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History will be the judge

Rebuttal Statement at the Interactive Dialogue on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar during 37th Session of Human Rights Council

AN interactive dialogue on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar was convened on Monday during the ongoing 37th Session of the Human Rights Council being held at the United Nations Office in Geneva from 26 February to 23 March 2018.

During the dialogue, Ms. Yanghee Lee, the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar presented her report followed by the oral report of the Chair of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) on Myanmar to the Human Rights Council. **SEE PAGE-3**



Mothers gather to receive financial aid to be used for supplementary nutrition for their children in Maungtaw, Rakhine State, yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

Maungtaw mothers, infants receive aid

By Kyaw Thu Win, Aye Min Thu

MAWYAWADI Village, Shwezar Village, and Hindu Aid Camp (2) in Maungtaw, Maungtaw Township held supplementary nutrition programmes for mothers and infants under 5 years, and financial support programmes for mothers and infants under 2 years of age.

Dr. Thar Tun Kyaw, Director-General of the Public Health Department and Medical Treatment Department, and Dr. San San Aye, Director-General of Social Welfare Department conferred Ks90,000 to each of the 122 pregnant mothers present. **SEE PAGE-7**



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Rebuttal Statement at the Interactive Dialogue on the Situation of Human Rights . . .

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After that, U Htin Lynn, Permanent Representative of Myanmar made a rebuttal statement. In his statement, the Permanent Representative said that only two years in office, the present democratic government has been able to make progress in peace process and laying democratic foundations. Implementation of the recommendations of Advisory Commission on Rakhine State for a sustainable solution is also in progress.

He mentioned that while such efforts are well on track, the terrorist attacks in the Rakhine State in August 2017 have abruptly changed the state of affairs in Rakhine State. Restoring law and order to provide security for all is necessitated while the ARSA terrorist attacks and their instigation have impacted on the population. Daily lives and future of all ethnic groups: Rakhine, Daing-net, Mro, Thet, Mramagyi and people belonging to Buddhist, Muslim and Hindu faiths have been adversely affected. It has also led to displacement of people internally in Rakhine State and beyond the border. He highlighted that more of them and their villages still remain intact in Myanmar as witnessed by the diplomatic corps and UN entities in their recent visits. However, less-than-objective approach by some have brought a paradigm shift in the perception and attitude towards Myanmar. Ultimately, history will be the judge.

The Permanent Representative further stressed that State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has been striving for freedom, democracy and human rights in Myanmar even before she assumed the responsibility of state. It is unreasonable to assert that Myanmar leadership whose mission has human rights at its core remains indifferent to the allegations of grave human rights violations. The leadership and the government shall never tolerate such crimes. Myanmar is ready to take action where there is clear evidence. Legal action has already been taken against military and police officers and civilians who were found to be in breach of standard operating procedures and rules of engagement following the Inn Din incident. This action is a positive step forward in accountability.

He added Myanmar is prepared to work with any arrangement or mechanism which is in line with its national circumstances, and situation on the ground. However, it must be helpful to finding a lasting solution, not to exacerbate the challenges. Myanmar has been receiving the visits of successive special rapporteurs since 1992. Myanmar has also facilitated six visits of Professor Yanghee Lee to the country. Despite the fullest possible cooperation extended to her, the end-of-mission statement of last July lacks impartiality and objectivity while highlighting sweeping allegations and unverified information. It also failed to mention the terrorist attacks and clarifications provided by the authorities. Her non-compliance with the code of conduct as stipulated in Resolution A/HRC/RES/5/2 has caused public resentment against her. The issue was heatedly debated in Parliament (the Phythu Hluttaw-House of Representatives) on 25 July 2017. Thus, the people and government of Myanmar came to a conclusion that it would no longer be productive to continue to extend cooperation to Ms. Yanghee Lee. In Myanmar's view, there is a clear need to replace her. Meanwhile, the government of Myanmar is ready to extend our cooperation with the mandate of a Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar.

He also explained that in preparing facilities for the repatriation, bulldozing the ground is part of the process. Whatever government does should not be seen with pre-conceived mind and doubtful eyes. Myanmar is prepared to continue to cooperate with the international community and the United Nations. Myanmar is engaging with UNDP and UNHCR with regard to repatriation, resettlement and development in Rakhine State. Myanmar has received a concept note and shall be working further on it. Myanmar hopes that the international community will constructively contribute to our efforts to advance democratization process and to promote and protect human rights in line with the country's circumstances and needs. ■

President U Htin Kyaw receives outgoing Malaysian Ambassador



President U Htin Kyaw bids farewell to outgoing Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar Mohd Haniff Bin Abd Rahman at the guest hall of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

PRESIDENT U Htin Kyaw received outgoing Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Mohd Haniff Bin Abd Rahman, who completed his

tour of duty in Myanmar, at the Presidential Palace yesterday afternoon.

