region yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

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State Counsellor visits Zalon Mountain Pagoda in Bamauk

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people for the development of their region.

The State Counsellor and party proceeded to Bamauk Township by helicopters. They first visited to Zalon Mountain where they paid respects to and donated offertories to the monks.

The State Counsellor then paid homage to the Zalon Mountain Pagoda before leaving for Bamauk Township to hold a public meeting with the locals.

During the meeting at the community hall of the township, the State Counsellor said, "First of all, I apologize for coming late into this hall. On my way to this hall, the people greeted me personally, and I think I must take time to say greetings in return. But some suggested to me not to greet the people when they offer me a handshake.

However, from my point of view, if I am offered a hand, I want to do a handshake. I believe this is a gesture showing the spirit of the Union. Only if I hold the hand offered voluntarily with loving kindness can we make unity and progress. So please understand me if I am taking time.

If it is possible, I wish I could give a handshake with each and everyone of the over fifty million people. But this is practically out of the question.

In such a gathering like this, the local people usually ask for roads and bridges connecting the villages. The same request is made, whether the east or west, northern or southern part of the country. Another request is for electricity because our people believe that things will be alright only if there is power supply in the locality. Before we came here, we made a visit to the Zalon Mountain. There, the revered Sayadaw made a request for power supply on the ground that the elderly pilgrims could take a lift and make a pilgrimage to the top of the mountain. So, we must also take this into consideration.

Another request some villages make is the water supply for drinking and for general use. As you all know, this is a very important need, for without water, how can we survive? So, we



Zalon Mountain Pagoda. PHOTO: MNA

shall fulfil the need of this water supply as one of the priorities. As regards health and education, health is more in demand. Why? Because there is no sufficient number of doctors and nurses in their local areas. No specialists. I was informed that in a so and so hospital there has been no sufficient number of staff, that the staff do not come on transfer.

However, what arouses curiosity in me is there are only few requests related to education. Of course, some regions ask for vocational education. But the local people's reports or requests related to schools are only a few. I was taken aback.

Since I entered politics, I have toured the country, and on my tours, I have noticed that the people have made requests in the mass gathering for healthcare and education as priorities. Later, however, requests relating to education have been on the decline. Why? I wonder. Is education making progress? Or have our people lost interest or ardour in education matters? I don't think so. If the children and the parents have strong interest in education, this makes me wonder whether, if compared with healthcare, there may not be many issues in the sector of education. This the Ministry of Health must take into consideration very seriously.

Education is the future of our country - this is the statement I always highlight. On my way to this hall, I saw many students, and this made



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi pays homage to the monks at the Zalon Mountain Pagoda yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

me realize how huge the responsibility of state is. These students must have access to higher education, they must be taught the kind of education that they could apply when they walk along the path of their life. This is, of course, a great responsibility for us. On the other hand, what comes to my mind is the more students we have, the more forces for our future. Life is like a coin with a head and a tail. That is to say, if one side is meant for your interests, then on the other side, you have the responsibility to make efforts so as to enjoy these interests. Self-service will also be needed at spots agog with people.

I'd request the local people to cooperate and collaborate, too. For example, those far flung areas have been in need of doctors and healthcare staff.

Then the Minister for Health Dr Myint Htwe explains about the plans for attracting more doctors to those inaccessible areas like the Sagaing Region for road transportation and travelling. He usually requests the local people that accommodations be arranged for the new staff coming on transfer because those staff, healthcare staff or education personnel, coming from somewhere else, have to leave their family, leave their native place for an unfamiliar place. So I think the local people are responsible for making the new comers a second home so that the government servants will perform their duties happily there for a long period of service. If the locals treat the new comers as strangers, then the new comers will feel like strangers in an unfamiliar

setting. On the other hand, this new comer is our brotherhood, our relative, our fellow citizen who has come to serve for the interest of our village. Then give him or her a warm welcome. So the new comer will find a second home there for a longer stay. This is what I wish for.

Our country has a rich variety of nationalities. In a town like this, I notice the various nationalities dressed in different national costumes. In a country of various nationalities like this, we must not see our ethnic national races as strangers. If so, how can we build unity among ourselves?

So, no matter what national dress you wear, these children

dressed in various national costumes, some are schoolmates, or classmates. So you all are friends, aren't you? Though you might belong to other national races, a friend is a friend. This is the right attitude I'd like you all to adopt. We all are brothers and sisters, the offspring of the Union. This kind of attitude will transform the differences and diversity of our country into one single force. Don't adopt the kind of attitude that because he or she is of a different skin, he or she is my foe, that people of different ethnic backgrounds can't live together under the same roof, that those with a different skin or race must be ignored. No. This kind of negative attitude would undermine the strength of the nation. To

State Counsellor meets with locals, Bamauk in Sagaing Region

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prevent this sort of situation, we must nurture our children to adopt Union spirit. Never forget that this country is a Union, in which various nationalities live together. Every nationality has his own unique customs, some admirable customs and traditions. The new comers must find it out. Then he will discover that they know what we don't, and he must teach them what they don't know. With this kind of spirit, we must build our Union.

Our country has perhaps the richest human resource of working age in the world. These human resources are a rich source of strength. These human resources will carry out the duties of the country, make efforts for development of the country. But, first of all, the government must provide aid for the good health of our children, for their good education.

It is important that the government is responsible for the management in which those who have completed their education are employed in decent jobs. The term 'unemployed graduate' is far and wide in our country. You get a degree from a university, but you can't get a job. This is no good. I am trying my best to convince the people that an intellectual is not a university graduate.

Education means having the capabilities and knowledge necessary for your life. This kind of knowledge and capabili-

ties do not belong to the university graduates only. Personally speaking, I'd like to give much support to the role of vocational education because in some developed countries in the world, vocational education is ranked as equal to the university education, even more valued in some countries. The youths who have been trained in vocational education earn the same salary as the university graduates. These youths can carry out the duties of the country, exert influence in the economy. So the world has now acknowledged how important the role of vocational education is. In our country there are weaknesses in the sector of education. But these weaknesses can be transformed into advantages. Our country has only 4 percent of university graduates. This is a very low percentage. The majority of the people are not graduates. It doesn't matter. We will create opportunities for our youths to get access to vocational education. Take these opportunities. Parents should encourage their young people

parents wish to see their sons and daughters to become graduates. I think taking photos during the convocation ceremony is getting less and less popular. Ceremonies for awarding completion certificates for vocational education may be held. For this I could give permission so that many people will be convinced that Education of any form has its own values.

In our public gatherings, please feel free to let us know your needs. Of course, the local needs are almost all the same in many regions. Some might raise a question; if the local needs are almost all the same, why raise questions? But questions do differ. When you present your issue or your need or your difficulty, you usually differ in presentation. That's why wherever we go, we provide a



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi seen at the meeting with local people in Bamauk Township in Sagaing Region yesterday. PHOTO: MNA



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi meets with residents in Bamauk Township in Sagaing Region yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

chance to the locals to voice their hardships, expectations and worries personally. Some questions in the form of notes are already tabled, which we give priority. When we have responded to these questions, if we have time, the audience can draw votes, and a chance is given to raise a question. First, I will give answers to the questions forwarded in letters. Some questions will be dealt with by the Union government, others by the Regional Government.

Thank you."

After the speech of State Counsellor, the locals discussed construction of a 200ft-long bridge, upgrading Bamauk-Homelin road, requirement of a police outpost, stone road, a

66/KV/5 MVA sub-power station, upgrading a rural clinic to a station hospital and reconstructions of a rural health centre and a house for its midwife.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe and regional government ministers explained the short-term and long-term plans for the region.

The State Counsellor also replied to more questions and talked about fighting against narcotic drugs with the partici-

pation of local people, markets for local sugarcanes and educative programmes for sugarcane farmers.

