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Fourth session of Union Peace Conference commences in Nay Pyi Taw

THE fourth session of Union Peace Conference— 21st Century Panglong began with an opening ceremony on the first day at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The opening ceremony was attended by President U Win Myint, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice Presidents U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio, Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat, Amyotha Hluttaw Speaker Mahn Win Khaing Than, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice Senior General Soe Win, Amyotha Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Aye Tha Aung, Union Ministers, Union Attorney-General, Chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council, Chairman of Peace Commission, senior Tatmadaw officers, Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command, Deputy Ministers, representatives of Hluttaw and Tatmadaw members, patrons, chairpersons, vice-chairpersons and representatives of political parties.

The NCA-S EAOs were represented by KNU Chairperson Saw Mutu Sae Poe and Vice-Chairperson Pa'doh Saw Kwe Htoo Win, DKBA Saw Moo Shay, KNU/KNLLA-PC Chairperson Saw Hto Lay and Vice-Chairperson Saw Yin Nu, ABSDF Chairperson U Than Khe and General Secretary U Sonny, CNF Chairperson Pu Zin Cung and Vice-Chairperson Pu Thang Ning Kee, PNLO Leading Patron Khun Okkar and Patron Phyar Tan Khun Ti Saung, ALP Vice-Chairperson Khaing Soe Naing Aung and Deputy Leader Saw Mra Raza Lin, RCSS Chairperson Sao Yawd Serk and its peace negotiation leader Sao Pawng Kherh, NMSP Chairperson Nai Han Thar and Vice-Chairperson

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi makes a speech at opening ceremony of 4th session of Union Peace Conference— 21st Century Panglong on 19 August. **PHOTO:MNA**

Opening ceremony of 4th session of Union Peace Conference— 21st Century Panglong is held at Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 August. **PHOTO:MNA**

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"People are the key"

Section 59 (g) in Hluttaw Election Law

IN accordance with section 59 (g) of the Hluttaw Election Law, no one is allowed to vote more than once in any election for a Hluttaw constituency in which he or she has the right to vote. Anyone who is found guilty of or abetting this act shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year, or with fine not exceeding K100,000 (one hundred thousand Kyats), or with both.

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw discusses signing BIMSTEC agreement, calls for greater action on tax revenues

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw holds its 10th-day meeting of 17th regular session on 19 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE 10th-day meeting of the 17th regular session of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Firstly, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin explained the proposal sent by the President of Myanmar to sign the BIMSTEC agreement. He said if the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw approves the proposal then they will send a message to the office of the BIMSTEC Secretary-General signaling Myanmar's readiness to sign the agreement. He said Myanmar needs to sign the agreement like other nations have done in the upcoming 5th BIMSTEC Summit and the BIMSTEC agreement will come into effect after 30 days from the date of all member nations signing the 7 documents of agreement. He said signing the agreement will strengthen BIMSTEC and allow it to establish itself with integrity.

Next, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Deputy Speaker U Tun Tun Hein called for MPs interested in discussing the proposal to register their names.

This was followed by Hluttaw representatives debating the principles, project progress and expenditure related to the National Project Bill and Union Budget Bill for 2020-2021FY.

U Khin Cho from Hlaingbwe constituency said if the estimated revenue is not collected then it can cause complications for slated expenditures and make the nation more dependent on loans. He said the 7 goals of CERP needs to be implemented so essential expenditure for 2020-2021FY will rise. He said all budget proposals should re-evaluate only the essential necessities.

U Maung Maung Ohn from Ayeyawady Region constituency 5 said Myanmar has to import millions of tonnes of petrol every year but the ethanol used to mix with these fuels is produced from domestic alcohol factories based on sugar canes, maize, rice and cassavas. He said the government issued permits for the company in 2009 but it was unsuccessful as the laws and regulations were not very systematic. He said the nation must lead to enact the necessary laws and regulations for sales of fuel and ethanol.

Tatmadaw Pyithu Hluttaw representative Colonel Han Thu said there will be repercussions on many sectors due to COVID-19 so national projects will not be able to fulfill their objectives if estimated revenues are not met. He said the deficit for estimated revenue for 2020-2021FY should be reviewed and methods to increase revenue should be pursued.