Present on the occasion were Union Minister for Inter-

national Cooperation U Kyaw Tin, Permanent Secretary U Khin Latt from the Office of the President and officials. —Myanmar News Agency ■

30th anniversary memorial for Ko Phone Maw, Ko Soe Naing

By Zaw Gyi

The 30th anniversary memorial for Ko Phone Maw and Ko Soe Naing was held at Yangon Institute of Technology in Insein Township, Yangon, yesterday morning.

At 8.30 am in the blood-stained star market place where Ko Phone Maw fell, representatives of the Students' Union, Yangon Institute of Technology

students, former students, families of the deceased and members of political organisations laid a wreath, paid their respects, offered "soon" and offerings to the 30 Sanghas, and then took the five precepts.

The event was led by the Yangon Technology Institute students' union to create an enthusiasm among the youth towards establishing a peaceful country and to remember a true

historical event.

The previous events were led by a committee of former students, and it was held for the first time in the compound of Yangon Institute of Technology on the 29th anniversary. The Yangon Institute of Technology students' union is holding the event for the first time.

U Ko Ko Gyi, who established a political party, spoke about his experience of meeting comrades who fought together 30 years ago. This is an event where the historical baton of the fight against injustice has been passed on to the new generation students, he said. To prevent such a tragic incident from occurring again, a government that can guarantee democracy and a democratic order needs to be established, said U Ko Ko Gyi.

A photographic record of the event, as described in the union news journals and the foreign media at the time, was displayed during the ceremony. ■



People pay tribute to the fallen students in 1988. **PHOTO: ZAW GYI**

History, not UN, will be final judge on Rakhine

History, the Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations said Monday, will be the ultimate judge of what has occurred in Rakhine State.

U Htin Lynn, the Permanent Representative of Myanmar, said during the Interactive Dialogue on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar that it is “unreasonable to assert that Myanmar leadership, whose mission has human rights at its core, remains indifferent to the allegations of grave human rights violations”.

The dialogue was part of the 37th Session of the Human Rights Council being held in Geneva from 26 February to 23 March. During the dialogue, Ms. Yanghee Lee, the Special Rapporteur on

the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar, presented her report, followed by the oral report of the Chair of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission (IFFM) on Myanmar to the Human Rights Council.

Ms. Lee said actions against members of the Muslim community “bear the hallmarks of genocide”. Marzuki Darusman, chairman of a fact-finding mission on Myanmar, said: “All the information collected by the Fact-Finding Mission so far further points to violence of an extremely cruel nature, including against women”.

In a rebuttal, U Htin Lynn rejected the allegations and called for Ms. Lee to be replaced.

Myanmar has received special rapporteurs since 1992, and has facilitated six visits of Ms. Lee to Myanmar.

“The leadership and the government shall never tolerate such crimes. Myanmar is ready to take action when there is clear evidence. Legal action has already been taken against military and police officers and civilians who were found to be in breach of standard operating procedures and rules of engagement following the Inn Din incident”, he said.

U Htin Lynn said the terrorist attacks by the ARSA terrorist group in Rakhine State in August 2017 abruptly changed the state of affairs in northern Rakhine

and made restoration of law and order a priority, which has led to the displacement of people internally in Rakhine State and across the border. The Permanent Representative noted that many ethnic groups, including Rakhine, Daing-net,

Mro, Thet, Mramagyi and those belonging to Buddhist, Muslim and Hindu faiths have remained in their villages, as witnessed by members of the diplomatic corps and UN entities in their recent visits.

But over the past year or so, a paradigm shift has occurred in the perception and attitude toward Myanmar, U Htin Lynn said, the latest of which manifested itself in reports about mil-

itary installations being built on sites that once were the homes of members of the Muslim community. The Permanent Representative explained that in preparing facilities for repatriation of refugees, bulldozing the ground and building new structures is part of the process.