She also instructed the local government members to accommodate the requests of local people for constructions of a sub-power station near Narmaw village and retaining wall along the road to Zalon Mountain, upgrading the road between Bamauk and Zalon Mountain, expansions of Bamauk-Indaw road and the roads in Bamauk Township, constructions of inter-village roads, appointment of medical doctors at Bamauk Township hospital and station hospitals, construction of an exhibition building for antiques donated by King Mindon, and construction of a road to Zalon Mountain from the exhibition building.

The State Counsellor and party then left Bamauk Township for Homalin by helicopters and proceeded to Kalay Township by a special flight.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin and Dr Zaw Tun)

The youths who have been trained in vocational education earn the same salary as the university graduates do. These youths can carry out the duties of the country, exert influence in economy.

lity do not belong to the university graduates only. Personally speaking, I'd like to give much support to the role of vocational education because in some developed countries in the world, vocational education is ran-

to do so. At the same time, I'd like to express my heartfelt thanks to the parents because the parents of our country have come to give more support to vocational education.

In the former times, the

Correction

Please read "In fact, many of them are holding the citizenship of foreign countries, but their loving hearts are still with us" in the second column on Page 5, and "So, I'd urge you to avoid betel" in the fifth column on Page 5 in the January 22 edition of the Global New Light of Myanmar. We regret the errors. Ed

Senior General meets Laotian Air Force Chief

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing received Colonel Khamlek Sengphachanh, Chief of Lao Air Force, at Zeyathiri Beikman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday evening.

They discussed how Myanmar and Laos are close neighbours with friendly relations and increasing cooperation between the air forces of both nations and sending friendly

visits to each other, according to news released by the Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets with Colonel Khamlek Sengphachanh, Chief of Lao Air Force, in Nay Pyi Taw.
PHOTO: C-IN-C'S OFFICE



Establishment of Credit Guarantee Corporation (CGC) and Financing for MSMEs Seminar held in Nay Pyi Taw

SEMINAR on 'Establishment of Credit Guarantee Corporation (CGC) and Financing for MSMEs' was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday focusing on SMEs and MSMEs Financing in the areas of government policies, regulation and credit services for SMEs.

It was jointly organized by Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry and the Bank of Thailand in M Gallery Hotel.

In his opening remark at the seminar, U Soe Win, Union Minister for Planning, Finance and Industry said the seminar will go deep dive for agriculture

SME financing policies and credit mechanism of Thai Credit Guarantee Corporation on its credit process, credit allocation, portfolio monitoring and credit risk management.

Myanmar private sector is dominated by micro- small- and- medium enterprises (MSMEs)

but their financing gap is large, he said, adding that the inclusive access for finance for MSMEs is essential for the economic development in Myanmar.

The government is implementing the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP) from 2018 to 2030 and its goal -3 under Pillar -2 aims to support private -sector- led growth by promoting MSMEs' development and enhancing their financial access.

Understanding the importance of MSMEs to the development of Myanmar's economy, government is preparing to establish the Credit Guarantee Corporation (CGC) specialized in credit guarantee business. The purpose of this CGC is to provide credit guarantee to the micro- small- and- medium enterprises (MSMEs) including start up SMEs. The mechanism is to share credit risks with the participating financial institu-

tions (PFIs).

Mrs Chantavarn Sucharitakul, Assistant Governor, Bank of Thailand, discusses about the current successful Credit Guarantee Scheme for SMEs, MSMEs and the development of SMEs, MSMEs and establishments of Credit Guarantee Corporation in Thailand.

She disclosed the completed information referred to Thailand Credit Guarantee Corporation (TCGC) experience for the establishment of Credit Guarantee Corporation (CGC) in Myanmar.

The participants from Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry, Office of the Union Auditor General, Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Myanmar Banks Association, the representatives from private banks and delegates and other invited guests totally around 100 participants attended this seminar.—MNA



Union Minister U Soe Win delivers the opening speech at the Seminar on 'Establishment of Credit Guarantee Corporation (CGC) and Financing for MSMEs' in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**

Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations receives Country Director of Head of Office, Myanmar, World Bank

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, U Thaung Tun received Mr Gevorg Sargsyan, Country Director and Head of World Bank Office in Myanmar at the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

They discussed matters relating to the implementation of health and education projects with the assistance of the World Bank. They also reviewed the status of project proposals on energy efficiency improvement and financing for peaceful and

prosperous communities project.

Myanmar's economy continues to show resilience despite the global slowdown. The economy grew by at 6.3 per cent in 2018/2019, supported by better performance in the manufacturing and services sectors.

Deputy Minister, U Bharat Singh and senior officials also attended the meeting.—MNA

Union Minister U Thaung Tun meets with Mr. Gevorg Sargsyan, Country Director and Head of World Bank Office in Myanmar in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTO: MNA**



Union Minister for Information encourages professional development for IPRD staff

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint held a meeting with the officers of the Information and Public Relations Department (IPRD) from the State/Regional and district levels at his ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Firstly, the Union Minister delivered a speech where he said that ever since he joined the Ministry of Information, he had urged staff of the IPRD to become responsible and accountable. He also said to make the IPRD an indispensable department for the nation and its staff to be indispensable for the department.

He said the IPRD has to provide services directly to the public and thus needs to work hard to be acknowledged and accepted by everyone. He said this is why they need to be staff that can provide services to the public in line with changing times.

The Union Minister said the IPRD leads the organizing of the Children Literary Festivals and



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint addresses the meeting with the officials of the Information and Public Relations Department in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

because of the growing interest of the festival being relevant to all spheres of society, there have been similar festivals held in each region and public participation has enabled the festival to be held at the township level as well.

He said, similarly, they had worked hard to convert the pub-

lic libraries into community centres, transforming them from merely a place to gather knowledge to a community-based site. He said they must further represent the public and implement their will and he sees that among these endeavours are the holding of public reading circles and literature talks.

The Union Minister said the IPRD has been formed from the state/regional level to the district and township level, and its staff carry the responsibility to disseminate news and information to the public, an objective of the ministry, and to gather news and information as well. He said they must work hard to rise from

simple news gatherers to outstanding media professionals.

The Union Minister said online media is proliferate in this age and thus, the IPRD staff have varied opportunities to become excellent media professionals by presenting news and information relevant to their township to the public.

He said that by continuing to uphold these responsibilities, staff will become essential to their region and department, and the IPRD will likewise become crucial for the nation.

Next, IPRD Director-General U Ye Naing explained the IPRD's processes in 2019 and the State/Regional department heads explained the advantages and disadvantages they faced in implementing their work in 2019 and their future plans.

Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun responded to them, after which the Union Minister delivered the closing speech.—MNA

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

E-IDs fundamental to e-governance: U Thein Swe

THE Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population and the Thales, a French multinational company, jointly organized an e-ID and e-passport workshop yesterday at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw.

Speaking at the workshop, Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe said his ministry, after forming a working committee, is implementing an e-ID system which would collect the biometric data of people in Myanmar and add them to a database after individual data are assigned Unique Identity (UID) numbers and registered.

The implementation of the e-ID system is a huge task and also a fundamental need for an e-government system, he said.

The governments of Myanmar and Austria are collaborating on the project, and arrangements are being made for the signing of a contract between the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population and Austria-based OeSD Company, said U Thein Swe.

The Union Minister added his ministry is going to roll out



Union Minister U Thein Swe delivers the opening speech at the e-ID and e-passport workshop at the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

the e-ID system in two years in three phases, and is also organizing meetings and workshops for the e-ID working committee and sub-committees.

Yesterday's workshop was held to discuss methodology that would help improve in the Digital S-curve, which the government

is aiming for. With the aid of the French Embassy in Myanmar, experts from French company Thales participated in the workshop and discussed matters related to the e-ID system.

"The solution from the Thales company will assist not only in national security, but also

digital economy development. In addition, it will also help accelerate digital transformation in public and private electronic service sectors, in order to establish an e-ID system," said Union Minister U Thein Swe.

Afterwards, the Union Minister urged the members

of the working committee and sub-committees to enquire about the facts that should be known and any aspects they need more clarity on as the implementation of the e-ID system will begin soon.

He called for cooperation on the e-ID project which is a priority for the government, and also expressed thanks to the French Ambassador and officials from the Thales company for helping organize the workshop.

Then, French Ambassador Mr. Christian Lechervy explained the conditions for assistance of the workshop.

Director Mr Dieter Dhondl and e-ID experts from Thales company also spoke about several matters, including their company, implementation of Myanmar's e-government system, and creating a smart nation in a rapidly changing world. They also shared the experiences of e-government service users, reviewed the e-ID proposal and ID solution of Thales company, and discussed making payments using e-IDs. — MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Responsible pet ownership a step towards curbing rabies

WHENEVER we read stories about rabies and animal bites in the media, registration of cats and dogs is the first idea that comes into our heads. Registration of cats and dogs is the first step to resolving animal control issues. At the same time, we need to raise awareness about responsible ownership of pets.

The Yangon City Development Committee Law prohibits ownership of pets, their transportation, and sale without registration in the municipal area of Yangon. Under Section 321 of the law, anyone who breaks the law would be fined K100,000-K500,000 for the first violation. Repeat offenders may be awarded a six-month prison sentence under the law.

Owners must be held responsible for dogs that exhibit dangerous behavior before problems escalate. They need to be able to ensure their dogs do not attack other pets and people.

To ensure responsible pet ownership and to prevent animals from causing a nuisance to the public, registration of stray animals is not being allowed.

Those who register their pets are obliged to follow the rules agreed upon with the YCDC. This reflects that ownership of pets comes with responsibilities, and if one cannot fulfill them, then it would be better to forego pets.

Owners must be held responsible for dogs that exhibit dangerous behavior before problems escalate. They need to be able to ensure their dogs do not attack other pets and people. We must take strong action against irresponsible pet owners, especially dog owners, when their pets hurt a person or another animal.

Animal ownership is something that affects most people in the municipality. Even if one is not an animal owner, one is still likely to interact with animals in one way or another.

We hope that the rules foster responsible pet ownership. This will support animal owners and the general public by preventing dog bites and reducing the risks associated with aggressive and vicious dogs.

Remittances are of Great Importance for Development

By Htun Tin Htun

RECOGNITION of the role and contribution of migrant workers is nowadays of crucial importance for the sustainable development of many countries in the world and there are many organizations to defend and protect the rights of the migrant workers whenever they encounter problems threatening their human lives and human dignity.

Every citizen has the right to employ and migrate for their survival and success of their lives which is short and less satisfactory due to various reasons and no migrant worker will be criticized due to their current work abroad though some are facing several problems there.

Man matters most and mindset of all the national citizens need to be changed as our people tries to change the nation into new disciplined, developed, modernized, peaceful, sustainable and equitable Democratic Federal Union and the migrant workers of the nation currently in the neighboring countries for the time being will be back one day when our dreams come true.

Illegal working is not allowed in any country and it is important for those migrant workers who entered into a country illegally and working without permission of the host countries need to find ways and means, to get help through the relevant associations and organizations to be officially recognized by the host countries in line with their legal framework.

The incumbent government plays the important role in accepting the real situation, recognizing the important role of migrant workers (appreciate that they use

their own money, effort and energy to go abroad to find their suitable jobs even though they mostly have known the sufferings and dangers of migration while they work in abroad) and in negotiating with the authorities of neighboring countries to accept the migrant workers (respect their rule of law and law and order) and in protecting the rights of migrant workers who follow and abide by the rule of law in the countries they have been working.

The number of migrant workers from the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in neighboring countries is huge (estimation has now reached approximately 5 million, it is learned) and we can calculate that if we counted three members in a family (small) and/or seven members in a family (big) the total number of dependency on the migrant workers is really very large in this regard across the country.

Authorities therefore should focus on the officially registration of migrant workers (not for criminal or other action) through the inter-Ministerial coordination and cooperation together with the people in the grassroots communities (the formation of team/task force from the village-tract/ward to collect the data, computerized registration system, what the illegal financial (hundi transfer of money) system and/or legal financial (private or public banking) system they have been using, the amount they remitted (average every month/ or how frequently they remit), the number of dependents, etc.).

National development needs the active participation of the people and the people should be aware of the importance of remittance

from the workers working abroad and the spending of the people in the nation is of paramount importance for the development of the country.

Collective and concerted efforts are needed to get the figure of (even estimate nearly) the volume of remittance in a year from the workers from the Republic of the Union of Myanmar working abroad which is equally important with the export value of goods and services to abroad.

Economy of the nation now is underestimate due to various reasons (illegal trading and marketing of goods through the illegal border gates, the remittances through

National development needs the active participation of the people and the people should be aware of the importance of remittance from the workers working abroad and the spending of the people in the nation is of paramount importance for the development of the country.

the illegal transfers, illegal black marketing of precious stones like gems-stones and jewelries, illegal teak and hardwood production and marketing, the hiding agenda for revenue retention and tax evasions etc.) and the cooperation, coordination and collaboration is needed among authorities for the interest of the nation.

Systematic approaches need to be initiated and implemented focusing on the remittance of the workers working abroad and the illegal money transfers need to be effectively deterred through the education and advocacy cam-

paigns in line with prevailing laws, rules and regulations; the owners/entrepreneurs of these illegal money transfer businesses can be discovered through the help of relevant village-tract/ward administration.

The administration also plays the critical role in this regard and the number of workers who go abroad from the relevant village/village-tract and ward/quarter in the township should be known by the administration for various purposes.

Rights and responsibilities are equally important for every citizen and the State (Government/

ment, little by little the registration work can be done and accomplished to make a comprehensive list of workers who have gone abroad and the workers as well as the people of the country will enjoy the fruits of the working abroad.

Every citizen has the right to employment and enjoyment according to the United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights and every citizen has the responsibilities to follow the law and order, rule of law and tax payment and it is the noble duty for all of us.

Attitude makes good behaviors and habits after gaining knowledge and skills and therefore the workers working abroad need education and training, awareness and advocacy on how importance of remittance (money) is crucial for their family as well as the whole nation in order to measure the right and correct progress of the socio-economic development of the country.

The families who got the re-

mittances from their family member(s) working in abroad should not hide the information and they all are responsible for dutifully disclosing and describing the real status of where are they (their family members) and what they are doing and how much they earn per month/year and how much they remit and how often?

It is very much interesting in roughly calculation that the estimate of remittance can be 5 million workers (guestimate) multiplied by US\$ 100 (average remittance per month) makes the figure US\$ 500 million a month (average) and US\$ 6000 million in a Year (average) and in terms of Myanmar Kyats it is amounted Kyats (9,000,000,000,000) and the figure will surely be increased if they are able to remit more than US\$ 100 per month.

Revenue received by the Government mainly from the Tax and Duty is of paramount importance and if we can obtain this information about remittances, the appropriate tax from the workers working abroad as well as the legal money exchange/transfer makers can be levied and collected for the purpose of building peace, escalating prosperity and enhancing the development of the nation.

Money (Capital), Land and Labor are the means of production and we, the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar badly need the Capital (financial resources) for expansion of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) representing over 90% of country's economy, a major driving force of country's economy and if the savings from the remittance can be used and invested in such expansion of businesses. Union of Myanmar will become a developed country within a few years.

People's participation is of great importance for the peace and development and the people must be encouraged and urged their money to invest more in the circulation capital of business enterprises and maintaining only not in idle in the box/cupboard or only in the immovable/movable property. ■■■

The families who got the re-

ment, little by little the registration work can be done and accomplished to make a comprehensive list of workers who have gone abroad and the workers as well as the people of the country will enjoy the fruits of the working abroad.

