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Vice President U Henry Van Thio, left, shakes hands with a farmer at a ceremony yesterday to return confiscated farmland to farmers in Myittha, Mandalay Region. **PHOTO: MNA**

Confiscated farmland returned to farmers in Myittha, Mandalay Region

MORE than 120 acres of confiscated farmland was returned to their original owners in Myittha, Mandalay Region, yesterday in the presence of Vice President U Henry Van Thio, bringing the amount of farmland released to farmers to 2,156 acres.

Speaking at the ceremony to return the farmland to 53 farmers that had been confiscated by the Ministry of Defence, Vice President U Henry Van Thio urged the institutions concerned to continue to release the farmland they have

confiscated as part of efforts for the development of the agricultural sector, on which more than 70 per cent of the rural population depends on for their livelihood.

“In some cases, it is found that land ownership disputes

and squatters issues have caused delays for returning the farmland to owners, (even) though the ministries concerned had abandoned the farmland,” said the Vice President.

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Myanmar Permanent Representative made a statement on the UN Security Council's visit to Myanmar

THE United Nations Security Council heard a briefing on its members' recent visits to Bangladesh from 28 to 30 April 2018 and to Myanmar from 30 April to 1 May at the United Nations Security Council Chamber on 14 May 2018 at 03:00 p.m. The briefing was presided over by Permanent Representative of Poland, the current President of the Security Council. At the meeting, Permanent Representatives of Kuwait, Peru and U.K, co-organizers of the visit, briefed the Council on the visits. Following the briefing, other Security Council members, China, U.S., Sweden, France, Kazakhstan, Equatorial Guinea, Russia Federation, Netherlands and Poland participated in the consultations on the issue.

In accordance with the article 37 of the rules of procedures of the Security Council, concerned parties, Myanmar and Bangladesh, were also invited to discuss at the briefing.

At the briefing, Ambassador U Hau Do Suan, Permanent Representative of Myanmar, made a statement and explained about Myanmar's views and position on the Rakhine issue. The full text of his statement is as follows:

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We are honored the State acknowledges us; it raises our morale

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Three ministries hold press conference on 2nd one-year performance in Nay Pyi Taw

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Forget the bitterness of the past, work for brighter future

THE Government of Myanmar is trying its utmost to solve the complicated Rakhine issue, giving priority to peace, stability, development and repatriation of returnees. Humanitarian assistance has been provided to all affected communities through the Red Cross Movement and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre). The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) have also joined in this effort.

The Government is making progress in implementing the recommendations of Dr. Kofi Annan's commission as a road map.

Of 88 recommendations, 36 are for socio economic development, 48 are for peace and stability and four are pragmatic ways for achieving success in implementing the recommendations.

The Committee on Implementing the Recommendations in Rakhine State has gained achievements since it was formed. About 60 local investment businesses were permitted in 2018 and land compensations were given to the farmers under the economic and socio-economic development sector.

The government's efforts for rehabilitation, stability and development for Rakhine State are in the right direction, but there is still a long way to go. Local authorities and security institutions are working together with accountability and responsibility to put the state onto the road to development.

Similarly, infrastructures were built to accommodate the returnees from Bangladesh under the repatriation program. When the displaced persons return, they will be able to resume their lives.

Regarding the closing of IDP camps established after the conflict in 2012, the government is taking measures step by step to close the camps so that the people sheltering in the camps can travel freely in accordance with the law and can participate in the development tasks.

The government's efforts for rehabilitation, stability and development for Rakhine State are in the right direction, but there is still a long way to go. Local authorities and security institutions are working together with accountability and responsibility to put the state onto the road to development. It is the Rakhine people who would enjoy the benefits of the implementation of the recommendations. The people of Rakhine are urged to forget the bitterness of the past and to cooperate with each other and with the authorities in building a brighter future for the state.