U Myo Win of Mon State constituency 8 said a lot of time is spent on micro numbers when reviewing the budget. He said the Union Government should develop a system that ensures budget proposals do not ask for more than the actual costs or the equipment cost is not too much higher than the project value.

U Khin Maung Thi from Loilem constituency then referred to the Ministry of Education and said there is a high requirement of teachers for basic, middle and higher education and should be fulfilled within this academic year. He said the Ministry of Health and Sports needs to review its policies so that more assistant surgeons come to apply and treat public health.

The matter was further debated by Dr Hla Moe from Aungmyethazan constituency, U Win Htut from Pyapon constituency, Tatmadaw Amyotha Hluttaw representative Colonel Soe Lwin, U Kyaw Min of Letpadan constituency, U Bo Gyi from Chauk constituency, U Tin Tun Naing from Seikkyi Khanaungto constituency, U Moe Shwe from Putao constituency, and U Kyaw Soe from Bamauk constituency.

Next, the assembly discussed the 2020 Union Tax Bill. Dr Pyae Phyo of Ayeyawady Region constituency 7 motioned for a change in section 23 of the bill by replacing 25 per cent income tax to 20%. He said tax reforms should be made progressively every year and the authorities should ensure the public does not misconstrue tax payments and promote a tax paying culture.

Tatmadaw Pyithu Hluttaw representative Colonel Aung Kyaw Myo said the estimated and actual tax revenue of the nation should be emphasized as the country has to pay back foreign loans. He said this is why the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry should keep the tax on tobacco and alcohol outlined in this bill unchanged.

The bill was further debated by U Aung Myo Latt from Mandalay Region constituency 5, Tatmadaw Amyotha Hluttaw representative Colonel Saw Tun Aung and Daw Shwe Shwe Sein Lat from Bago Region constituency 3.

The 11th-day meeting of the Second Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's 17th regular session will convene on 21 August.—Aung Ye Thwin, Aye Aye Thant

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Ceremony for signing Part III of Union Accord to be broadcast live on third day of UPC

The signing ceremony of the Part III of Union Accord on the final day of the 4th session of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong will be held at Myanmar International Convention Centre II (MICC-II) in Nay Pyi Taw on 21 August morning.

The event will be broadcast live at 9:45 am on that day on MRTV, MITV, MNTV, Channel 9, Up to Date, One News, MWD, MWD (Variety), DVB, Mizzima, YTV, Myanma Radio, Myanmar State Counsellor Office Facebook page, NRPC Facebook page, MoI Facebook page, MRTV Facebook page, Myanmar Digital News Facebook page, and Skynet DTH Facebook page. —MNA *(Translated by TTN)*

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Who is eligible to vote?

- irrespective of sex or religion
- those who are 18 years of age on the date of the election
- citizens, associate citizens, and those who have permission to become naturalized citizens, who do not contravene the provisions of the Hluttaw Election Law
- a person whose name has been included in the voting list of the respective constituency

Who is ineligible to vote?

- a member of a religious order
- person serving a prison sentence
- person adjudged to be of unsound mind as provided for in the relevant law
- person who has not yet been discharged as an insolvent
- person prohibited by the Election Law
- foreigner or person who has assumed foreign citizenship

Fourth session of Union Peace Conference commences in Nay Pyi Taw

FROM PAGE-1

Nai Aung Min, LDU Chairperson Kyar Khun Sar and other representatives of NCA-S EAOs for the Conference.

Those attendees at the Conference were diplomats from foreign missions in Myanmar, representatives of UN agencies and local and foreign NGOs and the invited guests.

The Kayah youth campaigner for peacemaking efforts performed with the song 'Peace is Essential'.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in her capacity as the Chairperson of National Reconciliation and Peace Centre, delivered an address.

(Speech of State Counsellor is covered on page 4)

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing also delivered a speech.

(Speech of Senior General Min Aung Hlaing is covered on page 6)

Chairperson of the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) Sao Yawd Serk made an address, in representing NCA-S EAOs.

President U Win Myint, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice Presidents U Myint Swe and U Henry Van Thio are coming to attend the opening ceremony of Union Peace Conference on 19 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

(Speech of RCSS Chairperson Sao Yawd Serk is covered on page 10)

Shan Nationalities League for Democracy Vice-Chairperson U Sai Nyunt Lwin made a speech, representing political parties group.

