State Counsellor returns after attending 33rd ASEAN Summit, nine related events

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi departs from Changi International Airport in Singapore to Myanmar yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

Myanmar, Bangladesh determined to implement bilateral agreement for return of displaced persons from Rakhine State

THE Government of Myanmar and the Government of Bangladesh have agreed to commence the repatriation of the first batch of verified displaced persons from 15 November 2018.

Although Myanmar had made the necessary preparations to receive some 150 persons as agreed with Bangladesh, the Bangladesh side has not yet repatriated the displaced persons citing the report of UNHCR, that there was no willingness on the part of these displaced persons.

On 16 November 2018, Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe and Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali of Bangladesh communicated to each other using the hot line established between them. Both Myanmar and Bangladesh reiterated their determination to implement the bilateral agreement “Arrangement on Return of Displaced Persons from Rakhine State” signed on 23 November 2017 where-in the return will be under safe, voluntary and dignified conditions.

It was understood that the present difficulties stem from the weakness in following the procedures laid down.
ASEAN will continue to support Myanmar’s efforts to address the Rakhine Issue

ASEAN welcomes Myanmar’s invitation to the AHA Centre to dispatch a needs assessment team to identify possible areas of cooperation in Rakhine State

THE Myanmar delegation led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, arrived back Nay Pyi Taw International Airport yesterday afternoon after attending the 33rd ASEAN Summit and Related Summits held in Singapore from 12 to 15 November 2018.

On 12 November 2018, the State Counsellor delivered a keynote speech at the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit with the theme “Business and Investment in Myanmar and ASEAN”. On 13 November 2018, the State Counsellor attended the Opening Ceremony of the 33rd ASEAN Summit, ASEAN Summit Plenary and Working Dinner hosted by Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore together with other ASEAN Leaders.

On 14 November 2018, the State Counsellor attended the ASEAN-Australia Informal Breakfast Summit, 21st ASEAN-China Summit, 20th ASEAN-Republic of Korea Summit, Working Lunch hosted by Prime Minister Mr. Lee Hsien Loong for ASEAN Leaders and Leaders of Guests of the ASEAN Chair; 3rd ASEAN-Russia Summit, 21st ASEAN-Japan Summit and 2nd Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Summit. Later in the evening, the State Counsellor attended the Gala Dinner hosted by Prime Minister Mr. Lee Hsien Loong for ASEAN Leaders, Leaders of non-ASEAN EAS Participating Countries, and Leaders of Guests of the ASEAN Chair.

On 15 November 2018, the State Counsellor attended the ASEAN-India Informal Breakfast Summit, 6th ASEAN-US Summit, 21st ASEAN Plus Three Summit, East Asia Summit Lunch (Retreat) and 13th East Asia Summit (Plenary). The State Counsellor also attended the Closing Ceremony of the 33rd ASEAN Summits and Related Summits and Handing Over Ceremony of the ASEAN Chairmanship to the Kingdom of Thailand in the evening.

At the 33rd ASEAN Summit, the leaders discussed and exchanged views on matters relating to building a Resilient and Innovative ASEAN, ASEAN’s external relations and future direction, regional and international issues. With regard to Rakhine issue, the ASEAN Leaders highlighted its complexity and noted the agreement between Myanmar and Bangladesh to commence the repatriation of the first batch of verified displaced persons to Myanmar. The Leaders recognized the need for ASEAN to play a role in rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance and welcomed the invitation extended by Myanmar to the AHA Centre to dispatch a needs assessment team to identify possible areas of cooperation in Rakhine State to facilitate the repatriation process.

The ASEAN Leaders also expressed their continued support for Myanmar in its efforts to bring peace, the rule of law, to promote harmony and reconciliation among the various communities and to ensure sustainable and equitable development in Rakhine State.
State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi held bilateral talks with Chinese Premier, New Zealand Prime Minister, American Vice President on the sidelines of the 33rd ASEAN Summit

During the meeting with the Chinese Premier on 15 November 2018, they exchanged views cordially on promotion of bilateral relations and cooperation including provision of assistance for Myanmar’s peace and national reconciliation process, repatriation and resettlement of displaced persons from Rakhine State and some regional issues including the Indo-Pacific Strategy Concept.

The Vice President thanked the State Counsellor for reaching out to the United States and enquired about the steps taken by the Government of Myanmar in addressing the Rakhine issue including repatriation process and accountability of the reported human rights violations.

