

NLD patron Thura U Tin Oo shares views on first year term of government

Interviewers
KhinMaungHtwe, Yi YiMyint

WHEN asked for his view of the one-year term of the current government, the veteran patron of the NLD Thura U Tin Oo said yesterday that much had been achieved, and much remained to be done.

“There have been multiple accomplishments as well as many cases left to be pursued and settled. There is only so much that can be done in a year after half-a-century of military rule and a one-party system. We have to find and deal with its roots one by one and it will take time. Of course, it will encourage the people if that process can be put in a timeframe.”

“There are still armed conflicts even today, so we should learn something from this and (implement a) cease fire. It will be even better if all the armed ethnic groups were involved, and it seems it is more effective if things are carried out with faith, compassion and intimacy,” Thura U Tin Oo said when asked for his opinion of the peace process.

“Our leader has met with our ethnic brethren and zealously pursued to end armed conflicts. If trustworthy words and actions

are shown from both sides and it leads to the right path, then it will benefit the nation. The entire nation needs to foster this mindset for it to become a reality,” he added.

When asked for his view on criticism concerning the financial sector during the NLD government’s one-year term, Thura U Tin Oo replied, “We can’t expect too much to happen in one year after decades of a previous economic system. If the challenges are dealt with in a disciplined and systematic way, then it can become effective. It can be guessed that the economy has shifted to the negative after the system enforced by the Parliament-democratic era of the Union Revolutionary Council. Similarly, my understanding is that the effects of this era’s workings will only produce visible results in the years to come”.

As is the custom in politics there has been admiration as well as criticism during the NLD government’s term. When asked what message he would like to send to the critics, the veteran patron said criticism was welcome.

“There has been many criticism and complaints on a myriad



NLD patron Thura U Tin Oo. PHOTO: YE HTUT

of cases, but the bright side is that this is evidence that the public is no longer afraid to voice their opinions. A government is not free of criticism, but if we persevere step by step with the people’s will in mind, then there is no doubt challenges can be dealt away.”

Thura U Tin Oo was also asked which qualities a person should possess in order to be re-

vered, such as Bogyoke Aung San. “Good morals and honesty. Good morals attract trust and a person with questionable morals will find it extremely difficult to become a leader of the people”, he said.

“Bogyoke Aung San had a strong and calm disposition and he was well respected for his morals and the genuine sacrifice of his personal life for the good

of the nation.

He also said things that were reasonable and had the drive to make them come true, for example, history has proven his skills when he promised independence within a year. However it is a great loss that he had to die so young while serving the nation,” he added.

Of his expectations for State Counsellor DawAung San Suu Kyi, he said he had much confidence in her to continue to lead the country and its people.

“I have great trust in her. She takes accountability for her promises. She takes great risks when travelling to meet ethnic leaders for the peace process. I want to wish her good health and safety from danger”, he said.

In conclusion, the veteran NLD patron said: “May each and everyone be able to maintain generous compassion and unity of mind while peacefully striving for development of all ethnic races in the country. I hope to see something that ensures a path towards everlasting peace and unity among the ethnic races before us (the older generation) die. May everyone be at peace. That is all.”

(Unofficial translation)



Foreign and Local media observe Maungtaw POE. PHOTO: MNA

News media continues reporting in Yathedaung, Maungtaw Townships

THE group of local and foreign news media who arrived in Maungtaw township, Rakhine State to report from the scene continued their news gathering in Maungtaw and Yathedaung yesterday.

Media representatives went to port of entry (POE) in Maungtaw yesterday morning, gathering news on immigration and commodity exports.

Via the Maungtaw POE, fishing products, dried fish and mung beans have been exported to the neighboring country from December 24 until now. In March exports were valued at about US\$490,000.

Afterward, the Chief of No. (1) Border Guard Police

Headquarters Police Brig-General Thura San Lwin and U Ye Htut, chairman of Maungtaw District Management Committee, answered the questions of reporters on security, peace and stability, rule of law in the area, education, health and upgrading socio-economic life.

The journalists also reported on the plan to build 100 houses for local nationals to live, in Kyaukpandu village, Maungtaw township, under the arrangement of the Ministry of Border Affairs, and the situations of the Koetangauk police outpost in Yathedaung township, which was attacked by terrorists on October 9, 2016. —Myanmar News Agency

Philanthropic associations team up to fight drought in summer

WITH some areas across Myanmar facing drought conditions linked to the El Niño climate pattern, philanthropic associations are teaming up with donors to supply water to the people.

The Department of Meteorology and Hydrology forecasts that this summer season will be the hottest in five centuries.

