

NAY PYI TAW, 23 April – Meeting (1/2011) of the Central Committee for Progress of Border Areas and National Races took place at the President Office here at 9.30 am today, with an address by Chairman of the Central Committee President U Thein Sein.

It was attended by Vice-Chairmen of the Central Committee Vice- Presidents Thiha Thura U Tin Aung Myint Oo and Dr Sai Mauk Kham, members of the Central Committee the Commander-in-Chief and the Deputy Commanderin- Chief of Defence Services, Union ministers, chief ministers of regions and states , deputy ministers, departmental heads and officials.

First, President U Thein Sein delivered an opening speech. He said that the meeting was held for the first time in the time of the present government.

Peace and stability is essential in building a developed nation.

Without national unity, the country, where over 100 national races have been living together, cannot enjoy peace and stability. The successive governments therefore have prioritized the forging of national unity.

In the post-independence period, disunity among the national people sparked internal insurgencies in the border areas. Consequently, the nation was unable to strive for national development and its border areas lagged behind others in progress.

That was why Our Three Main National Causes: non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty was laid down as a national policy in the time of the Tatmadaw government. As the Union could break into pieces and national sovereignty could be lost if national unity broke up, the policy was laid down to carry out development tasks in the border areas where the majority of national races reside.

In May of 1989 the Central Committee for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and the Work Committee and a new ministry were formed. As a result, the tasks for progress of national races in border areas have gathered momentum.

Now, the present government has been entrusted with the duty to continue carrying out the tasks for further progress of national races in the border areas.

To perform this duty, a border affairs ministry has already been formed at the Union Level and ministries of security and border affairs at state and region levels in accord with the constitution. So for ensuring effective cooperation and coordination between the Union level and state/region level, the central committee for progress of border areas and national races will be reconstituted to be able to take effective measures.

Although land and water resources of the states and regions may vary according to their topography, measures will be taken to improve the various sectors of those regions such as economy, social affairs, education, health and transport. Only if development tasks are carried out to improve the transport, economy, health and education standards of those regions, will national consolidation be strengthened and Union Spirit be forged.

It is important that the administrative machinery of the Union Government is to reach out to the whole nation, including the far-flung border areas.

Only then can executive and judicial matters be effectively carried out and the rule of law will reign.

Sub-townships have been formed in faraway regions.

As those sub-townships are formed with the characteristics of a township, close supervision is necessary to effectively implement the tasks of the sub-townships.

Moreover, it is required to convince the people from the border areas of the government's goodwill efforts for peace and stability and development so that they can come to cooperate with the Union government and state and region governments with understanding by ignoring the spirit of relying on the other country and cultivating the spirit of cherishing their own country and regions, added the President.

Next, Secretary of the Central Committee Union Minister at the President Office U Thein Nyunt explained functions of the work committee for progress of border areas and national races.

The chief ministers of the states and regions explained their respective tasks and Vice-President Thiha Thura U Tin Aung Myint Oo, assistance to be rendered by the Union Government.

The President fulfilled the needs and made a concluding remark. He said that the Head of State himself led the Central Committee to carry out the tasks for progress for border areas and national races.

The work committee implemented the tasks in accord with the policies and work programmes laid down by the central committee. As the present meeting was held for the first time by the central committee, the tasks to be implemented need to be relevant. With the formation of ministries of security and border affairs in the states and regions, the tasks and duties must be shared by the states and regions, subcommittees and work committees. When visits are made to the states and regions, coordination should be made and work procedures, division of labour, tasks for work committees and tasks to be carried out by the regions and states are to be arranged on a cooperative basis.

As the tasks are wide and fundamental, the central committee will be taken charge by the President as Chairman and the two Vice-Presidents as Vice- Chairmen.

In the post-independence period, internal insurgencies reigned in the border areas due to disunity among the national people, localism and racism.

Today, it is time to take lesson from the past. Actually, implementation of the tasks for progress for border areas and national races today can remedy the diseases of narrow-minded attitudes like localism and racism.

So it is necessary to bridge the regions of the Union.

With roads and bridges, there will be contacts and links among the national brethren and mutual friendship and amity will be forged.

As to the transport sector, the Tatmadaw government worked around the clock to build roads and bridges. But with the passage of time, there may be some damage and difficult transport. So it is needed to repair the damaged roads and bridges. While building new roads with added momentum, it is also necessary to repair and upgrade the old ones. In building new roads, priority must be given to the ones badly in need of repair.

Likewise, for the development of border areas, encouragement must be given to the emergence of factories and workshops in addition to agricultural and livestock breeding businesses for the economic development of the local people. Measures are to be taken for development of those businesses as well as industries for food and shelter security and wealth of the local people.

When it comes to education, border areas still have a lot of illiterate people. Without literary knowledge, one cannot distinguish between right and wrong and may involve in criminal cases and drug trafficking.

Therefore, measures are to be taken to improve the knowledge of the people in border areas through education. To improve the education, measures are to be taken to open new schools, facilitate administrative matters of the education staff and improve the image of the existing schools in the border regions. Besides, it is required to train the local people to be disciplined, morally good and equipped with the spirit of cherishing their own country.

Furthermore, it is needed to develop health sector in addition to uplift of education standard and to launch health educative programmes at greater length due to poor health knowledge.

He continued that health staff members from border areas are to take care of locals all their best regionwise and townshipwise, to make field trip to secure regions and villages to some extent, to organize locals in carrying out environmental sanitation tasks, to educate the people who lack of health knowledge to broaden their horizons, and to pay high attention to development of national races in border areas. Cooperation of locals will be ensured through winning their trust. There remain a number of difficulties in some border areas till now for some do not realize government,s goodwill and aims.

If the local people realize government,s goodwill, policies and objectives and join hands together for development of their own region, all measures for progress of border areas and national races will be successful.

So, it is needed to go field trips to border areas to ensure smooth transportation and higher education and health standard. Region and State ministries of border affairs are to work unitedly in accord with procedures adopted by Central Committee for Progress of Border Areas National Races. Procedures for Regions and States will be adopted.

The meeting came to an end at 10.30 am.

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