The State Counsellor informed the Vice President that as there are diverging views on resolving the issue, exchanging views would be useful to understand each other. As the Americans understand their own country better, Myanmar understands her own country better than anyone else. She explained that Myanmar Government has been trying to resolve the Rakhine issue as one of the top priorities, but our approach is different compared with the approach from international community.

State Counsellor explained, inter alia, that the situation in Rakhine State is not a new issue that emerged recently. The present Government, since assuming the office, has been doing its best for peace, stability and rule of law in Rakhine State by forming a Central Committee, and in addressing the issue, the international community is focusing only on the rights of a particular community and they also need to consider the complexities and the sensitivities of all communities in Rakhine State.

In fact, the populations of native Rakhine and other ethnic peoples are shrinking and they are becoming minority in Rakhine State.

State Counsellor also pointed out that while in the view of many countries, the Myanmar Government is biased for the Rakhine people, the Myanmar people view that the international community is totally biased in favour of the other community. She added that if Myanmar resolved the Rakhine issue in a short sighted approach, it would hurt the stability and the future of the country and that it would be no one else but our own people to suffer the consequences. She apprised him of the measures taken by Myanmar Government to start the repatriation of first batch of displaced persons from Rakhine State and to address the accountability for alleged human rights violations through establishing an Independent Commission of Enquiry by the President.

The Vice President stressed the importance for Myanmar to overcome the challenging issue of Rakhine State and expressed that the United States will continue to support for the success of Myanmar’s democratization process. — Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Myanmar, Bangladesh determined to implement bilateral agreement for return of displaced persons from Rakhine State

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in the “Physical Arrangement for Repatriation of Displaced Myanmar Residents” agreed between two countries on 16 January 2018. Under the Physical Arrangement, the forms for the prospective returnees have to be signed by the displaced person themselves, signifying their willingness to return voluntarily to Rakhine State. This was not done in the case of the 2,250 people whose forms were sent to Myanmar including the 150 people interviewed by UNICEF. It was also understood that the next batch of some 22,000 forms recently sent to Myanmar, have indeed been signed by the displaced persons themselves. It was also confirmed that 440 displaced persons of the Hindu faith have volunteered to come back as soon as possible and that they will be included in the first batch of verified returnees.

During the communications, the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh intimated to the Union Minister, that because of the imminent Bangladesh elections, the repatriation could only start after the end of December 2018. —MNA

Union Minister U Win Khaing inspects Thaton electric power plant

UNION MINISTER for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing yesterday inspected a power plant project which is on test-run at Kyaypan Village, Thaton Township, to supply electricity to eight townships in Kayin State.

The plant, which has been came into operation since 1985 with a 18.45 MW gas turbine and another two gas turbines which can produce total 16.25 MW supplying power to Mon and Kayin states. Thaton Power Plant is being upgraded and equipped with gas turbine and steam turbine manufactured by the General Electric-GE by the China Engineering Corporation Ltd.

The work on upgrading the plant started in March 2016, and the plant, which is currently under test run, is expected to generate 118.9 MW in February next year. Upon completion of the project, the plan will benefit 399 villages in eight townships in Kayin State. To transport the electricity generated by the plant to Kayin State, nine mile-long 230 KV cables and a 230/66 KV 60 MVA sub power station are being constructed at Indu Town, Kayin State.

Meanwhile, a 230-KV transmission line linking Mawlamyine and Myawady and a 230 KV 100 MVA sub-power station are being constructed in Myawady, and the construction are expected to be finished in march 2019. —MNA (Translated by JT)

Rakhine repatriation: Media visit Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre

A team of journalists from 12 domestic news agencies arrived in Sittway yesterday to observe preparations for the return of displaced people to Rakhine State from Bangladesh.

The journalists travelled to Maungtaw Township in the afternoon and visited the Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre and the Kanyinchang Economic Zone.

They met with District Administrator U Soe Aung and asked questions on arrangements made by the government to receive the displaced people, the reason for the delay in the repatriation process, Myanmar’s plans for the resettlement and rehabilitation of returnees, the current state of stability in the area, freedom of movement for the returnees, construction of houses, upgradation of transport in Maungtaw District, and the status of development projects in Rakhine State.

Next, the media group visited the Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre and saw the temporary accommodations set up for returnees there.

The journalists also met with the centre’s director U Soe Shwe Aung and questioned him about the centre’s preparations for repatriation.

He told them about the arrangement of facilities such as housing, drinking water, and electricity, and installation of septic tanks at the centre.

He also detailed plans for providing food, assistance, medical centres, temporary schools, and playgrounds, at the reception centre.

The group of journalists then travelled to the Kanyinchang Economic Zone.