Local authorities in Monywa, which is also located in the arid region, are bracing for the drought, preparing to work together with non-governmental and philanthropic organisations to overcome water shortages in Monywa District this summer, said Daw San San Myint of the Monywa Township Rural Area Development Department.

Six villages in the district are expected to face water shortages this summer, according to the department.

Meanwhile, KBZ’s Brighter Future Myanmar Foundation

announced yesterday that it will donate water bowsers to philanthropic associations located in drought-hit areas as part of efforts for aiding in the battle with drought nationwide.

A 3,000-gallon bowser which was donated by the BFM to the Sitagu International Buddhist Academy yesterday.

It was the 34th bowser donated to philanthropic associations. The bowser will be used for supplying drinking water in wards and villages in Sagaing Region this summer.

The BFM bought 44 bowsers in 2016 and supplied water to the people facing water shortages that summer.—Thura Lwin



Local residents clamour to get clean drinking water from a water bowser. PHOTO: MNA

Gon Shein Wah handicraft shop to be opened in May

A new Myanmar traditional handicraft shop, Gon Shein Wah, will be opened in May, according to U Thardu, chairman of the Myanmar Arts & Crafts Association (MACA). Gon Shein Wah will only sell the handicrafts made by the 25 members of MACA.

The Gon Shein Wah shop will be located on the second floor of Excel Tower, on Ka-

bar Aye pagoda road, in Bahan Township. The shop will exhibit 15 kinds of handicrafts created by 25 members from MACA.

“There are over 100 members in our MACA. So, we cannot open the shop in the name of Myanmar Arts & Crafts Association. Thus, we opened the shop in the name of Gon Shein Wah. Our 25 members will provide prod-

ucts made of bamboo and cane. They will also create wooden sculptures, finished wood, gold, silver and copper wares,” said U Thardu.

The Myanmar traditional handicraft shop will be opened with the aim of collecting the Myanmar traditional handicrafts for sale in one place and attracting the tourists.—200

Performances in One-Year Period

Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor which worked for Peace and the Rule of Law on a priority basis during the one-year period of the government

Article: Khin Yadanar

THE incumbent government soon after taking office enacted the law regarding the State Counsellor on 6 April 2016 and later established a new Ministry in accordance with that law: the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor.

The objectives of the Ministry are as stipulated under Article 3 of the State Counsellor Law: -

- (1) For the flourishing of multi-party democracy
- (2) For the development of a market economy
- (3) For building a Federal Union
- (4) For Peace and Development of the Union.

The Ministry is a government body which provides assistance in accordance with the powers entrusted under the State Counsellor Law to implement the four tasks of the State Counsellor and to act as a coordinator in implementing the policies laid down by the State Counsellor. So the Ministry's functions are related to the works of the State Counsellor.

"In fact, the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor is a Ministry providing necessary assistance to the State Counsellor and acting as a coordinator in implementing the policies adopted by the State Counsellor. So its functions are related to the work of the State Counsellor. During the one-year period of the government in office, the Ministry has prioritized the national reconciliation and peace process, and peace, stability and progress of the Rakhine State. It is also implementing the important sectors of the State including the work of releasing prisoners of conscience and eradicating corruption under the policy guidance laid down by the State

Counsellor," said Union Minister of the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe.

The Ministry plays the main supporting role in the realization of the following goals - peace, economic prosperity and flourishing of democracy or in other words Peace-Prosperity-Democracy-PPD -- of the new government. The three goals have correlation with each other. Peace in the country ensures a robust economy of the State and the two provides support for the building of a Federal Democratic Union. It is learnt that the government in implementing the above-mentioned three goals does not implement the goals separately but looks at the process holistically and implements comprehensively.

Preparing the Institutions for the Peace Process

"How is the incumbent government going to continue implementing the peace process?" Not only the people of Myanmar but the international community also wants to know the answer to this question. The Ministry has taken the responsibility to ensure continuity of the entire peace process, creation of a process which is pragmatic and has good potential, and agreed and acceptable to all stakeholders. It is learnt that in order to do this the State Counsellor held a meeting with people who had actively participated in the peace process, and also held talks with representatives of armed ethnic groups.

"In accordance with the aspirations of the State Counsellor, the peace process aims at achieving national reconciliation apart from restoring peace in a holistic way. The Ministry on its



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is seen during her visit to Japan in 2016. PHOTO: REUTERS

part has been working for the continuity of the entire peace process, creation of a process which is pragmatic and has good potential, and agreed and acceptable to all stakeholders," explained the Union Minister.

The Ministry has been meeting with all the participants of the peace process, holding bilateral talks with them and taking suggestions from them. As an initial step in creating an array of institutional platforms for the realization of the three goals, the State Counsellor founded the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre- NRPC on 11 July 2016. NRPC in fact is the first step towards the whole process of achieving national reconciliation and peace in the Union.

In establishing NRPC, not only peace in the Union but also national reconciliation was taken into consideration. In reforming the NRPC, the headquarters is kept in Nay Pyi Taw while the former Myanmar Peace Centre has been turned into its Yangon branch. Efforts were made to house the NRPC headquarters at a building in the sports village formally earmarked as the sports in Nay Pyi Taw and this building was inaugurated on 1 January 2017, according to the initial plan. The State Counsellor graced the occasion by planting an Olive Tree to mark the inauguration of the NRPC.

On the other hand, the Ministry formed the Preparatory Committee of the Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panglong and made changes in the event planning for the continued progress of the peace process. Peace talks and institutional changes had to be conducted simultaneously. In order to ensure

that the concept of the 21st Century Panglong is in conformity with the existing peace process, the State Counsellor met with the leaders of the armed ethnic groups who were the signatories to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement - NCA and chose the name of the future conference as "the Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panglong." A meeting was held with the Joint Monitoring Committee-JMC formed according to NCA and the continuation of the JMC functions was approved.

During the one-year period of the government in office, Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor prioritized the national reconciliation and peace process, and peace, stability and progress of the Rakhine State.

As the NCA involves the two important major tasks - to maintain the ceasefire and to hold the political dialogues - efforts were made to effectively maintain the ceasefire and strengthen the JMC functions. In this way disagreements among the NCA signatories has been reduced and ceasefire agreement has been cemented through the effective maintenance of the ceasefire and strengthening of the JMC functions.

Dual track approach for the all-inclusiveness of the peace process

"In implementing the peace process through the Dual Track, we are holding peace talks with the NCA signatories as well as the non-signatories to the NCA," said the Union Minister.

The political dialogue with the NCA signatories is centred mainly on the amendment of the framework of the political dialogue. At the same time, discussions were also made with the respective persons for holding peace talks with the non-signatories. In this regard, the Dual Track process could be launched in a simultaneous manner. In order to implement the above-mentioned tasks the "Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panglong" Preparatory Committee was formed with subcommittee-1 and subcommittee-2.

The subcommittee-1 deals with the NCA signatories and the subcommittee-2 with the non-signatories. As a whole, the two subcommittees have reached the stage of reviewing the framework of the political dialogue in seeking means for a dialogue in which both the NCA signatories and the non-signatories can participate.

In addition, the Peace Commission chaired by Dr. Tin Myo Win was formed to realize the policies adopted by the NRPC, hold talks with armed ethnic groups at the Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panglong and coordinate with NRPC for internal peace and progress.

The Peace Commission held talks with NCA signatories and non-signatories, concentrating on the participation of the non-signatory armed ethnic groups in the peace process.

SEE PAGE 6 >>

Maungtaw Investigation Commission holds meeting 7/2017

THE Maungtaw Investigation Commission held its meeting 7/2017 at the meeting hall of the President's Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the meeting, Chairman of the Investigation Commission Vice President U Myint Swe said regarding the allegations of the UN Human Rights Commission, the commission made field trips to Maungtaw region to probe into the incidents and went to Bangladesh to interview the refugees who are said to have fled Myanmar due to violent attacks in Maungtaw region.

Concerning the UN Human Rights Commission's accusations, the Vice President said that the Tatmadaw investigation team led by Inspector-General Lt-Gen Aye Win and Myanmar Police Force investigation team headed by Police Brig-Gen Win Tun went to the Maungtaw region to investigate the incidents in detail. He continued that the aforesaid investigation teams made field trips to systematically probe into the case in accord with rules and regulations and their detailed reports were submitted to the Vice President. The commission mem-



Vice President U Myint Swe addresses the Maungtaw Investigation Commission meeting in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: MNA

bers are to give their suggestions freely as it is important to review all findings in the commission's report.

The Commission Secretary U Zaw Myint Pe clarified mat-

ters on fact-findings mission to Bangladesh and compiling final report and a brief report. Then, the commission members U Aung Kyi, Dr Aung Tun Thet, U Nyunt Shwe, Dr Hla Maung,

U Saw Thalay Saw, Daw Kyein Ngai Man, U Thar Nyan, Chief of Myanmar Police Force Police Maj-Gen Zaw Win and U Aung Naing took part in the discussions.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Old bullets found in Aungtharya Village, Maungtaw

AROUND 385 old bullets were dug up in Aungtharya Village, Maungtaw District on 30 and 31 March.

On the evening of 30 March, Aungtharya Village residents Maung Nay Myo Htun and Maung Kyaw Htay Aung were searching for a location to set up a bird trap when they discovered 310 bullets in what they assumed was a bird's nest on the

side of a hill to the south of the village.

Afterwards on the morning 31 March, they continued digging up the same area and discovered 75 more old bullets.

The bullets are thought to be Point-303 rifle bullets used back in 1942. The bullets have been sent to Arms and Ammunition Troop for careful inspection.—*Ramanya, Tin Soe*



Hundreds of old bullets dug up near Aungtharya Village, Maungtaw. PHOTO: MNA

Man found dead in Buthidaung Tsp

THE body of a man was found in Kalapanzan Creek of Buthidaung Township on Thursday morning.

After an investigation by the local police force, it was learnt that the identity of the man was Shiveli, 53, who was from Myoma Ward, Buthidaung Township. His body was found dead in the middle of Kalapanzan Creek in Derpaing village tract with stab

wounds and incision wounds.

It was reported that Shiveli's wife filed a lawsuit after he went missing while visiting the house of his mother-in-law in the village of Mikyaung Kaungswa village since 21 March.

Local police station have already filed a lawsuit on the murder case for the man.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Correction

A story on page four of Wednesday's Global New Light of Myanmar on Grab, the new rideshare service, contained inaccuracies. Grab has launched the beta trial of its GrabTaxi service in Yangon. The company is running an ongoing beta trial in Myanmar's largest city but did not launch service on 1 April.

Myanma Tatmadaw's military uniforms seized in Bangladesh

MILITARY uniforms of the Myanmar army were seized in Teknaf, Bangladesh, on Wednesday, according to the State Counsellor's Office Information Committee.

It is reported that 402 military uniforms, 227 insignia, 186 military rucksacks, 18 military vests, 50 military helmets, 30 military rain coats, 188 pairs of military boots and 230 longyi were seized by Bangladeshi cus-

tomers officers after the search of a motor boat in Keiyaung Tawle port on Wednesday evening.

It was found that the military items were imported by a young man to Rahman Trading Company Limited in Chittagong. The man was arrested by Bangladeshi authorities at 8 pm Wednesday in Teknaf.

The company is owned by Nuru Arlaung Sedeki, who nor-

mally imports dry food stuffs from Myanmar.

The State Counsellor Office's Information Team said that the motive behind the seizure is that the violent attackers can disguise themselves as the members of the Myanmar Army and can rob and set fire to villages and violate human rights in attempts to disgrace the Myanmar army.—*Myanmar News Agency*

Senior General opens new jetty in Coco Island

THE Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party arrived at Coco Island on Thursday morning and attended a ceremony that formally opened a new jetty.

The commander-in-chief also inspected the work progress for the construction of an earthen road.

The Senior General and entourage additionally observed manufacturing of home decoration items made of coconut products at Coco Island Naval Command, met with government employees, town elders and locals at the town hall and presented cash assistance and gifts to them. They then paid homage to the Zina Marazein Pagoda and donated offertories to the abbot of Sasana Mandaing monastery.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing also attended the opening ceremony of the Coco Island jetty yesterday morning. At the ceremony, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Tin Aung San, Quarter-

master-General Lt-Gen Nyo Saw and Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Myo Zaw Thein formally opened the jetty.

Afterward, they were briefed about construction of the jetty by Dr Nyein Zin Latt, a lecturer from Myanmar Maritime University and an official handed over documents related to the jetty to

the naval commander. The Senior General and party released turtles into the sea to commemorate the opening of the jetty. The new jetty is expected to contribute to development of the Coco Island and will help improve transportation and the flow of commodities.—*Myanmar News Agency*



A naval ship shoots congratulatory fire to celebrate new jetty in Coco Island. PHOTO: MNA

Yangon Book Plaza products mostly bought by tourists

THE Yangon Book Plaza opened on the fifth floor of Iron Bazaar in Lanmadaw Township and is doing well because books are being bought mostly by tourists, according to an official from Plaza administration.

Yangon Book Plaza is the biggest book shop in Myanmar and is open from 10 am to 9 pm daily. The plaza houses 22 bookshops opened by various publishing houses.

The plaza not only sells publications but also provides recreation

places where books can be read free of charge. The books from Yangon Book Plaza are selling at a fair price. From time to time, the plaza also hosts book festivals and related events as well as literature talks.—200