Empowering Social Security System for the Workforce

By Khin Yadana

BEING a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Myanmar has a policy to ensure that workers have a good and appropriate working environment and the need for skilled workers in all sectors becomes critical for development of the country. It is very important to implement programmes to develop qualified human resources for nation building efforts and to develop a better socio-economic future for Myanmar workers by creating more job opportunities. The population of Myanmar is over 51 million and – among them 32 million people participate in the workforce. Social welfare schemes are led by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, aiming to provide social security programs for the benefits of the employees.

Social Security Board (SSB)

The Social Security Board (SSB) was established in 1956 after the adoption of the Social Security Act, 1954. The SSB has 77 township offices covering 110 townships in the country. In 2012, the Union Government has adopted a new Social Security Law, 2012. This new law provides for an extended social security system. The SSB is progressively implementing the new law. In April 2014, the SSB started the implementation of the new contribution and benefit levels for the existing benefits including medical care, sickness, maternity and work injury as well as the collection of contributions for the new family benefits.

The SSB has implemented a social security scheme covering employees working for firms, state-owned, private, foreign and joint ventures. Moreover the social security scheme is contributory. The SSB administers social security programme for public employees, including members of the civil service, state boards, state corporations, municipal authorities and military personnel,



Union Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe presents social pension for three months to an elder aged over 90 years in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area last year. PHOTO: MNA



A pregnant woman receives medical care at the social security clinic. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

as well as employees in private sector industries. On 31 August 2012, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw enacted the Social Security Law of 2012, which introduced benefit systems for invalids, the elderly, survivors and unemployed individuals. The board has operated three hospitals and 93 social security clinics, other 43 clinics, 3 divisional offices and 77 township offices.

Reform efforts

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw enacted the new Social Security Law in 2012. It included changes to contribution rates and benefits for medical care, sickness, maternity leave and workplace injuries, introduced new family benefits and also provided for registered workers to be issued with smart cards. These clinics have their own doctors and

ment services personnel life insurance, defenses services personnel life insurance, snakebite life insurance, sportsman life insurance, workmen's compensation insurance, marine hull insurance and farmer's life insurance. The majority of the people in Myanmar dislike long-term life insurance plans because their value can be reduced over time by rapid inflation and they want to buy the insurance for surgeries because health insurance premiums can be paid with installments.

Social Affairs

Labor inspection officers are working to make sure that workers who are working in factories, shops and offices are getting benefits and rights in accordance with the law with respect to pay, work days and holidays, work hours, workplace safety, and health. Workers are being provided with social security rights in accordance with the Social Security Law-2012 and efforts are being made to expand coverage of the social security system. As Myanmar became a member of the ASEAN Social Security Association-ASSA and International Social Security Association-ISSA, the Union Government has carried out the good practices of the international social security systems to improve the livelihood of workers by managing the social security funds effectively.

The Government guarantees not only for the security, provision of food, shelter and clothing of its citizens, but also for the stability of social existences such as education and health. It is undeniable that the Government has been making concerted effort towards its social sector to promote the standard of the workers. Moreover the State Government has the duty to continuously monitor, assess and take action by taking into

consideration international labor standards and ensure that workers are getting the rights and benefits they are entitled to get in accordance with the country's internal labor laws, rules, regulations and instructions, to make sure that they will get better benefits and rights, that their socio-economic lives will improve, and that their standard of living will be elevated.

Grasping jobs through free vocational trainings

The Ministry of Labor, Immigration and Population is opening schools for training and developing the skills of workers in Myanmar, under the 1950 employment and training act. Now there are 5 schools like this in the country—basic welding course, air-conditioner repair works, basic electrical course, lathe and moldings works. Vocational training is aimed at assisting the workers, who are seeking job opportunities in ASEAN countries, as Myanmar is a part of the ASEAN economic community. International Labour Organization's survey showed that the demand is high for skilled labour in electronic field, carpentry, infrastructure, hotel and tourism, garment and social and human resource sector.