“What the government does should not be viewed with a pre-conceived mind and doubtful eyes”, U Htin Lynn said. “Myanmar hopes the the international community will constructively contribute to our efforts to advance the democratisation process and promote and protect human rights in line with the country’s circumstances and needs”.—GNLM

Maungtaw mothers, infants receive aid

FROM PAGE-1

Dr. Thar Tun Kyaw spoke at the event and said that their health staffs routinely carry out supplementation programmes for mothers and infants in Mawyawadi and Shwezar villages. They carry out routine measurements for height and weight and see if the children are growing in proportion to their age. They mark the children’s arm with different colors to indicate their nutritional intake. A green mark means the child is receiving sufficient nutrition, yellow means the child is receiving only minimal nutrition, and red means the child is lacking proper nutrition and needs immediate support.

Dr. Thar Tun Kyaw said that

if mothers received healthcare during pregnancy and followed nutritional guidelines then their babies will grow up healthy. He said that they provide 200,000 units of Vitamin A and oral medicine for ringworm once every six months. They also provide workshops on nutrition in Buthidaung and Maungtaw and provide counseling to parents of children less than 2 years of age concerning their diet.

Dr. San San Aye said these supplementation programs and financial support programmes are done under the social welfare programme. Since the new government took office, the Ministry for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement has been working to ensure every person receives

proper social welfare. The overall strategic plan includes eight phases and providing financial support to mothers and infants is part of the first phase to ensure that infants receive proper nutrition for brain development in their first 1,000 days. She said that Chin and Rakhine states, and Naga Self-Administration Zone need these programmes, as their children have very low levels of nutritional support. She said that children have four basic rights as humans which will need to be recognised from an early age so that it carries on into adulthood.

Officials have provided financial support to 1,158 pregnant mothers and 1,026 infants under 2 years of age in Maungtaw District.



Mothers gather to receive aid for nutrition and health care. PHOTO: MNA

Myanmar, Japan hold economic conference



Deputy Minister U Aung Htoo reads the message sent from President U Htin Kyaw to Myanmar-Japan Joint Economic Conference. PHOTO: MNA

MYANMAR-Japan Joint Economic Conference was held at the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Yangon yesterday.

The conference began with opening remarks by U Thein Han, Vice-Chairman of the UM-FCCI, and Mr. Ken Kobayashi, Chairman of the Myanmar-Japan Economic Commission.

At the opening ceremony, Deputy Minister for Commerce U Aung Htoo, read out a message sent from President U Htin Kyaw to the conference.

Similarly, Japanese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Tateshi Higuchi, read out a message sent from Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Shinzo Abe to the conference.—Myanmar News Agency

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Objective, balanced approach needed for challenges in Rakhine

MYANMAR continues its efforts at putting Rakhine State back on the road to development and stability while still facing terrorism, funded and inspired from abroad.

In Rakhine, the country's efforts to bring peace and development were on track until August 2017, when violence was triggered by the attacks on security forces by terrorists.

The terrorist attacks and the mass displacement of people changed the situation and negatively affected the perception and attitude of the international community on the situation in Myanmar.

To effectively carry out resettlement and rehabilitation and to develop Rakhine State, the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development in Rakhine (UEHRD), led by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, was formed.

There have been many accusations that there is ethnic cleansing or even genocide in Myanmar. There were tensions

and there was fighting in Rakhine State, but there was no genocide.

The term genocide should not be used in Myanmar, nor in other countries, without clear evidence.

Seeing through a narrow lens of human rights of one particular community alone is not helpful to understand the challenges in Rakhine State.

The Government has initiated a number of programmes to find a sustainable solution to the issues in Rakhine. We are currently implementing the recommendations of the Annan Commission. A Ministerial-level implementation committee and an Advisory Board, made up of eminent personalities from home and abroad, have been set up to help us find lasting solutions.

Following the agreement reached between Myanmar and Bangladesh, we have made preparations for the repatriation of the displaced persons.

We have strengthened our border guard police capacity to ensure the safety of the returnees as well as all communities – Rakhine, Muslim, Daingnet, Mro, Thet, Maramagyi and Hindu. They are all victims of violence and terrorism. Security needs to be ensured for all.

But, international media has portrayed the mass displacement as happening because of persecution.

Recently, officials asked those fleeing their homes why they wanted to cross over to Bangladesh. They also asked what difficulties they were currently facing and their needs and requirements.

Officials discovered that initially a total of 666 residents from 15 villages in Buthidaung and two villages in Yathedaung had taken up temporary shelter in the border area.

