

## Rakhine Relief-to-Recovery-to-Development Workshop launched

TO draw out future tasks for the development of Rakhine State, the Rakhine Relief-to-Recovery-to-Development Workshop began yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw, with international experts experienced in solving conflicts, such as the Rakhine issue, sharing their experiences.

In his opening address of the two-day workshop, Depu-

ty Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Soe Aung expressed hope that local and foreign partnership organisations would understand the government's efforts for solving the Rakhine State issue, urging them to actively and openly discuss the issue to arrive at a good outcome.

Following his address, Dr. Aung Tun Thet, Chief Coordi-

nator of the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine (UEHRD), introduced the UEHRD and answered questions raised by the participants of the workshop.

Thomas Hockley of the European Union, Peter Bachelon of the United Nations Development Programme and Sean Bradley of the World Bank discussed subjects related to assessment, management and financial sectors.

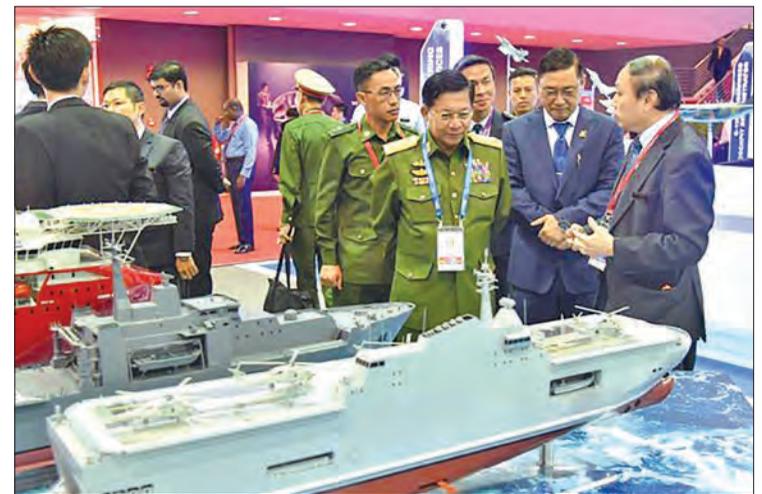
The union government announced last month its readiness for repatriation of returnees from Bangladesh under the agreement between Myanmar and Bangladesh.

The Physical Arrangement for Repatriation of Displaced Myanmar Residents from Bangladesh under the Return of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State was signed by the two countries on 16 January.

Myanmar has set up two reception camps and one transit camp on its side of the border. —Myanmar News Agency ■



The Rakhine Relief-to-Recovery-to-Development Workshop being held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits the Singapore Airshow 2018 at Changi Exhibition Centre yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

## Senior General visits Singapore Airshow 2018

At the invitation of Lt. Gen. Perry Lim, Chief of Defence Force of the Singaporean Armed Forces, a Tatmadaw delegation, led by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, arrived in Singapore on 6 February to attend the Singapore Airshow 2018.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his delegation visited the Singapore Airshow 2018 at Changi Exhibition Centre yesterday morning.

The Senior General met

with Lt. Gen. Perry Lim at the exhibition centre.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to boosting the friendship between the two armed forces, exchange of visits between the naval forces, and cooperation in military medicine between the two countries.

Later, the Senior General and his delegation had a look at the military aircraft, helicopters and military cargo aircraft on display at the aviation exhibition. —Myanmar News Agency ■

# ASEAN expresses support for Myanmar

### FROM PAGE-1

humanitarian assistance to all displaced inhabitants without discrimination. ASEAN also welcomed the Arrangement on Return of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State between Myanmar and Bangladesh signed on 23 November 2017, as well as the establishment of the Advisory Board for the implementation of the recommendations on Rakhine State. The ASEAN Foreign Ministers, among others, expressed their support to the Myanmar Government in its efforts to bring peace, stability, rule of law and to promote harmony and reconciliation among the various communities, as well as sustainable and equitable development in Rakhine State.

Union Minister U Kyaw Tin attended the working dinner hosted by Foreign Minister of Singapore Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan on Monday and ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat held on Tuesday together with other ASEAN Foreign Ministers.

At the Retreat, the ministers discussed Singapore's initiative



Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin and other ASEAN Foreign Ministers pose for a documentary photo at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat in Singapore on Tuesday. **PHOTO: MNA**

under the theme of "Resilience and Innovation" as well as priorities of Singapore's ASEAN chairmanship including its proposal of ASEAN Leaders' Vision for the resilient and innovative ASEAN, creation of ASEAN Smart Cit-

ies Network, and strengthening of Cyber Security cooperation among ASEAN member states. They also discussed follow up to the 31<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summit and exchange views on regional and international issues of common

interest and concern.

Union Minister U Kyaw Tin also briefed the ASEAN Foreign Ministers in an informal setting on the recent developments in Rakhine State and Myanmar's efforts in preparation for the

return of the displaced people.

In his briefing, Union Minister U Kyaw Tin stressed that the current humanitarian situation in Rakhine State was caused by brutal terrorist attacks against 30 police outposts, not by clashes between the two communities. The issue of Rakhine was not a religious one, but a political and economic issue involving illegal migration, rule of law, resources competition and poverty.

At a time when the Myanmar government has been exerting serious efforts to resolve the issue, the ARSA terrorist group has worsened the situation through provocative acts and disinformation campaign, the minister said. The Union Minister emphasised the need for ASEAN to assist Myanmar in enhancing humanitarian assistance and in implementation of Dr. Kofi Annan Commission's recommendations in the needed areas and not to support actions that could inflame the already complex situation and further polarise the two communities. —Myanmar News Agency ■

## Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin receives Singaporean Ambassador

UNION Minister for Ethnic Affairs Nai Thet Lwin received Singaporean Ambassador to Myanmar Ms Vanessa Elisabeth Chan Yuen Ying at the guest hall of the Ministry yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, the Union Minister discussed matters on preserving and promoting the literature of ethnics, protecting

ethnic rights and supporting the peace process. He also said the government is making efforts to discuss the peace process and the repatriation process in Myanmar. He added that one could witness the true situation of Rakhine state.

The Singaporean Ambassador expressed happiness on hear-

ing about the concerted efforts of the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs, and called for more such collaborative efforts in the future.

The Singaporean Ambassador also invited the ministry to attend the Singapore-Myanmar Vocational Institute (SMVTI) in Yangon. —Myanmar News Agency ■



Union Minister Nai Thet Lwin meets with Singaporean Ambassador Ms Vanessa Elisabeth Chan Yuen Ying. PHOTO: MNA

## Japan is a longtime friend of Myanmar and is determined to provide full-fledged support for Myanmar's democratic nation building: Mr. Kentaro Sonoura

The following is an interview with Mr. Kentaro Sonoura, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Japan (National Security) who is visiting Myanmar on February 7 and 8.

Q: What sort of cooperation is Japan providing to Myanmar?

A: Japan is supporting consolidation of democracy, national reconciliation and economic development of Myanmar; regarding it as its long-standing friend, by bringing together its public and private sectors. We are aiming to provide support, focusing on the three areas; Yangon's urban development; transportation; and electricity so that Myanmar people can actually feel a sense of improvements of their living conditions by 2020.

It is important to improve connectivity within the country as well as with neighboring countries for realizing economic development. First, Japan is carrying out rehabilitation of the Yangon Circular Railway and will start the preparatory surveys for construction of the North-South and East-West Urban Railway Lines in order to improve the efficiency of transport and logistics around Yangon. We will also implement rehabilitation of the Yangon-Mandalay Railway and the improvement of the inland water transportation between Yangon and Mandalay, as to enhance the connectivity between rural areas and urban areas as well as overseas. Furthermore, we have provided support for introducing an electronic customs system and are assisting construction of the East-West Economic Corridor connecting the border with Thailand to Yangon, in order to facilitate logistics in the entire Mekong region, including Myanmar. It is expected that Thilawa Special Economic Zone, the symbol of the cooperation between the public and private sectors of Japan and Myanmar, will play an important role as a trigger for economic



development by connecting Myanmar's economy with the world economy, in addition to inviting foreign investment, fostering industries and creating jobs.

Furthermore, achieving national reconciliation is an indispensable factor for consolidating Myanmar's development and ensuring regional stability. Japan is supporting Myanmar's peace process, together with Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for National Reconciliation in Myanmar, through facilitating dialogue between the stakeholders involved as well as providing reconstruction and development assistance to the areas, including Kayin State, where ceasefire has been achieved.

Tatmadaw has an important role in consolidation of democracy in Myanmar. Japan is conducting defense cooperation and exchange through accepting cadets from Tatmadaw in the National Defense Academy of Japan, exchanging officers and supporting capacity building for various areas including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR), hoping that Tatmadaw can draw the experiences from the Japan Self-Defense Forces positioned in our democratic system.

During my visit to Myanmar,

We understand that consolidation of democracy and sustenance of development in Myanmar is directly linked to stability and prosperity of the entire Indo-Pacific region

I will attend the opening ceremony of the HA/DR seminar held by Ministry of Defense of Japan and the Japan Self-Defense Forces for Tatmadaw today.

Q: What sort of cooperation is Japan carrying out in the Indo-Pacific region as a whole?

A: Japan has been contributing to the regional stability and prosperity through utilizing various means including Official Development Assistance (ODA). We regard that the Indo-Pacific region, including the ASEAN, has big populations and an economic dynamism and is the core of the world's vitality. Japan is promoting the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," in order to maintain the free and open Indo-Pacific, based on the rule of law, the international public goods bringing stability and prosperity in the whole region.

This strategy consists of the following three pillars: (i) promoting and establishing freedom of navigation and the rule of law (ii) pursuing economic prosperity by improving connectivity with quality infrastructure development in accordance with international standards and (iii) securing peace and stability through capacity-building in the areas of

maritime law enforcement and disaster prevention.

Especially, Japan has made efforts improve, not only physical connectivity including ports, railways and roads, but also human connectivity and system connectivity, in cooperation with Indo-Pacific nations, including Myanmar. In the context of Japan-Mekong cooperation, we have discussed priority projects and issues and contributed to project formation through the Connectivity Initiative. For developing infrastructure, we will give due consideration to profitability and safety as well as social and environmental impacts and focus on creating employment and building capacities through implementing projects. Furthermore, in addition to ensuring the coherence to the recipient country's financial soundness and the economic development strategy, we are promoting the development of "quality infrastructure" in accordance with the international standards for ensuring freedom of access by those in need of infrastructure. We believe that several projects involved by Japan, such as the abovementioned Thilawa Special Economic Zone and the East-West Economic Corridor, can generate a sense of improvement among Myanmar people.

Japan has also been im-

plementing capacity building assistance for maritime law enforcement, disaster prevention and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR), in order to ensure safety of maritime transportation routes and to maintain maritime order based on rule of law.

Q: How is Myanmar positioned in the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy"?

A: Japan is a longtime friend of Myanmar and is determined to provide full-fledged support for Myanmar's democratic nation building, as Myanmar went through a historical turning point two years ago. We understand that consolidation of democracy and sustenance of development in Myanmar is directly linked to stability and prosperity of the entire Indo-Pacific region, including the Mekong and ASEAN regions.

Japan also regards Myanmar, located in the conjunction between Southeast Asia and South Asia, as a key in promoting the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy". Therefore, Myanmar is an important country for Japan. We will carry out cooperation in line with the abovementioned three pillars in order that this strategy can fully contribute to Myanmar's development.

We believe that our cooperation can facilitate and invigorate the comings and goings of people and things along the route leading to India, the Middle East and Africa in the westward, and Mekong countries, South China Sea and Pacific in the eastward, and promote economic development of the whole region. Japan highly values the possibility of Myanmar's growth and is committed to advance along with Myanmar. —News Team ■