(Speech of SNLD Vice-Chairperson U Sai Nyunt Lwin is covered on page 10)

After a video presentation of national reconciliation and peace efforts, the attendees posed for group documentary photos before concluding the opening ceremony.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Group documentary photo of leaders at the Union Peace Conference in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

Representatives of ethnic groups and foreign diplomats attend the Union Peace Conference in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

State Counsellor and Chairperson of National Reconciliation and Peace Centre makes speech at Union Peace Conference–21st Century Panglong

I welcome and greet all distinguished guests who have come to attend the opening ceremony of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong, Fourth Session. May you all have good health and well-being.

The Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong has now reached the fourth session. All those who are concerned with this conference have worked strenuously with deep regard and commitment for peace to move this process forward. Just as our negotiations were gaining momentum, we met difficulties because of the need to prevent, control and treat the COVID-19 pandemic. Even during this period of travel restrictions, and strict health rules and regulations, leaders and representatives of different groups are now assembled in unity in this place today, at this time, in this convention hall. This shows our firm determination to work with resolute spirit for national reconciliation and peace of our country and our Union no matter what difficulties we may have to encounter.

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

Union Accord, Part III

In this same convention hall, last year in October 2019, at the 4th anniversary of the signing of the NCA (Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement), I urged that we should all strive to reach an agreement for signing Part III of the Union Accord in three parts. At this present conference, we will be able to sign Part III of the Union Accord in three parts; for this, I wish to thank all those who have worked to make this happen. On that day, at that time, at that ceremony, I said that we have to establish a genuine Democratic Federal Union; in accordance with a federal system we needed to have power–sharing, resource sharing, sharing of tax revenues, all federal units should have equal status, states should have their own state constitutions capable of guaranteeing the right to self-determination. I also spoke about the basic principles which would ensure that in the exercise of powers shared to the states, it should be based on the people. At the moment when we are about to sign the Union Accord, out of the five basic principles, one important principle which is the right of states to formulate their own state constitutions, in other words, guarantee for self-determination, could not be incorporated into the agreement although very tough negotiations were held late into the evening on 12 August; we had to leave it as "to be discussed further".

Although we could say that the reason this had to be left behind was that agreement could not be reached on the use of the words "state basic law" and "state constitution"; it was the result of attempts to define the meaning of words. In actual fact, this is because of concerns and anxieties existing on both sides. If we made further analysis of these concerns and worries, we would be able to see clearly and distinctly that it was because of looking with suspicion and not having enough trust.

In the 1947 Constitution which emerged based on the Panglong Agreement which was signed by my father and ethnic national leaders, fellow founders of the Union in the last 20th century, it was stipulated thus "all matters relating to the state constitutions would be done in accordance with the law so long as they do not contravene the articles of the Constitution." If we look at today's 21st Century Panglong discussions, everyone is in agreement about the right of states to formulate their own state constitutions without contravening or going beyond the bounds of the Union Constitution. With respect to the depth and inherent meanings of phrases and terms for which agreement could not be reached; if both sides saw and understood, I believe that we could negotiate and reach agreement and allay the fears and anxieties. Regarding this, we will have to continue our negotiations with patience. The main thing we have been able to overcome was our deadlock regarding "not to secede" and "the right to self-determination". With regard to the right of states to formulate their state constitutions, which would need to be discussed further, I have a positive feeling that we would be able to come to an agreement in the not too distant future. We will continue to work on this to reach an agreement shortly.

Changes during the past five years

In a way, we could say that the reason we are looking at each other with fear and anxiety and have mistrust may be because of the impact of over 70 years of armed conflicts. One reason for having a lack of trust is because of the absence of the willingness to do "give and take" and compromise. It may sound because of an unwillingness to do "give and take"; it could also be because of a weakness in the culture of "give and take" and compromise. There are also some instances where some people think erroneously that to compromise is to admit defeat. It is important to show practically that it could be beneficial for the Union by exercising "give and take" and compromise.

If we look back at the past period of a little over four years, we were able to reach agreement on the basic principles; in the past, these things were unthinkable, these things were very difficult to reach an understanding; we did this in the interest of our country with the future interest of the Union. There are those who are criticizing us, of course. They said – Democratic Federal Union, equality, power–sharing, self-determination, all these are general terms. "What has changed", they said. I think our critics have perhaps forgotten that between "what is fundamental" and "what is easy" that are many practical differences. Just like "Metta" and the "Loka Pala" principles, although terms like equality, self-determination, power–sharing, are very simple basic principles which had been established since the founding of the Union, I am sure all of you will understand that for these principles to become a practical reality and to be practiced in daily life, it is rather very difficult.

The Union Accord, which we will sign at this conference represents the basic principles which we have been able to adopt. These have been the aspiration of all ethnic nationals for so many years; we have aspired for them but without success; this is our solemn promise to practice in daily life this programme without fail. Therefore, the movement for national reconciliation and peace which we have all marched hand-in-hand is indeed a historic movement. It is also a historic milestone which all of us have been able to erect together.

Peacemakers

Peacebuilding is greater than working for the welfare of Union and national people. It is also a noble deed. Peacebuilding is more meaningful than the silence of gunfire, bomb explosion and armed clashes. Instead, peacebuilding is aimed for rooting out an underlying attitude that caused the 'bad politics' which focused on the power of weapons to gain an impression, get respect and to achieve success; peacebuilding is the ultimate goal of peacemakers; it can only be regarded that we could perform our duties well; although there are no gunfire and bomb explosion toady, we could experience armed conflicts in the following day; a genuine peacemaker is the one who could end 'bad politics' and its underlying attitude which depends on weapon power and might.

Dialogues are not enough to remove such evil culture and attitude; some meetings were held to last longer the negotiation and to restore power for those who just rely on the power; the negotiation meetings failed to turn out results although relevant persons are using beautiful words without having a positive attitude; when we are working closely together to solve the problems, we need to practice a political culture to give and take by substituting a bad culture with a new culture; so, I am emphasizing the establishment of a good culture as it is difficult to eliminate bad behaviours.

It is required to be familiar with the practice of 'give and take; it was regarded as a defeat and no one was willing to follow this way in the history; With the concept that negotiation could not find the solution, power was built to avoid the defeat, and the conflicts have prolonged due to the idea of 'power is the key'; actually, realizing the benefits of 'give and take' could build trust gradually; self-trust will be followed by a mutual trust on the dialogue partners and leading to the confidence on the whole collaborative works for ensuring achievement of objectives.

Two options for the Union

Peacemaking process is not an isolated phenomenon; it is related to the economic development of the country, the impacts of COVID-19 on health and education sectors, affects of global economic recession on Myanmar, the New Normal lifestyle beyond the pandemic,

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State Counsellor and Chairperson of National Reconciliation and Peace Centre makes speech at Union Peace Conference–21st Century Panglong

FROM PAGE-4

holding the upcoming democratic elections, increasing international power competition and geopolitical situations.

As peacemaking efforts in Myanmar are connected with these situations, we have experienced new chances and lost some opportunities; I would like to strongly urge the Tatmadaw, the signatories of NCA and non-signatories of the ceasefire agreement to tightly hold the emerging opportunities from the peace process; the welfare of our Union could bring about the interest of relevant organizations.

Our country or our Union has severely suffered from the armed conflicts over 70 years; the world's longest civil war has occurred in the country; how many years the country will continue suffering uncertain future; it needs to be considered; some immediate and significant impacts from the lack of peace and conflicts are the losses of lives, property, businesses, trades and investments, while we have actually lost education for generations and the future of the country, as well as the health and dignity of people, and countless losses; over 70 years the country has suffered great losses worth of trillions in total and the future of Union and the lives of younger generations in the Union; the history has tasked us for building peace nowadays.

Should we continue wandering the evil routes which have been over 70 years, or should we take the new peace way to the future Union? We have two options in front of us. Which road will be taken? We can choose one of those; we need to have serious consideration at the junction about the future of our Union; before making a step forward, it is required to think about the Union and the younger generations of national people living in this Union.

Peacemaking processes beyond 2020

Before concluding, I want to highlight the future peacemaking process and related works.

The Part III of Union Accord which will be signed in the 21st Century Panglong Conference includes the five topics—

(a) National reconciliation
(b) Peace
(c) Democratic reform
(d) Establishment of a Federal Union
(e) Amendment of 2008 Constitution

Agreements have been made on phase by phase processes and step by step implementation beyond 2020; it is a remarkable result and an historic outcome of our efforts in the past four years; I would like to express thanks to all the stakeholders who patiently tried to reach these agreements.

If these five topics will be implemented in three processes for peace beyond 2020.

The first process is the parallel implementation of national reconciliation and peace in which negotiations will be made with non-signatories of NCA for ceasefire and peace talks; meanwhile, enforcement of ceasefire agreements with NCA-S-EAOs, the effectiveness of ceasefire monitoring processes and implementing the reform process in upward momentum; at the same time, we will work for promoting the people of ethnic rights in line with basic principles in the Union Accord, for harmonizing legal reforms which are prior to the pledges for federalism and for equalizing the works in the administrative sector.

The second process is the simultaneous implementation of democratic reform and establishment of a Federal Union; this process will discuss the remaining three points of its basic principles to find out the standard provisions in the constitutions of states; meanwhile, in line with the Table (1) of phase by phase implementation in the post–2020, the framework for political dialogues must be reformed in a practical way and trying to make agreements on the Table (2) in this processes; more discussions will be needed to carry out a harmonious implementation of reconciliation in politics and security for democratic reform and establishment of a Federal Union.

The third process is the Constitution amendment based on the agreements from the first and second processes; a common political agreement could be made from the discussions on the step by step processes based on the basic principles; amendments of laws and Constitution will be carried out with the participation of experts in work committees as per the roadmap of NCA; the process to write own constitutions of the states and to harmonize security and reconciliation works will also be carried out.

The successive administrations could not accomplish national reconciliation and peace through specific approaches over 7 decades; the NCA has emerged during the term of the previous government; the NCA is the initial step for national reconciliation and peace; the present government have paved a new way for implementing the step by step processes in the post–2020; it would be the way for any new administration for peace and establishment of a Democracy Federal Union.

Advice to people

I would like to make a concluding remark that the expectation of Union will be a far–away dream until we could not bring about justice and equality; we need to seriously review the lessons in the history; we need to cure painful feelings of national people by our consideration; while we are nurturing the fledgeling democracy, we will have to continue working for the establishment of a Federal Union which could make the dream of national people make true.

It is very important for all the national brethren to join hands in building a Union that could address the ongoing challenges of the country; the world will not awaiting us in moving forward; the lack of empathy for the awkward situations of national people will not fulfil the dream of new Union; we need to share the awful feeling of our national brethren.

It is required to share specific values of national people to emerge the attitude and opinion of 'Our Union'; negligence on the instability of other areas and irresponsible attitude to set aside the future of next generations must be removed by empathy and right views; the cooperation of national people will force those who are preventing and deteriorating peace to opt for the path of peace.

Therefore, all need to put their forces into peace process; while the stakeholders in peacemaking processes are leading to emerging a Democracy Federal Union, our people also need to insert their force into this work from the back; it is strongly believed that we could establish the expected Union when this collective strength reaches the highest degree; before we passed away, we want to enjoy peace in our country; with the belief of 'peace is essential', people are urged to cooperate in peacemaking processes and to push for peace.

Thank you all.

(Translated by Kyaw Myaing, Aung Khin)

Women's Rights and Gender Orientation Training conducted in Yangon

MYANMAR National Human Rights Commission and Triangle Women Organization jointly conduct "Women's Rights and Gender Orientation Training" in line with the health guidelines of Ministry of Health and Sports in Yangon yesterday morning.

At the opening ceremony of the training, the MNHRC Chairman U Hla Myint, Vice–Chairman, commission members, office staff and experts joined the ceremony.

Commission Chairman U Hla Myint delivered the opening speech and Triangle Women Organization Founder and Director Daw Khin Lay briefed the purposes of training.

While the MNHRC is conducting field study for the public to improve the human rights affairs, to improve the ability of staff members of commission office and to make preparations for New Normal during COVID-19 pandemic, it conducted training workshop on the rights for the people with disabilities with the participation of Myanmar Independent Living Initiative (MILI) on 2 July and another training workshop on the children's rights with NGO Child Rights Working Group on 22 July.

A total of 35 staff of commission office join the two-day training workshop on women's rights issues.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

Joint training course of MNHRC and Triangle Women Organization is in progress on 19 August. **PHOTO:MNA**

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivers address at Union Peace Conference– 21st Century Panglong

(19-8-2020)

First, I would extend a greeting to officials of the Union, officials of National Reconciliation and Peace Centre (NRPC), officials of the respective ethnic armed organizations (EAOs), representatives of the respective groups, heads of international organizations and ambassadors of foreign missions and all the delegates attending this fourth session of the Union Peace Conference– 21st Century Panglong, and wish you all a peace of mind.

Although it is the fourth session, in fact, it is the fifth session if the Union Peace Conference held during the former government set up under the multiparty democracy system is added. According to the list of comprehensive meetings between the government and the EAOs, there was also a meeting between the government and the three parties of the National Democratic United Front (Ma-da-nya-ta) — the KNU Party, the New Mon State Party and the Karenni National Progressive Party —and the Burma Communist Party (BCP) in 1963 during the time of the Revolutionary Council Government. So, it can also be said the sixth session.

Our country practised monarchy till it lost its independence in 1885. There were Bamar kings, Rakhine kings and Mon kings and the hilly regions had Kachin duwas and Shan chieftains. With the united force of all the national races of the country, the First Myanmar Kingdom (Bagan period), the Second Myanmar Kingdom (Toungoo period) and the Third Myanmar Kingdom (Konboung period) were established. The British launched three aggressive wars against Myanmar, and annexed Rakhine-Taninthayi in 1824, the lower Myanmar in 1852 and the entire country in 1885. Myanmar lost its independence and the monarchy met its end when the British put Myanmar under its empire. Under its divide-and-rule policy, the colonialist restored the chieftain administrative system and the duwa administration under its full supervision. All those systems had ended since 1959 during the post-independence period.

Our country experienced various kinds of administrative systems including the Diarchy and the 91-department under colonialist rule, and it adopted the parliament democracy system when regained independence in 1948. The Caretaker Government and the Revolutionary Council Government assumed state duties during the period from 1958 to 1962, and the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) governed the country under socialist system from 1974 to 1988. The SLORC and the SPDC assumed state duties till 2010 from the time unrest occurred in 1988 amidst the democracy movement, and laid the foundation of multiparty democracy system aspired by the people. Since then, the country has been practising the multiparty democracy system till now in accordance with the wishes of the people. I have recounted all those events as knowledge of the evolution of the administrative machinery of the country.

The world still has the countries that practise monarchy, but their system is much different from the past as the power is limited. In our country, the monarchy, chieftain rule, the parliamentary system and socialist system of the past had already ended. Now we are on the road to multiparty democracy. We cannot live in the past. We must join hands and take part in the multiparty democracy adopted in accord with the aspiration of the people.

Now, let me deal with the issues "ethnic rights" and "minority rights" that can be found almost in the talks or in writings on peace. Our country has over 130 national races, and all are enjoying equality and equity. The Constitution of our country comprehensively stipulates the rights and pledges for the entire people and citizens including all the national races in the Chapter I, in Basic Principles of the Union and the Chapter VIII in connection with the fundamental rights and duties of citizens. In fact, they are not lesser than the norms of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

We need to raise the issues of "ethnic rights: and "minority rights" only in the absence of equality and the presence of discrimination. But there is no discrimination between the majority and the minority in any matters including the legislation, administration, judiciary and social development. The first President or the Head of State of the country after the independence was restored was Sao Shwe Thaik, the

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

Shan national, and his successor was Mahn Win Maung, the Kayin national. Nowadays, the national people are also serving the Union level duties under the multiparty democracy system of the country. Since the past the country has renowned Bamar intellectuals as well as other national academics including Mon and Rakhine intelligentsias. Based on their efforts, all the citizens of Myanmar have been enjoying their rights.