Good governance (transparency, accountability, participatory, inclusiveness, consensus, rule of law, efficiency/effectiveness) and clean government (right man in the right place and qualified followers and great leaders) are what the people of the Republic the Union of Myanmar looking for.

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The Primary Health Care Centres would be the first line of defense against disease and ill—health suffered by the people. The General Physicians of the PHC Centre would decide if a particular patient needs “Specialist” care. The PHC Centre, if run well, would encourage, particularly people who are “sick” to get prescriptions for needed medication from them instead of going to the medicine sellers and asking them what they should take to get relief for their ailment. That would prevent people from taking medicines, like Antibiotics and strong Analgesics which might harm them in the long run. This would be true as well of patients visiting the Public Hospitals, which may even now, be overburdened with patients not really requiring hospitalization and “Specialist” care.

With the population of Yangon increasing rapidly, and more people needing health care, the Primary Health Care Centres would serve a dire need. My apologies if what I have suggested is already being done.

With Charity to all and Malice to none.

Waiting for the Doctor

By Lokethar

Private hospitals and clinics in Yangon City provide health care services undoubtedly. But, most of them have to share the service of many “Specialist” doctors for their expertise. Timely visit of the Specialist to the private facility maybe difficult which leaves patients unwittingly waiting for the doctor, with the service staff insisting that the patients arrive early and suffer the waiting. Sometimes the waiting is for hours and not knowing the “Token Number” being served can be exasperating; More transparency is needed in the patients “Q-ing.”

As for specialist care, the practice in most countries is on reference by the Primary Health Care Services, General Physicians who transfer to specialists if needed

with the consent of the patient who by them is treated.

The frustration expressed in the poem would be well understood by those, especially the elderly and the frail, who have to visit Private Hospitals’ outpatients facilities regularly for examination, treatment or consultation of one “Specialist” or another.

I would, however, like to elaborate on Primary Health Care Services mentioned in the second stanza of the poem. The Ministry of Health has had Township Primary Medical Clinics in the various Townships in the City of Yangon since many years ago. It is the same in case of many other Cities. Besides, there are village level primary care clinics, in many cases manned by what we know as Health Assistants, Midwives and Nurses. They are providing a much needed service.

My point is this: Basic Structure of Primary Health Care has been in place in Myanmar for a long time. What I would like to suggest is that they be increased, upgraded, streamlined and manned by an adequate number of General Physicians and Nurses. These Primary Health Care Centres (I don't know if it's the right term

2020, 73rd Anniversary Union Day National Objectives

1. All ethnic nationals to preserve and protect for non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of National Unity and Perpetuation of Sovereignty.
2. To work on the peace process till success is achieved based on Union spirit.
3. To strive with the collective strength of all ethnic nationals for rule of law, a fair justice system and the security and safety of all citizens.
4. To prevent/protect all people from the danger of narcotic drugs as a national duty and thereby uplift their standard of living.
5. Emergence of a Constitution which will be in alignment with a genuine Democratic Federal Union.

Maintain unity of all ethnic brothers Remember Union Day!

Living on the same land and drinking the same water, We are all Union nationals of the same blood.



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 21st January, 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 22nd January, 2020: Rain will be isolated in Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Sagaing and Taninthayi Regions, Shan, Chin, Kayin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-6) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Upper Sagaing Region, Kachin, Shan and Chin States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22nd January, 2020: Fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22nd January, 2020: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22nd January, 2020: Generally fair weather.

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Tatmadaw releases statement on ICOE's Final Report

THE Tatmadaw released a statement on the final report of the Independent Commission of Enquiry-ICOE on 21 January, according to the Tatmadaw True News Information Team.

The statement stated that the Tatmadaw (Myanmar Defence Services) launched operations to restore regional peace and stability in the aftermath of the ARSA's attacks on police outposts and station, and one military Battalion Headquarters in northern Rakhine State in 2016 and 2017. The Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) was established by the Office of the President to investigate the subsequent of those operations.

The Final Report of the Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) was released on 21 January 2020. A considerable number of Tatmadaw members have given statements in support of the evidence collection work of the ICOE.

Since late November 2019, several weeks prior to the release of the Final Report of the ICOE, the Court-Martial concerning the Gutarpyin incident has been convened at the local Regiment in Buthitdaung Township in Northern Rakhine. This trial has been taken place on the basis of the report of a Court of Inquiry.

The Tatmadaw will not only give full consideration to the recommendations relating to the armed forces in the report of the ICOE but the Office of the Judge Advocate General will study the report in detail as well. The Tatmadaw in carrying out its duty to defend the Sovereignty of the state and protect the life and property of the local people from terrorist attacks launched by ARSA and its collaborators did so spontaneously. The action was not premeditated. The court of inquiry will continue investigations regarding any wrongdoings by those within the chain of command. It is learnt that the Office of the Judge Advocate General will take action in conformity with military justice procedures if there is credible evidence of any commission of offence by members of the Tatmadaw, said the statement.—MNA

Update reports (22 January 2020) on pneumonia caused by 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Wuhan City of People's Republic of China

1. The Ministry of Health and Sports is accelerating its responses to the outbreak of pneumonia caused by 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Wuhan City of the People's Republic of China, with strictly monitoring the symptoms of fever and flu at the State/Regional Public Health departments, airports, jetties, border crossings, especially at the border gates close to China.
2. According to the report of World Health Organization dated on 21 January 2020, a total of 278 patients were diagnosed with 2019-nCoV: 258 cases in Hubei Province, 14 from Guangdong Province, 5 from Beijing Municipality and 1 from Shanghai Municipality. Of the 278 confirmed cases, 51 cases are severely ill and 12 are in critical condition.
3. The laboratory tests outside China up to 22 January 2020 have found 2 cases in Thailand, 1 in Japan, 1 in South Korea and 1 in the United States.
4. Wuhan City reported 6 deaths up to 22 January 2020, and they were old and fragile persons with other chronic diseases.
5. The WHO is holding a meeting of International Health Regulations (IHR) Emergency Committee for Pneumonia due to the Novel Coronavirus 2019-nCoV on 22 January 2020 in accordance with the International Health Regulations (2005), whether to announce the Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) and measures for prevention and control of the disease.
6. The WHO has confirmed the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is the same virus species of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and primarily announced it is the outbreak of Limited Human-to-Human Transmission. The 2019-nCoV can be prevented as follows:
 - Stay away from the people with the symptoms of respiratory diseases such as fever, coughing, sneezing
 - Avoid going to crowded areas
 - Using clothes and facemask to cover nose and mouth during sneezing and coughing
 - Avoid touching to animals with bare hands
 - Wash hands after touching materials exposed to patients and direct contacts with the patients
 - Health workers need to follow the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) for prevention of the disease whenever they contact with the patients
 - Domestic/Foreign travelers at the international airports are to follow travel advice issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports
 - Update reports on the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) will be published on the ministry's official website (<https://www.mohs.gov.mm/>) and Myanmar CDC Facebook Page (<https://web.facebook.com/MyanmarCDC/>), and that people are suggested to follow healthcare instructions.

Ministry of Health and Sports

Sports Science and Sports Medicine Conference 2020 held in Yangon

THE Sports Science and Sports Medicine Conference 2020 was held at the Novotel Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

The conference was supervised by the Department of Sports and Physical Education of Ministry of Health and Sports and jointly organized by Myanmar Olympic Committee and Myanmar Women's Sports Federation.

First, the conference was opened by playing the national anthem, followed by playing the video message delivered by Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe.

In his video message, Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe said the purpose of organizing the conference is to improve the sports community through "Exercise is Medicine (EIM)" programme, urging 48 sports federations and Myanmar Olympic Committee in Myanmar to cooperate with the ministry in marching towards to



UPC Chairman Dr Tin Myo Win, Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thien and attendees pose for a photo at the Sports Science and Sports Medicine Conference 2020 in Yangon yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

the goal. EIM initiative is beneficial to health, and a healthy nation can be built by its people doing physical exercises.