While Myanmar is working together with ASEAN countries on regional labor issues, concerted efforts have been made to develop better job opportunities for the workers and cooperate with the International Labor Organization (ILO). With the aim of providing better rights and benefits for workers, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population has supported the private sector, which can produce more skilled workers and to build up capacity; more technical and vocational schools have been opened across the country.

Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Union Election Commission
Notification 61/2018

1st Waxing of Nayon, 1380 ME
(15 May, 2018)

Eleven Defence Services Personnel representatives from Pyithu Hluttaw substituted

According to a request made in accordance with Section 33 of the Pyithu Hluttaw Election Law to substitute eleven Defence Services Personnel Representatives who are parliamentarians, the Union Election Commission has scrutinized and substituted the following eleven Pyithu Hluttaw representatives shown on the left column under the Notification 1/2016 of the commission dated 18-1-2016, the Notification 8/2016 of the commission dated 17-5-2016, the Notification 26/2016 of the commission dated 14-11-2016 and the Notification 2/2017 of the commission dated 26-1-2017 with those shown on the right column.

The Defence Services Personnel Representatives of Pyithu Hluttaw to be substituted were nominated by the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Services in the second Multi-party General Election held on 8 November 2015.

(1) BC 18086	Navy 1335
Brig-Gen Tin Soe	Commodore Nay Win
(2) BC 21899	BC 19598
Brig-Gen Than Aung	Col Win Lwin Oo
(3) BC 15137	BC 19528
Brig-Gen Soe Myint	Col Soe Lwin
(4) BC 15191	BC 19368
Col Kyi Shwe	Col Min Oo
(5) BC 26239	BC 67540
Col Mya Oo	Captain Daw Pyae Pyae Thu
(6) Air 1753	BC 31225
Col Nay Win	Lt-Col Aung Zin Min
(7) BC 19768	BC 28666
Lt-Col Than Oo Lwin	Lt-Col Thant Zaw
(8) BC 26277	BC 30371
Lt-Col Maung Bo	Lt-Col Ye Tun Naing
(9) BC 31376	BC 63112
Lt-Col Htain Lin	Captain Daw Zin Zin Aung
(10) BC 31919	N 537
Lt-Col Kyaw Zin Latt	Maj Daw Aye Aye Mar
(11) BC 27402	N 628
Maj Myint Maung	Maj Daw Thuza Shwe

(Hla Thein)
Chairman
Union Election Commission

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their works to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kye Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon or by email to dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Real name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.). – Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar news office

Myanmar Permanent Representative made a statement . . .

FROM PAGE-1

Myanmar government welcomed the visit of members of the Security Council to Myanmar with the hope that the visit would help them to better understand the situation on the ground, so that we can further strengthen our cooperation with the United Nations in our efforts for the safe, dignified and voluntary return of the displaced persons. We believe that we shall be able to overcome the serious challenges we are facing today by working in partnership with the United Nations. We trust in constructive engagement and cooperation based on the principles of objectivity, mutual respect and understanding.

We also hope that the visit will give a strong impetus to our bilateral efforts with Bangladesh for the implementation of the repatriation process. We had facilitated the Security Council's visit at fullest extent as possible within the available time frame of the Council. The State Counsellor remarked the visit an important turning point. She reaffirmed Myanmar Government's commitment to bring peace, stability and development to Rakhine State.

In resolving current issues relating to the Rakhine State, we all agree that the most urgent task right now is to start repatriation of the displaced persons in accordance with the bilateral agreements. We have repeatedly stated that we want to start the repatriation process as soon as possible as we are ready to receive the returnees.

Recently on 8 May, Bangladesh Ambassador to Myanmar Mr. Manjurul Karim Khan Chowdhury was summoned to Nay Pyi Taw and reminded of Myanmar's readiness to commence repatriation of verified displaced persons before the monsoon as agreed by the two governments. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs once again urged Bangladesh to implement the bilateral agreement and repatriate those already verified so that they can return to their villages in Rakhine. The Ambassador was also reminded to send the lists of displaced persons using the right forms as agreed in the Physical Arrangement for repatriation. The forms used by Bangladesh were not the ones prescribed in the Physical Arrangement. They did not contain signatures, fingerprints and proper photographs necessary for proper verification and assurance of their consent. We had already requested the Bangladesh sides on three separate occasions through diplomatic channels to forward duly-filled prescribed forms that would enable displaced persons to be repatriated under the principle of voluntary, safe and dignified return.