Yesterday’s trip marks the media’s 28th news gathering visit to Maungtaw District in Rakhine State. Journalists from Mizzima TV, Irrawaddy, The Daily Eleven, the Myanmar Times, Forever, DVB, Sky Net, Frontier, MRTV, MNTV, and MNA took part in the trip.

Local and foreign media agencies have been sent to Rakhine State to gather news 6 times during the emergency period, once with arrangements from the Ministry of Defence, 6 times from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, once from the Union government, once from the Myanmar Press Council, and 13 times on the advice of the Committee for Implementation of Recommendations on Rakhine State, which recommended two media trips a month to Rakhine State. —MNA (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Union Ministers inspect Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre

UNION Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population U Thein Swe, Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye and Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu inspected Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre which is ready to conduct repatriation and resettlement of returnees from Bangladesh. During their tour of inspection, they were also accompanied by deputy ministers who are chairmen of committees formed to carry out receiving and resettlement of returnees. The Union Ministers and party inspected readiness for repatriation process, the place for reception, accommodation of returnees, processes to be conducted, the status of completed construction of shelters, health care services and access to safe drinking water, access to electricity, the sufficiency of fire-proof toilets, safety measures against fire, preparation for cleaning around the camp and processes undergo afterward and officials of the camp provided necessary explanations.

The Ministers and party checked Assembly Board Houses donated by the People’s Republic of China, the status of construction of sample rural houses, opening clinics for their health care and schools.

The Ministers and officials also went to the Byinphyu border police outpost and inspected the construction of garage for storing dry rations.—MNA

(Translated by Myat Thandar Aung)

Union Ministers U Thein Swe and Dr. Win Myat Aye, and Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu inspect Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre yesterday. PHOTO: MNA

District Administrator U Soe Aung interviewed by journalists at Hla Pho Khaung Reception Centre in Rakhine State. PHOTO: IPRD
Myanmar’s economic landscape diversifies

The Central Bank of Myanmar has issued a directive on 17 November to banks to lend to local businesses in Myanmar kyats. This will provide local businesses access to credit financing and deposit-taking banking services as local banks are not as developed or ready to offer the services, said Central Bank of Myanmar Vice Governor U Thazin. The Vice Governor remarked that foreign banks can no longer be relied upon to assist local businesses as the country is increasing day by day. At present, there are 4 state-owned banks, 21 local private banks, and 13 foreign bank branches in the country.

Managing foreign investments flowing into the country requires more skilled banks that are firm enough to handle the increased money supply in the country. This is why the state is setting economic policies that encourage the growth of both domestic and foreign banks.

Not too recently, on 2 November, the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) gave approvals to nine enterprises, including education and health services. The decision is expected to bring in 4 billion U.S. dollars into local people and will contribute a lot to the increase in money supply.

Between 1988 and the present, the MIC's new administration has allocated foreign investments by US$12 billion. While foreign and domestic cooperatives are expected to form and grow into Myanmar with the country’s leaders and high-ranking officials offering crucial assistance to industries and entrepreneurs from their visits abroad.

U Thaung Tun, Minister for the Union Government and MIC, Chairman of the MIC, recently at the inaugural Singaporean Association of Myanmar (SAM) Business Summit, held at the LOTTE Hotel in Yangon on 12 November.

“The fast-growing consumer market and industry sectors which require foreign investment is expected to have a strong expansion in a number of sectors including oil and gas, finance, construction, transport, logistics, telecommunication, and tourism. Myanmar’s economic potential is well recognized but we will need to take a proactive approach to secure investments,” said U Thaung Tun.

The director-general explained that foreign banks are expected to form and grow into Myanmar with foreign banks to handle it. External investors will want to work with local banks of choice, and give foreign banks nearly as much authority as local banks in a wise tactic.

Not only will this create more business opportunities in the country, it will undoubtedly bring in more economic develop and elevate the livelihood of the people as well.

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INTERVIEWER – ZIN ON (Myanmar Ailin)

We have done everything we need to do. The Bangladesh government needs to cooperate in a systematic repatriation process. Only then can we say the process is comprehensive.

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Myanmar Daily Weather Report

Forecast for Mandalay and Neighbouring Areas

16 November 2018, 11:00 MST Today

STATE OF THE SEA:
Weather is a few clouds over the North east coast of Myanmar. Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region.

BAY INFERENCE:
Weather is a few clouds over the North east coast of Myanmar. Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region.

BAY FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF 17 November 2018:
Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region. Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region. Shall, Kayak, Kayin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (70%). Weather will be generally fair in Lower Sanguag and Magway regions, Bago, Hpakant and Kayin state and partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states.

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Cyclonic Storm News

According to the observations at (11:30)hrs MST today, the Severe Cyclonic Storm “Gaja” has crossed Tamilnadu coast and is moving towards the eastern coast of India. This is forecast to move towards Westwards and weaken gradually. The lowest pressure for Severe Cyclonic Storm “Gaja”.

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Cyclonic Storm News

Accordin to the observations at (10:30)hrs MST today, the Severe Cyclonic Storm "Gaja" has crossed Tamilnadu coast and is moving towards the eastern coast of India. This is forecast to move towards Westwards and weaken gradually. The lowest pressure for Severe Cyclonic Storm "Gaja".

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OPINION

We have done everything we need to do. The Bangladesh government needs to cooperate in a systematic repatriation process. Only then can we say the process is comprehensive.

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Unison Minister Dr Min Myat Aye

The visit is aimed at recognizing the repatriation process. Arrangements are being made for the representation visit. They will come soon. For further cooperation, we will have to consult ASIAN. This shows ASIAN’s support for the process. This is a huge step for Myanmar. We have done everything we need to do. The Bangladesh government needs to cooperate in a systematic repatriation process. Only then can we say the process is comprehensive. I would like to express here that in practice transparency is dealing with our international community.

There are many hindrances for repatriation process.

“The repatriation process is not a smooth process. There are many hindrances. There are three types of displaced people. First, they are people who have been in refugee camps. Second, they are people who have faced difficulties in finding employment. The third type sees people who have been in refugee camps. They are cooperating but they need to make the process a reality.” It is our responsibility that the whole process has been started. I believe that UNHCR and Bangladesh’s cooperation is important for accomplishing this goal.

UN’s many cooperation

We have focused on sustainable and safe repatriation process. We have been trying to cooperate and making arrangements that concern this matter.

“Innocent villagers have become scapegoat for attacks. People who live in places affected by floods, and facing difficulties in making connection of this matter.”

The weather is being partly cloudy in Taninthayi Region and widespread in Taninthayi Region. Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region. Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region. Shall, Kayak, Kayin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (70%). Weather will be generally fair in Lower Sanguag and Magway regions, Bago, Hpakant and Kayin state and partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states.

The weather will be generally fair in Myanmar Waters. Wave height will be about 14-7 feet and off along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Lower Sanguag and Magway regions.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA:

FOR 17 November 2018: Partly cloudy. Weather is partly cloudy in Yangon. The National level strategic plans have been closed to the camps.

Creating a peaceful and prosperous Myanmar

Our friends are with us. For our part, we have crafted good opportunities and would like to work together. We tried our best for better cooperation and try to cooperate for the whole Maungtaw District. The Bangladesh, UNDP, UNHCR and ENRICH cooperation in all the processes is very important. Then it will be truly successful.

(Translated by Wallace)
106 persons from IDP Camp in Sittway found on boat near Kyauktan

AUTHORITIES seized a boat carrying 106 persons near the mouth of the Yangon River near Thante Village, Kaladan Village-tract, Kyauktan Township, Yangon Region, early yesterday morning.

After local authorities found the boat, it was inspected by a combined team led by the head of the Kyauktan Township’s General Administration Office, and comprising officials of the Kyauktan Township’s Police Force and the Kyauktan Township Immigration and Population Department. Officials found the boat carrying 50 men, 31 women, 13 boys, and 12 girls left the Narzi IDP camp, Raikhine State, on 22 October and was on its way to Thailand and Malaysia when it ran out of fuel. The boat’s passengers were taken to the cyclone shelter at Thante Village and were provided with care. Officials are continuing their investigations in the case. — MNA (Translated by JT)

50 gems lots, 2186 jade lots sold out through open tender

A total of 50 gems lots and 2,186 jade lots have already sold out through open tender at the Mani Yadanar Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw.

The yesterday sales of the Gems and Jade Emporium fetched over 17.464 billion kyats from the sale of 1,082 jade lots.

Out of 1,150 jade lots put on sales, 1,124 jade lots found buyers for 16.752 billion kyats on 15 November.

So far, 50 gems lots and 2,186 jade lots found buyers through the open tender system.

On 14 November, 96 gems lots were put on sales through the open tender system and the emporium made 794.90 million kyats from the sales of 50 gems lots. Over 1030 jade lots were set to go on sale through the open tender system till 17 November.

Women arrested with drugs worth Ks150 million in Patheingyi

DURING a combined operation, members of the Anti-drug Squad and Customs authorities seized drugs worth over Ks150 million from two women travelling on a bus in Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Region, early on Thursday morning.