If people are healthy, there will only a few patients in the hospitals and quality health care from the doctors and nurses can also be received as they would

have to take care of a few patients.

The aim of the conference held with the theme "Brighter Future of Myanmar Sports through Sports Sciences and Sports Medicines" is to become Myanmar sports community drug-free and stand with dignity, and conduct

health care activities with Exercise is Medicine (EIM) programme.

Afterwards, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thien delivered an opening speech, and expressed his hope that Myanmar stands with dignity in the world, developing sports science

and sports medicine after the conference.

Afterwards, Deputy Minister Dr Mya Lay Sein detailed the beginning and condition of sports science in Myanmar, and the role of sports medicine.

The conference was then opened by UPC Chairman Dr Tin Myo Win, Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thien, Deputy Minister Dr Mya Lay Sein, Permanent Secretary Dr Thet Kiang Win, Director-General U Myo Hlaing, Dr Ye Tint Lwin and international scholars who will deliver addresses the event.

UPC Chairman Dr Tin Myo Win, Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thien and party also observed the sports medicine booths displayed at the conference. In the second session, 14 academics from six countries delivered the speeches on sports science and sports medicines.—MNA (*Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun*)

Inwa locals switch to machines for producing alms bowls

LOCAL businesses in Inwa region, Tada-U Township, Kyaukse District, Mandalay Region, have begun using machines to make alms bowls instead of shaping them by hand.

“There are two ways to make alms bowls — the ancient method and the modern method. The monks prefer to use alms bowls made using traditional methods. Such bowls are made of Thitsi (*Melanorrhoea usitata*) and the good-quality ones are long-lasting. Producing alms bowls using traditional methods takes time and is expensive. Modern alms bowls are made of glue and silt. They are of low quality and thus, cheap. However, modern alms bowls are now popular in the market,” said Daw Khin Pone



An artisan worker polishing an alms bowl to smooth the surface of the object. PHOTO: THAN ZAW MIN (IPRD)

Kyi, the owner of Inwa Nay Pyi Taw alms bowl business.

“The production of

handmade alms bowls takes a month and making machine-made bowls takes just

“The production of

a week. Due to high demand in the market, manufacturers are bent upon producing

machine-made alms bowls in Inwa region,” she added.

There is less demand for handmade alms bowls in the market. Although handmade alms bowls are of high quality and long-lasting, they are rather expensive because of high labour charges. So, local people from Inwa region have now turned to machine-made alms bowls.

Lacquered alms bowls cost more than K12,000 per piece, while machine-made ones cost between K3,500 and K5,000 per piece, depending on the quality, Daw Khin Pone Kyi added.

The machine-made alms bowls are sent across the country from Inwa region. — Than Zaw Min (IPRD)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Mineral exports up \$532 mln in current fiscal

MYANMAR'S mineral exports were registered at US\$832.42 million between 1 October and 10 January in the 2019-2020 financial year, showing a remarkable increase of \$532.027 million compared to the year-ago period, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Last year, mineral exports were pegged at just \$300.39 million.

Both private and public sector mineral exports witnessed an increase in the current FY, with the private sector exports valued at \$378.39 million and public sector exports estimated at \$454 million.

Of the seven export groups, exports of agriculture, minerals, fishery, and finished industrial goods showed an increase, while the exports of livestock, forest products, and other goods declined.

Export values stood at \$998.7 million for agricultural products, \$48.32 million for livestock, \$288.2 million for fishery products, \$48.4 million for forest products, over \$2.75 billion for manufactured goods, and \$93.97 million for other goods.

The country's export sector relies more on the agriculture and manufacturing sectors. While export earnings from the

CMP (cut, make, and pack) garment businesses are rising, the country's reliance on natural resources such as natural gas and jade has been lessening.

Due to limited extraction of natural resources, exports of forest products and minerals dropped significantly in the previous year. Permits for mining blocks were suspended in 2016, but after a period of two years, Myanmar's mining sector has now been opened to local and foreign investors, according to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation. — GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Request for hiking minimum wage to K7,200 may raise employer concerns: association

By Nyein Nyein

A request for increasing the daily minimum wage to K7,200 has raised the concerns of employers as they will struggle to survive if they have to pay that rate, said Daw Khaing Khaing Nwe, Secretary of the Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association (MGMA).

The MGMA held a discussion on the publishing of a position statement on minimum wages with the members of the association on 18 January at the UMFCCI office. It is also conducting a survey so it can propose a new minimum wage rate. “We have not asked for their income statement. But, the minimum rate of K7,200 would be a 50-per cent increase against the existing rate. I think it will cause concern among employers. It will be hard for our factories to survive with that rate,” said Daw Khaing Khaing Nwe.

“The workers are asking for a pay hike due to low rates. In order to fix the daily minimum wage at K7,200, the Confederation of Trade Unions Myanmar (CTUM) has also forwarded a request to the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). Therefore, regarding minimum wages, which are set to be revised every two years, a survey is being conducted to adjust the appropriate rate for this year,” said Daw Khaing Khaing Nwe.

“Earlier, we did not have a reasonable rate to be proposed and strong data to give feedback on the set rate. This is the reason we have been preparing for it for four or five months,” said Daw Khaing Khaing Nwe.

The data collected from the questionnaire will provide a strong basis for setting the wages, said U Tun Tun, central executive member of the MGMA.

“We did not refuse to pay the set rate in the previous years. We will just discuss the most appropriate level for minimum wage with employers, workers, and the government,” said U Tun Tun.

The Minimum Wage Act 2013 was instituted on 22 March, 2013. And, the tripartite National Minimum Wage Committee (NMWC) representing employers, employees, and the government was formed on 20 July, 2013. Regardless of work location and job type, the minimum wage was fixed at K3,600 per day for 8 working hours (K450 per hour) on 28 August, 2015, which was applicable for businesses with more than 15 workers. Then, the NMWC was reformed by the Office of the President on 16 February, 2017, and the minimum wage was revised to K4,800 per day for eight working hours (K600 per hour) on 14 May, 2018. The rate did not apply to businesses with less than 10 workers.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Individual trades exceed K14.12 bln at border gates in Oct-Dec

TRADE conducted by Individual Trading Card (ITC) holders touched K14.12 billion at the border gates in the past three months of the 2019-2020 financial year, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

The Trade Department issued 23 cards in October-December, and card holders conducted trade worth K14.12 billion. While imports exceeded K12.7 billion, exports were valued at just K1.4 billion.

The Myawady gate recorded the highest trade value at K8.527 billion in the current FY, according to the Commerce Ministry. But, the figure only reflects im-

ports as individual trading card holders did not export goods through the Myawady gate in the past three months.

The value of trade carried out by individual card holders stood at K113.95 million at Tamu, over K6.11 million at Muse, K84.5 million at Tachilek, K15.19 million at Lwejel, K316 million at Kanpikete, K612.9 million at Kawthoung, K344.6 million at Reed, K2.54 billion at Mawtaung, K1.43 billion at Hteekhee, and K127.7 million at Kengtung, as per data from the Commerce Ministry.

Individual trades topped K737 million in the period spanning 21 November, 2012

to 31 March, 2013; exceeded K6.6 billion in the 2013-2014FY; crossed 9.3 billion in the 2014-2015FY; stood at over K6.4 billion in the 2015-2016FY; rose above K18.5 billion in the 2016-2017FY; touched K45.9 billion in the 2017-2018FY; K22.5 billion during the mini-budget period (April-September, 2018); and K9.38 billion in the 2018-2019FY.

The Trade Department has issued 1,710 cards so far with the aim of boosting trade. Businessmen can trade goods worth K3 million per day using ITCs, and the Trade Department has permitted trade of up to K15 million per day over five days. — Ko Htet

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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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AA sets goods-laden bus on fire; driver injured

AA set fire to a goods-laden bus on 20 January on the An-Sittwe Road in An Township. The driver of the vehicle sustained burns and has been hospitalized. Acting on information that a vehicle had been set on fire at milepost 18/4 on the An-Sittwe Road, local police inspected the site at 9 am on 20 January. The driver of the vehicle,

identified as Wai Yan Moe, 23, sustained burns on his legs and right arm, and is currently receiving treatment at the An Station Hospital. According to the investigation, the Hyundai Bus, operating between Yangon and Sittwe, left Yangon's Aungmyingalar Station at 6.30 pm on 16 January and remained in An thereafter. The

driver left An at 4 pm on 19 January with a consignment of goods. He was not accompanied by a bus conductor. The bus's engine failed after an engine oil leak at milepost 18/4, and the driver was forced to spend the night by the roadside. At 2 am on 20 January, a group of AA insurgents arrived at the spot and set the bus, in

which the driver was asleep, on fire. After 15 minutes, the driver managed to escape from the scene, though AA men fired at him. Goods worth about K25 million also caught fire along with the bus, according to the Myanmar Police. —MNA
(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Four universities to be added to YBS routes next month

By Nyein Nyein

THIRTY YBS buses will provide transportation services at four universities from next month, said U Hla Aung, Joint Secretary of the Yangon Region Transport Authority (YRTA).

The four universities are Technological University (Hlainethaya), University of Medicine 2, Dagon University, and Yangon University of Economics (Ywar Thar Gyi). The Omni Focus Company has submitted a report to the YRTA on running buses to and from these universities.

"We are preparing open spaces to accommodate buses at these universities. The related company is also preparing to start operations in February," said U Hla Aung.

Omni Focus Company has also submitted a request to the YRTA to operate shuttle bus services from Yangon airport to the highway bus terminals with 20 buses.

"Currently, the registration process of those buses is being delayed due to the register service provided by the license office. The company is making efforts to offer the services as soon as possible," according to the YRTA.

"The bus lines can help ensure the security of commuters. The YRTA is striving to provide better transportation services,"



Yangon Region Transport Authority Joint Secretary U Hla Aung talks to the press during a meeting with journalists on 22 January. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

said U Hla Aung.

At present, Omni Focus Company is providing services with YBS No. 20, 83, 98, 99, 56, and airport shuttle buses from Yangon airport to Yangon Central Railway Station.

To improve transportation services in Yangon, the Yangon Bus Service system

(YBS) was launched on 16 January, 2017, during the incumbent government's term. At present, more than 100 bus lines are running 4,500 buses on 135 routes, along with the airport shuttle and city transit. The number of daily commuters has been estimated at 1.8 million.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

NTT invests \$400 mln in submarine cable project



NTT Ltd holds a press conference in Yangon on 22 January. PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG

A PROJECT to lay an undersea Communications cable linking Singapore, Myanmar

and India (with landing points in India at Mumbai and Chennai) is being implemented, ac-

cording to a press conference held on 22 January at the Sule Shangri-La Hotel.

NTT Ltd, a top global technology services provider, has invested US\$400 million in the MIST submarine cable project.

"Implementing the project will enable faster data transfer. The construction will be part of a strategic joint venture for international submarine cables in South East Asia," said Mr. Sutas Kongdumrongkai, chief executive officer of NTT Ltd.

An 11,000-kilometer-long undersea cable will be laid as part of the \$400-million MIST project. The cable will be used in June, 2022.

NTT Ltd has opened its

Myanmar office by obtaining a licence from the Ministry of Commerce. The digital technology solutions provider will be able to meet the need to accelerate the development of information and technology in Myanmar. The Myanmar telecommunications sector is growing at 6-12 per cent annually, which is higher than the GDP growth rate in most developing Asian countries.

With the implementation of the submarine cable project, data management software technologies will help Myanmar digital businesses develop rapidly.—Myint Maung

(Translated by Hay Mar)



President Trump on Tuesday touted the US economic success as "nothing short of spectacular," saying the "American dream" is back during his address to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. PHOTO: AFP

Trump relaunches trade battle with Europe

DAVOS — US President Donald Trump relaunched a major trade offensive against Europe on Wednesday, threatening to hit the EU with damaging auto tariffs if Europeans failed to agree a long-delayed trade deal.

"The European Union is tougher to deal with than anybody. They've taken advantage of our country for many years." Trump told Fox Business News on the sidelines of the World

Economic Forum in Davos.

"Ultimately, it will be very easy because if we can't make a deal, we'll have to put 25 percent tariffs on their cars," he added.

Trump added that his attention would now turn to Europe, after he sealed a trade truce with China after several years of a trade war that destabilised the world economy.

"I wanted to wait till I finished China, to be hon-

est with you. I always like to be very transparent. I wanted to wait till I finished China. I didn't want to go with China and Europe at the same time."

'Arbitrarily putting taxes'

Trump's comments followed a warning by US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin that Washington would deliver on long threatened auto tariffs if Europeans go through with

a digital tax that mainly targets US firms.

"If people want to arbitrarily put taxes on our digital companies we will consider putting taxes arbitrarily on car companies," Mnuchin told a panel at the four-day talk-fest.

EU-US trade relations deteriorated soon after Trump came to power three years ago and declared a war against the yawning trade deficit with Europe.— AFP ■

S Korea posts lowest growth in a decade for 2019

SEOUL — South Korea's economy expanded at its slowest pace for a decade last year, hampered by prolonged trade tensions between the US and China and the sluggish semiconductor market, the central bank said Wednesday.

The world's 12th-largest economy grew 2.0 per cent in 2019, down from 2.7 per cent the previous year and the worst performance

since 2009 in the wake of the global financial crisis.

Slowing growth presents a challenge for the South, which enjoyed a decades-long boom known as the "Miracle on the Han" but where a highly educated youth now struggles to find well-paid jobs and frustration is mounting over inequality. President Moon Jae-in has been criticised for a controversial econom-

ic policy featuring public spending increases and the concept of "income-led growth", which has seen the minimum wage rise more than 30 per cent in three years. Opponents say it hurts those it is intended to help by raising employment costs. The trade-dependent economy slowed "due to factors such as a decrease in semiconductor prices", the Bank of Korea



Slowing growth presents a challenge for the South, which enjoyed a decades-long boom known as the "Miracle on the Han" but where a highly educated youth now struggles to find well-paid jobs. PHOTO: AFP

said in a statement. "While the growth of government consumption expanded,

construction and facilities investment contracted as private consumption

expenditure and export growth slowed," it said.— AFP ■

Japan keeps economic assessment for January but cuts view on investment

TOKYO — The government on Wednesday maintained its assessment of the Japanese economy after downgrading it a month earlier, but cut its views on business investment amid continued sluggish exports.

The Cabinet Office meanwhile upgraded its assessment on the Chinese economy, noting some signs of improvement in China's business

sentiment, following the so-called phase-one trade agreement between the United States and China.

"Business investment shows weakness in some components, although it is on the increase at a moderate pace," the Cabinet Office said in its monthly report for January, downgrading its evaluation on investment for the first time in eight months.

A government official

said while investments in research and development and software were solid, those in plants as well as machines and other equipment were weak as many business operators deemed they are not yet in the phase to expand.

The Cabinet Office maintained the overall economic assessment, saying the world's third-largest economy is "recovering at a moderate pace, while

weakness mainly among manufacturers is increasing further as exports are continuing in a weak tone."

In December, the government cut its overall economic view due to sluggish shipments of auto parts and production machinery to China amid trade tensions between

the United States and China. But the government said in the January report that the phase-one trade agreement has helped improve China's business sentiment, and it upgraded its evaluation on the Chinese economy for the first time in 39 months.—Kyodo News ■



Pedestrians walk in front of a board displaying the Tokyo 2020 logos for the upcoming Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games on 23 July, 2019, nearly one year before the start of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. PHOTO:AFP

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info@polaris.com.mm
Dated 23rd January 2020

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV UNI ARISE VOY.NO. (0192-599 N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on MV UNI ARISE VOY.NO. (0192-599 N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23-1-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of H.P.T 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 EVERGREEN MARINE
(S'PORE) PTE., LTD

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First woman enters Japan's submarine academy

TOKYO — The first female student was admitted to Japan's national naval submarine academy Wednesday after the end of a ban on women on the country's submarines.

Risa Takenouchi, 26, entered the academy in the western region of Hiroshima along with about 20 men, after the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force overturned previous restrictions.

"I hope not to put too much pressure on myself as the first woman," she told reporters.

"Instead I hope to work with my classmates and train to become a submarine crew member."

The navy has long only

allowed men to serve on submarines, citing the difficulty of accommodating gender privacy concerns. But it changed the rules in late 2018, after assessing that gender-specific privacy needs can be met without major submarine remodelling, a navy spokesman told AFP. "This is a part of our efforts for efficient use of human resources," he added.

Japan's military as a whole is attempting to expand the role of women in its ranks as the Self Defence Forces struggle to attract young talent, with local media saying the navy has had particular difficulty attracting candidates to serve on submarines. Japanese Prime Minister



Japan's military is attempting to expand the role of women in its ranks as the Self Defence Forces struggle to attract young talent. **PHOTO: AFP**

Shinzo Abe has long advocated for expanding the role of women in the workplace, but the coun-

try remains stubbornly low in international gender rankings. —AFP ■

NEWS In BRIEF

Cambodian opposition leader denies U.S. conspiracy in court

PHNOM PENH — Cambodian opposition leader Kem Sokha on Wednesday denied conspiring with foreign powers at his trial for alleged treason and espionage.

Speaking inside the courtroom in Phnom Penh, Kem Sokha said, "The charges against me are just (based on) an assumption. There is no evidence."

He added that a heavily edited video clip, which prosecutors have submitted as proof of his alleged collusion with the United States, distorts "some of my words and content."

Kem Sokha made the remarks on the third day of his trial at the Phnom Penh Municipal Court. Meng Sopheary, a lawyer for Kem Sokha, said her client "did not bring in foreign states or foreign agents to engage in hostilities or an invasion against Cambodia." He was president of the now-disbanded Cambodia National Rescue Party when he was arrested in September 2017 on suspicion of attempting to topple the government of Prime Minister Hun Sen. —Kyodo News ■

Afghan air raids kill 14 insurgents in southern Kandahar province

KANDAHAR — A total of 14 militants were killed as fighting planes stormed a Taliban hideout in Miwand district of the southern Kandahar province on Tuesday night, said an army statement released here on Wednesday.

Acting upon the intelligence report, the fighting planes targeted a Taliban hideout in Miwand district at 11:50 p.m. local time on Tuesday, killing 14 insurgents on the spot and wounding two others, said the statement. A weapon cache of the militants was also destroyed due to the airstrikes, the statement further said.

Taliban militants who are active in parts of Kandahar and the neighboring Helmand and Zabul provinces have yet to make comment. —Xinhua ■

Masks, disinfectants in low supply as China virus spreads

BEIJING — Pharmacies in Beijing and Shanghai were running low on surgical masks and disinfectants Wednesday as a deadly new SARS-like virus spread ahead of the busy Lunar New Year travel period.

More people than usual were seen wearing masks on the streets and several stores AFP visited had run out of stock — to the dismay of customers.

The rush to step up protective measures against the new coronavirus came after it infected more than 400 people across China.

The illness, first discovered in the central city of Wuhan, is spreading just as hundreds of



China has stepped up screening of travellers as the new virus spreads. **PHOTO: AFP**

millions of people take to packed trains, planes and buses around the country on their way to reun-

ions with family and friends for the festive period. An employee at a pharmacy in Beijing told AFP

it had run out of surgical masks two days ago.

"When it hit close to 300 cases, people realised it was serious," he said, adding that items such as thermometers had also been selling fast. "It happened so suddenly; we didn't prepare any back-up and existing stock was quickly depleted."

A batch of masks that arrived on Wednesday morning sold out in just half an hour, he added.

The store still had other masks in stock but these were not designed for surgical purposes.

At another pharmacy in Beijing, a sign on the door said they were also all out of the products. —AFP ■

N Korea bars tourists from China over virus outbreak

BEIJING — North Korean authorities on Wednesday blocked foreign tourists crossing the border from China as a preventive

measure after the outbreak of a new coronavirus in its neighbor, according to tourist companies.

Beijing-based Koryo Tours

said it was contacted by a business partner in North Korea about the measure on Tuesday, adding Pyongyang's move may

also apply to people traveling from China to North Korea on business. Meanwhile, a tourist company in Dandong, a northeastern Chinese city on the border with North Korea, said it was asked to stop day trips on Tuesday, and notified of a ban on all tourists on Wednesday. North Korea is believed to be vulnerable to infectious diseases, against a backdrop of chronic shortages of food and medical supplies triggered by economic sanctions aimed at thwarting Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic missile ambitions. The state-run Korean Central Television reported Tuesday night that North Korean authorities have started to take steps across the country in cooperation with the World Health Organization. —Kyodo News ■



Chinese tourists shop at a souvenir store run by the North Korean government in Dandong, a Chinese city on the border with North Korea, on 22 June, 2018. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

What's next in the Senate impeachment trial of President Trump

WASHINGTON — The US Senate voted along party lines on Tuesday to set the rules for President Donald Trump's historic impeachment trial.

By a 53 to 47 vote, the Republican-controlled Senate approved an "organizing resolution" for the trial proposed by Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

Before approving the rules, the Senate voted down several amendments proposed by Democrats seeking to subpoena witnesses and documents from the White House and State Department. These are the next phases in Trump's impeachment trial, just the third of a president in US history:

Opening arguments

The Democratic members of the House of Representatives chosen to present the impeachment case against Trump will deliver opening arguments to the Senate beginning on Wednesday.

They will have a total of 24 hours over three days to present their case that Trump should be impeached for abuse of power



Adam Schiff, chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, is serving as the lead House prosecutor in the Senate impeachment trial of President Donald Trump. PHOTO: AFP

and obstruction of Congress over his attempt to get Ukraine to investigate political rival Joe Biden.

McConnell had initially planned to compress the 24 hours of argument into two days, which could have led the sessions to go well past midnight. But McCon-

nell extended the time to three days under pressure from some fellow Republicans. Following the House presentation, Trump's defense team, led by White House counsel Pat Cipollone, will have 24 hours over three days to present their rebuttal.

Written questions

Following opening arguments, senators will have a total of 16 hours to ask questions in writing to House prosecutors or the White House defense team.

The written questions from the senators will be read out loud

in the chamber by US Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts, who is presiding over the trial.

Witnesses and documents

Following the question period, House prosecutors and the White House defense team will have two hours each to argue for or against subpoenaing witnesses or documents. The Senate will then vote on whether any witnesses or documents should be subpoenaed. A simple majority vote of 51 senators will decide the issue. House Democrats have said they want former National Security Advisor John Bolton and White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney and two others to testify. If there is an agreement to hear witnesses, they will first be deposed behind closed doors. The Senate will then decide whether they will be allowed to testify publicly.

Senate vote

Following the conclusion of deliberations, the Senate will vote on each of the two articles of impeachment.— AFP ■

Greece elects first woman president



The new president, until now the head of Greece's top administrative court, the Council of State, will take her oath of office on 13 March. PHOTO: AFP

ATHENS — Greece's parliament on Wednesday elected the first woman president in the country's history, a senior judge with an expertise in environmental and constitutional law.

A cross-party majority of 261 of the 294 MPs voted in favour of 63-year-old Ekaterini Sakellariou, parliament chief Costas Tassoulas said.

"Ekaterini Sakellariou has been elected president of the republic," Tassoulas said.

The new president, until now the head of Greece's top administrative court, the Council of State, will take her oath of office on 13 March, he added.

She will take over from

Prokopis Pavlopoulos, whose five-year term ends in March.

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, who personally nominated Sakellariou, called her an "outstanding" judge whose candidacy "unites all Greeks."

The daughter of a Supreme Court judge, Sakellariou completed postgraduate studies at Paris's Sorbonne university.

She was also the first woman to head the Council of State.

Although the president is nominally the head of the Greek state and commander-in-chief, the post is largely ceremonial.

Greek presidents confirm governments and laws and technically have the power to declare war, but only in conjunction with the government.

Backed by the main opposition leftist Syriza and socialist KINAL parties, Sakellariou's candidacy secured one of the highest vote counts in parliament history. Mitsotakis had emphasised that the selection breaks with tradition not only because Sakellariou is female, but also because she is not a member of a political party.— AFP ■

Crisis-hit Lebanon's new government meets

BEIRUT — Lebanon's newly-unveiled cabinet met Wednesday for the first time to start tackling the twin challenges posed by a tenacious protest movement and a nosediving economy.

Hassan Diab, who replaced Saad Hariri as prime minister, vowed to meet the demands from the street but demonstrators were unconvinced and scuffled with police overnight.

The 61-year-old academic, was thrown in at the deep end for his first experience on the political big stage and admitted

that Lebanon was experiencing "a difficult time in its history".

"Government of last resort," was the headline on the front page of Al-Akhbar, a daily newspaper close to the powerful Hezbollah movement that gave its blessing to Diab's designation last month. The Shiite group and its allies dominated the talks that produced the new government, from which outgoing premier Saad Hariri and some of his allies were absent. The millionaire was one of the symbols of the kind of hereditary and sectarian-driven

politics that protesters who have been in the streets since mid-October want to end. He and his government resigned less than two weeks into the non-sectarian protests demanding the complete overhaul of the political system and celebrating the emergence of a new national civic identity.

Protesters from across Lebanon's geographical and confessional divides had demanded a cabinet of independent technocrats as a first step to root out endemic government corruption and incompetence.— AFP ■



Lebanon's newly formed government faces the Herculean task of saving a collapsing economy while calming a three-month-old protest movement. PHOTO: AFP

Community Champions Football Clinic held in Taunggyi

A follow-up Community Champions Football Clinic was held for children yesterday at the Aye Tharyar Stadium in Taunggyi. The program was jointly organized by the Myanmar Football Federation and the Embassy of the United States.

The football program was held for the second time in Myanmar, and it was attended by Shan State Social Affairs Minister Dr MyoTun, United States Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Scot Marciel and officials from the embassy, officials from the Myanmar Football Federation led by general secretary U

KoKoThein, football coaches, and students.

At the ceremony, Shan State Social Affairs Minister Dr MyoTun gave the opening address. It was followed by speeches by Mr Scot Marciel and U KoKoThein.

U KoKoThein said that the aim of the Community Champions Football Clinic is to combat the menace of drugs through sports.

He also said the MFF supports not just football, but also social works.

He then spoke about the grassroots football clinics held annually across Myanmar, and



MFF general secretary U KoKoThein (l) presents the Myanmar team jersey to United States Ambassador Mr Scot Marciel at the follow-up Community Champions Football Clinic in Taunggyi. **PHOTO: MFF**

upcoming agendas for the football program to be held by the MFF next year in collaboration with the Embassy of the United States in Myanmar.

Next, officials opened the ceremony by kicking the balls.

Eighty students from Shan State participated in the football program.

Trainers and coaches shared football tactics and skills with them.

The MFF will send seven men and seven women coaches to the United States next month to learn about organizing football clinics, according to the MFF. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

VUC, MIU score big wins in Myanmar Futsal League



A VUC FC player (white and black) vies for the ball with On Doctor FC players (yellow) during the Week-15 match of the Myanmar Futsal League held yesterday at the National Indoor Stadium II in Yangon. **PHOTO: MFF FUTSAL**

THE Victoria University College (VUC) and Myanmar Imperial University futsal clubs claimed huge victories in the Week-15 matches of the Myanmar Futsal League held yesterday at the National Indoor Stadium II in Yangon.

The VUC Futsal Club secured an 8-1 win over On Doctor Futsal Club, while the MIU Futsal Club also bagged a big 10-2 victory over Do DoKoKo Futsal Club.

Meanwhile, other Week-15 matches of the Myanmar Futsal League saw tough competition and decisive wins.

The Myanmar Football Federation U-19 Futsal Team beat Futsal Chit Thu Futsal Club by 6-2.

Meanwhile, the GV Futsal Club defeated Dream Team Futsal Club by 5-2.

The match played between Myoma JY Futsal Club and AMM Brothers Futsal Club was an exciting one, and it finished with AMM Brothers beating Myoma JY by 3-1.

In another match, Winner Futsal Club drubbed Let Wel-Thone Nara Futsal Club by 6-1. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Myanmar National League U-21 tourney to begin on 24 January

THE Week-1 matches of the U-21 Myanmar National League will start from 24 January in Yangon, according to the Myanmar National League. Nineteen teams will participate in the tourney this year.

Yadanarbon F.C. will face Rakhine United at 3:30 pm on 24 January at the South Dagon Stadium in Yangon.

Yangon United will clash with Southern Myanmar FC at

the same time at the Yangon United Sports Complex.

University F.C. will take on Ayeyawady United at 3:30 pm on 25 January at the University Stadium in Yangon.

Myawady FC will play Chinland FC at South Dagon Stadium in Yangon at the same time.

Meanwhile, Institute of Sports and Physical Education FC will face Zwegapin United at

Padonmar Stadium in Yangon.

Mawyawadi FC will be pitted against newcomers Yaw Myay FC at Salin Stadium.

On 26 January, Shan United will take on Kachin United at Salin Stadium, and Magwe FC will fight Sagaing United at Padonmar Stadium.

Meanwhile, Chin United will play Hantharwady United at South Dagon Stadium the same day. —Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

Klopp rules out Liverpool sales in transfer window

LONDON, (United Kingdom) — Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp has no intention of allowing any of his players to leave the club in the January transfer window as he closes in on the Premier League title.

Klopp's side are 13 points clear of defending champions Manchester City with two matches in hand and look certain to be crowned English champions for the first time since 1990.

Unbeaten Liverpool face Wolves away on Thursday, seeking their 22nd win out of 23 Premier League matches this season. Sevilla and Roma have made tentative approaches regarding a loan deal for Xherdan Shaqiri, who is currently unfit, but Klopp said there was no plan for any departures.

"We had the majority of December and January with a bench full of kids," Klopp said at his pre-match press confer-



Jurgen Klopp wants to keep his entire squad together for the club's Premier League title push. **PHOTO: AFP**

ence. "Wonderful kids, but kids, so how could we think about giving a player to anybody? I don't understand that.

"It's not about Shaq, it's about pretty much everybody. We just have to keep them for sorting our situation and not the situation for different clubs."

Klopp said despite his team's rampant form, they could still get better, highlighting the need for better concentration. "There's a lot of space for improvement," he said. "What can we do in situa-

tions like that (the 2-0 win against Manchester United on Sunday)? How can we help ourselves? How lively can we stay even without creating constantly?"

"We need to find a common way in these situations to still dominate the game in a slightly different manner," he added.

Klopp hailed goalkeeper Alisson Becker, who provided an assist for Mohamed Salah in the dying seconds of the match at Anfield. The Brazil international has not conceded a goal in the Premier League since late November and Klopp said he had "exceeded expectations" since joining the club in 2018.

"As a goalkeeper we knew what we were getting," said the Liverpool boss. "OK, yes he has made steps which is normal in his life and in the training he gets. As a person he has exceeded expectations. He's an outstanding guy." —AFP ■