Prior to the UNSC visit to Myanmar, the Union Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement of Myanmar had visited Cox's Bazaar refugee camps and met with the displaced persons. He explained to them resettlement program for the returnees and information on the repatriation process. To our surprise, they are not aware of anything about the repatriation process. Apparently, they were not notified by the Bangladesh authorities on the current bilateral arrangements nor were provided any forms to be filled in for necessary repatriation process. During the visit, the Minister could not meet the persons that we have verified for repatriation despite our request for arrangement of the meeting.

While we are trying to solve the issues



U Hau Do Suan, Permanent Representative of Myanmar. **PHOTO: MNA**

in good faith through bilateral cooperation, it is most regrettable that instead of fulfilling its commitment for repatriation of the displaced persons as agreed upon in the bilateral agreements, the Bangladesh side has been deliberately making excuses one after another to stall the repatriation process. Bangladesh has been distorting the facts and telling the whole world that Myanmar is not willing to accept the return of the displaced persons. Bangladesh is altering the truth and vilifying the Government and people of Myanmar to solicit international condemnation and to exert maximum political pressures on Myanmar. We need full and sincere cooperation of the Government of Bangladesh if the repatriation process is to be successful.

Allow me to refer to the remarks made by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Kuwait on the illegal occupation on both sides of the international border.

Human habitation and building of any structure within 150 feet from international border line is prohibited by bilateral border agreement. Therefore we have filed our objection to Bangladesh side on construction of bunkers and some houses on their side of the border, in the restricted area.

We have also found out that Bangladesh has been helping illegal occupants on Myanmar side of the international border line in building shelters, which is a blatant violation of Myanmar's territorial integrity and sovereignty. This action must stop immediately.

Allow me to turn to the matter of accountability. The Government of Myanmar has stated time and again that no violation of human rights will be condoned. Allegations supported by evidence will be investigated and action taken in accordance with the law. You may recall, Madam President, that during your meeting with the State Counsellor, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, she condemned violence and reassured you of our readiness to take actions on the alleged human rights violations in Rakhine, if necessary information is provided. She reiterated security assurance would be given to anybody who wishes to bring up the case of rights violation at the court in Myanmar.

Moreover, the Commander-in-Chief had also told the members of the Council that the Tatmadaw would welcome any alleged survivor of sexual violence who could bring hard evidence of the crime committed so that the perpetrators can be held accountable.

When it comes to human rights abuses and violations, we should not forget

the fact that the current humanitarian problem was the result of ARSA terrorist attacks on 30 Border Guard posts in Northern Rakhine. The root cause of the latest crisis and the brutal killings and atrocity committed by the terrorists on innocent ethnic Hindu, Rakhine Budhists and other minority tribes had been ignored by the western media. The truth has been suppressed by the incessant sensational argument of Muslim victimhood narratives. Only balanced and constructive approach will lead us to the right solution of the extremely complex and politically most sensitive problem of Rakhine State.

During UNSC visit to Maungta, on 1 May, about 20 Rakhine, Mro, Maramagi and Hindus waited for the Council members at the Township Administrative Office to get the opportunity to testify their stories of ARSA terrorist atrocities. Due to limited time, only a Rakhine woman and a Hindu woman were able to talk about human rights abuse and atrocities perpetrated by ARSA terrorists. Sadly, many tragic stories of the ethnic people in Rakhine have fallen on the deaf ears of some who wanted to listen to only one side of the story of their choice.

These people witnessed the atrocities committed by ARSA terrorists, among others, the killing of 7 Mro ethnic people in Kone Tine village of Maungta township on 28 August, 2017 and the subsequent torching of 2,625 houses in the area. They also testified the horrific discovery of a mass grave found in the north west of Ye Baw Kya village on 28 September 2017 where 45 bodies of Hindus were discovered among 100 kidnapped by ARSA.

These ethnic people in Maungta area are traumatized by the brutal acts of terrorists. They all felt insecure as minority groups in their own land by the fear instilled in their life by the ARSA.

ARSA must also be held accountable for atrocities committed against civilian population in Rakhine. Investigation of violations must include cases of terrorist atrocities as well. We are seriously concerned that Bangladesh is unwittingly allowing extremists to rear its ugly head in this part of the region. ARSA is already having a foothold in the camps, and soon it will become a strong hold of terrorism and extremism. Recently, on May 9, a group of 4 to 6 terrorists entered into one of the refugee camps in Balukali and dragged a 46 years old Mohamed Faisal Ulhaq out of the camp and stabbed him to death. It was reported that he was advocating for return of IDPs to Rakhine among fellow displaced people in the camp.

We have made every effort to prepare the environment conducive for the return of displaced people. Convincing that engagement of UN agencies in Rakhine will strengthen our ability to ensure safe, dignified and voluntary repatriation, we are in the process of active discussions for the MOU with the UNDP and UNHCR. These agencies will be working alongside Myanmar ministries concerned and the Union Enterprise for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement and Development for the good of all communities in Rakhine.

At the same time, we shall also be dealing with the root causes of the recent violence. The recommendations of the Annan Commission set out practical measures necessary to achieve development for all communities in Rakhine. There

are 88 recommendations of Mr. Annan Commission and 48 recommendations of National level Investigation Commission. Many of those recommendations are overlapped. 57 recommendations will be fulfilled soon while 31 recommendations are still processing. The first report of the Implementation Committee was launched in Feb 2018 and the second report will come out in May 2018.

Since the submission of the Mr. Annan final report, 3 IDP camps have been relocated. Another 4 camps will also be closed very soon.

With regard to the issuance of National Verification Card, false information has been spreading around to discourage people from complying with the requirement. In fact, the NVC is the first step for citizenship verification. NVC holders who met necessary requirements in accordance with existing law will become Myanmar citizens. Everyone residing in Myanmar has to go through the same process of verification.

We will continue to implement the recommendations of the Annan Report at the fullest extent possible in line with situation on the ground to bring long-term peace, harmony and development to the people of Rakhine.

The international community, including the United Nations, should work together to create an environment conducive to restoring peace, harmony and development for all people in Rakhine State. Hate narratives that promote deep rooted mistrust must stop. The present hostile attitude towards Myanmar will not contribute to building peace and harmony in the country. We have just heard a few remarks of very hostile and hateful sentiments toward my country. That is quite unfortunate.

Discriminatory treatment and one-sided support would only lead to further polarization and escalation of tension between different communities in the region.

Bangladesh must cooperate fully with Myanmar in sincerity in the implementation of bilateral agreement for repatriation of displaced persons. We are confident that we will be able to solve the present humanitarian problem and long-term peace and development of Rakhine State if Myanmar and Bangladesh work hand in hand with the spirit of mutual respect, genuine desire to help the displaced persons and the spirit of good neighborliness.

In this connection, the Joint Working Group for repatriation of the displaced person will meet in Dhaka on 17 May 2018 to expedite implementation of the agreed repatriation process.

Myanmar expresses its appreciation to members of the Council who have been extending their support to Myanmar at this challenging time of transition to democracy. We also thank our four neighbours for accepting our invitation to travel to Myanmar with the Council members. We believe that mutual understanding and constructive cooperation will ultimately bring about positive result that we all aspire to. Notwithstanding all the daunting challenges we are facing, the Government of Myanmar will spare no effort to bring peace, harmony and development to all people in Rakhine State, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—Myanmar News Agency ■