They claimed that scarcity of jobs, food, and threats from the terrorist organization of Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) were the reasons for crossing over to Bangladesh.

Seeing through a narrow lens of human rights of one particular community alone is not helpful to understand the challenges in Rakhine State.

We are ready to continue to work with the international community.

At the same time, we earnestly hope that the international community would pursue a more objective and balanced approach to help overcome the challenges in Rakhine.

Myanmar is an agricultural country, and the agriculture sector is the driving force of the country's economy. According to reports, the agricultural sector contributes to some 30 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with abundant natural resources and a large working age population in the South-east Asia Region.

Boosting productivity in the agricultural sector

By Myint Swe (Kyay/ Myay)

Agro-based Economy

The government has laid down many economic and social objectives in its efforts to establish a developed country based on agriculture. Among them, one of the major economic objectives is to boost the all-round development of the economy based on agriculture sectors.

Myanmar's agricultural performance offers opportunities for successful agricultural development in the country where rapid gains can be made by better inputs, better seeds and improvement of logistical and marketing arrangements. Therefore it is paramount that improvement of agriculture is urgently needed to capitalise this emerging demand.

High yields of productivity

Smallholder paddy production dominates the agricultural economy of the country, in terms of both land area and production value. Paddy production has increased considerably since the introduction of new varieties and the growth of dry season paddy. However, overall rice productivity is still high and has considerable room for improvement through combination of better seeds and better agronomic factors. Other exports are tobacco, sugar, groundnut, sunflower, maize, jute, wheat, pulses and beans.

Moreover Myanmar is among the largest global exporters of pulses and the range of exported beans includes mung bean (green gram), black gram pigeon pea, soybean, cow peas, butter beans and kidney beans.

The fishery and livestock sectors are considered the most important and plans are underway to meet the protein needs of the population, enhance food security and provide employment for rural areas.

The livestock and fisheries sectors account for more than seven percent of the national GDP. The Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development aims to develop rural areas, to improve the socioeconomic situation for rural areas and to close the development gap between urban and rural areas.

Boosting of agricultural produces

Modernisation and expansion of agriculture require large capital requirement and modern technology. It is necessary to provide incentives, relax regulations to attract the investment.

It is of vital importance to raise the quality of life and standard of living of the farmers in order to increase GDP of the country, the agricultural sector plays an important role for the boosting of agricultural produces both quantities and qualities.

In order to formulate the sound economic development of the country, small productive industries can increase per capita income of the country.



Photo: Aye Min Soe

Modernisation and expansion of agriculture require large capital requirement and modern technology.

Moreover the private sector is essentially needed to be done while building up the economic enterprises. It is essential to constantly monitor conditions of small businesses from the public economic sector and simultaneously to encourage them. It is because a nation's economic development is directly proportional to the development of SMEs.

The requirement for the betterment of economy is for export products to become strong and imported goods to be reduced. The country is still relying upon imports of commodities of small value, not to mention heavy commodities. As it is, products of SMEs are finding it difficult to penetrate promising markets.

Myanmar's agriculture is heavily dependent upon the monsoon rains and rice production has increased due to supportive policies of the government as well as favorable market forces.

As for the ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, efforts are being made to increase the productivity, market access and competitiveness of the agricultural sector by improving the provision of quality inputs to farmers.

In order to assure quality seeds, fertilizer and farming machinery play a key role to drive the economic growth of the country. Moreover efficient regulations and markets can strengthen quality standards of agricultural products.

Key Export Commodities

The ministry will help to raise quality standards for key export commodities, such as rice, and local food processing, while helping farmers to develop skills related to the use of agricultural inputs and improved quality standards.

Educative talks should be held for them in order to reduce excessive use of chemical fertilizers and to discuss good agricultural practices and the importance of improving and reducing the use of chemicals on their farms.

The ministry will help create potential markets for agricultural products through exports and to increase the production of good-quality crop protection products and improve access to agri-lending products for farmers.

Imports from foreign countries are attributed to their quality, reasonable prices and availability of adequate amount as much as what the people demand. In any economic, political or administrative system, only a solid foundation can support the emergence of strong infrastructures.

There are still many challenges in various sectors on the path of economic development in the country and some positive signs such as a gradual ease of doing business in Myanmar and consequently the attention given to the private sector, which can boost economic development. Even though Myanmar has numerous challenges, private sector development is the main driving force behind national economic growth.

Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung