

Session 9

Update by ASEAN Judiciaries on Covid-19 Effects and Solutions since the 8th CACJ Meeting

CACJ Chair, My Colleague Chief Justices, Excellencies and Ladies and Gentlemen...

Thank you for giving me the chance of discussing about some updated measures taken by the Myanmar Judiciary to respond the pandemic.

The outbreak of third wave of the pandemic hit Myanmar seriously and the government announced to close public offices including courts and schools as preventive measures. These effects also had huge impact on the judiciary. Court functions were suspended when the transmission of the virus reaches its peak. The Courts had to try, as possible as they can, to be operational the court businesses in the time of strict restraints.

As for the judicial measures during this time, court services and raising public awareness are carried out by using official webpage and social media. Adjournments of the hearings are allowed to make via telephone. Cause-lists or daily warning lists are announced on official websites of the courts.

For pending cases, the accused persons in prison are remanded by the judges via video conferencing. At the Supreme Court of the Union, most of the hearings are conducted via video conferencing and judgments are passed remotely for appellate cases by using own platform.

During this time, over 700 Higher Grade Pleaders were conferred the certificates to be admitted as Advocate by the Supreme Court of the Union via video conferencing for four times of ceremony including their solemnizing.

Mr. Chair, and My Colleague Chief Justices...

While the Courts in Myanmar are trying to run the court functions under the pressure of the pandemic, we also pay attention to the safety and preventive measures for our judges, court staff and court users.

The Directives and Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Sport are circulated in timely manner. Preventive materials are installed at the court houses and compounds. We all have to strictly abide by the disciplines for prevention and control of the virus. Necessary personal hygiene measures are taken and test kits results are, if necessary, to be shown before entering the courthouses.

During the time of serious outbreak of the transmission, all judges and court staff are assigned to work with 'shift' system. At the stay-home area, they also need to strictly abide by the quarantine process in the case of travelling to and from restricted areas. To monitor and check the preventive measures, disciplinary bodies are formed in each Court. Almost all the judges and court staff are arranged to take vaccination programme.

Mr. Chair, and My Colleague Chief Justices...

I have to say that the Covid-19 creates both challenges and opportunities. The Pandemic makes us to explore the most possible ways for running our

regular functions. Nowadays the judges are more familiar with IT utilities in their daily works. Most of the regular events are not conducted physically but virtually that we have never done that before. I am convinced that we shall try to seize these opportunities for our judiciaries in the post era of Covid-19.

Thank you.