The two women were arrested and charged with smuggling under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. Around 1 am on Thursday morning, officials raided a bus at the Kyaukchaw checkpoint in Pathiengyi Township. They found 50,000 yaba pills hidden inside the bags of two women passengers. Ma Aye Nang, of Nanton Village, in Monggai Township, Lashio District, Shan State, was found carrying 30,000 tablets. Ma Na Oo, 18, of Wunhaing Village in Mongshu Township, Loilem District, Shan State, was found with 20,000 tablets. Police are continuing their investigation to find others connected with the drug-trafficking case. — Maung Pyi Thu (Mandalay) (Translated by KTL)

Truck transporting 48 bulls illegally seized in Bamauk

ACTING on a tip, police seized a truck transporting 48 bulls illegally in Bamauk Township, Katha District, Sagaing Region, on Thursday afternoon.

The bulls, worth over Ks24 million, were being taken from Homa Thin Township to Mohnyin Township in Kachin State, said police.

Police found the truck carrying the bulls in the forest near Nammu creek in the area between Bamauk and Homa Thin townships around 1 pm on Thursday.

They have arrested eight persons, who have been identified as Aik Maw, Win Naing, Maung Mae, Than Hsaung, Win Tun, Hsan Lwin, Naing Tun, and Kyaw Kyaw.

They have been charged with violation of Section 5 of the Essential Supply and Services Law. — Ni Toe (Translated by Khaing Thanda Lwin)
Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker meets GIZ program head

The meeting was attended by U T Khun Myat, Chairman of MIC and nine members.—MNA

MIC approves seven projects on 16 Nov.

THE Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) meeting (19 / 2018) was convened at the meeting room of the MIC in Yangon on 16 November, 2018. The meeting approved seven projects in agriculture, livestock and manufacturing sectors, which will create 5,493 job opportunities for citizens.

At the meeting, U T Khun Myat and Mr. Armin Hofmann discussed the development of Myanmar’s banking and financial system, the small and medium enterprises in the country, the technology sector, and cooperation between GIZ and the Hluttaw.

Pyithu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein and officials from the Hluttaw office also attended the meeting.—MNA

(Translated by Thanda Aung)

MoI holds 6th coord meeting on 7th Media Development Conference

The 6th coordination meeting to discuss preparations for the 7th Conference on Media Development in Myanmar was held at the Chatrium Hotel yesterday afternoon. Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun and officials from the Ministry of Information, the Vice Chairman of the Myanmar Press Council, Dr. Myo Thant Tin, and officials from partner organizations such as DW Akademie, IMS, JICA, Internews, Mypol, UNDSCO, BBC, and Mizzima News attended the meeting.

At the meeting, participants discussed the program for the 7th Media Development Conference, which is to be held at the Nay Pyi Taw Park Royal Hotel on 5 December. They also discussed the guest list and the list of people who will conduct discussions at the conference.—MNA

(Translated by Myat Thandar Maung)

53rd ASEAN-COCI delegates tour Nay Pyi Taw

Representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat-General’s Office and delegates from ASEAN countries visited the Thatta Thattaha Pagoda (Buddha Gaya), the Defence Services Museum, the Gem Museum, the National Museum, and the Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. The delegates came to the city to attend the 53rd ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (ASEAN-COCI) meeting hosted by Myanmar recently. Later, the ASEAN representatives and delegations left for their respective countries. —MNA

Myanmar, Bangladesh conduct coordinated patrols

A coordinated patrol between Myanmar and Bangladesh was conducted from border post 46 to 49 yesterday, according to the Myanmar Police Force. The Myanmar patrol was led by Police Captain Myint Maung from No. 1 Border Police Force, Area 5, Maungtaw Township, Raikhine State, while the Bangladesh side was led by Naib Subedar Md. Mozammel of No. 11 Bhahukhiaiyi outpost.

Similarly, troops led by Police Inspector Thein Tun Myint of Taung Pyo police post in Maungtaw Town, conducted a coordinated patrol with troops led by Naib Subedar Md. Mahbub Rahman of Baishfari police post of Bangladesh from border post 36 to 38 from 9 am to 11:30 am yesterday.

A troop led by Police Inspector Myo Thein Oo, No. 2 Border Police force, Ywet Nyo Taung police post in area 5, Maungtaw, on two boats met up with its counterpart of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB-2) led by Naib Subedar Sha-Alam on two motor boats. The four boats patrolled on the border of the two countries in the middle of the Naf River, at 11 nautical mile and the two troops held a meeting on boat 006.—GNLM

(Translated by Thandar Aung)