As I often said, it is necessary for all of us to bear in mind that we are Myanmar. It is necessary for all of us to avoid terms and feelings like ethnic rights and minority rights that can undermine trust and encourage disunity, inferiority, and doubts. Such feelings mitigate the motivation of stakeholders. It is the nature of humans that one has greed and desire to want more than others. However, we should be aware that we are the people who live together in a family or a union. The concept that rights must be demanded can destroy the spirit of cooperation and efforts. Only when we can promote the spirit of exerting efforts, will we be able to achieve a union based on federalism we desire. Only then, will we be able to uphold unity as one's own flesh and blood. All of us must cooperate with the Union Spirit without finger-pointing

As for the affairs of national races, Section 22 of the constitution of our country stipulates that the Union shall assist to develop language, literature, fine arts and culture of the National races and to promote solidarity and socio-economic development. Regions and States are delineated under Section 49 of the constitution and self-administered divisions and self-administered zones are delineated under Section 56 of the constitution. Moreover, Section 161 (b) and (c) of the constitution stipulate that Region or State Hluttaw shall be formed with representatives of the Region Hluttaw, each is elected from each national races determined by the authorities concerned as having a population which constitutes 0.1 per cent and above of the population of the Union. If national races want to participate more comprehensively in legislation, I would like to advise all to consider the current election system and the proportional representation (PR) system.

Democracy and federalism are defined in various ways. Democracy means democracy owned by and of the people, democracy for the people, and democracy opted by the people. In essence, it is a people-centred public administration. It is an administrative system elected based on the will of the majority of people. Federalism is a concept of sharing mandates in cooperation among different regions, states, national races, and ethnic groups. In essence, it is a concept of unity and sharing. As federalism is just a concept, it cannot be understood dogmatically and it can vary based on a particular country, geographical region, race, and religious faith. We have agreed in the first paragraph of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement which aims to end armed conflicts and achieve sustainable peace that we will establish a union based on the principles of democracy and federalism.

The fundamental prerequisite for establishing a union based on the principles of democracy and federalism is internal peace. Successive governments have exerted efforts to achieve internal peace and to end armed conflicts since regaining independence. The Tatmadaw has actively participated in the efforts. However, it is necessary to take into account why peace has not been restored so far. I have already talked about this in previous events, meetings and discussions. I would like to point out three main factors. The first one is the dishonesty in implementing the peace process. The second is the desire to link the peace process with other processes and the third is the weakness in upholding decisive basic principles.

First of all, stakeholders are required to be honest in implementing the peace process. After regaining independence, the AFPFL government held negotiations with the then powerful BCP armed group many times. The BCP always exploited the situation then. The policy laid down by the central committee of the BCP in 1955 or 55 policy to mobilize the people by upholding a slogan to end the civil war and to achieve peace in accordance with the desire of the people as a tactic and launching a propaganda campaign that accused the AFPFL government of the main culprit of the civil war. I am pointing out this as it reflects the situation today. We can see the fabrication of history that internal armed conflicts have broken out due to the Tatmadaw. Some political parties and armed organizations, like the 55 policy of the BCP, have fabricated history by substituting the Tatmadaw in the place of the AFPFL government.

Moreover, there are concepts that armed conflicts are concerned not with the government that is responsible for all the affairs of the state but with the Tatmadaw and EAOs and the government is neutral and must act as a referee. EAOs are opposing the Union and successive governments. If one studies the history objectively, it can be seen that the Tatmadaw is protecting the Union and successive governments. I would like to say that it is dishonest to drive the current peace process based on ideologies and concepts of the 1950s. To use a popular phrase at that time, I would like to urge them not to sell dog meat by displaying a goat head. Based on its experience, the Tatmadaw is taking measures to prevent what should not happen from happening and to pave way for what should happen to happen. The Tatmadaw always upholds 'Our Three Main National Causes' as the national duty.

SEE PAGE-7

To make sure that those who return from abroad will get jobs

This COVID matter is still not finished; this challenge has not reached its end-stage; we must still struggle and keep up our efforts; the Union Government will work hard to make sure that those who return from abroad will get jobs; business entrepreneurs should also help as needed; if everyone participated and cooperated, in the long run it will be for the benefit of all; we need to work so that our citizens no longer need to go abroad to seek for jobs and also to ensure that local enterprises will get more qualified workers and increase their productive capacity; this is beneficial for both parties.

(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's discussions on livestock and fisheries sector with stakeholders on 7 July 2020.)

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivers address at Union Peace Conference– 21st Century Panglong

(19-8-2020)

FROM PAGE-6

Secondly, I would like to point out that some organizations want to link the peace process with other processes. There is nothing more important than the interests of the nation or national interests in a country. In building a democratic system, the phrase 'No one is above the law' is the fundamental principle for the sustainability of the foundation of democracy. Similarly, it must be borne in mind that no one or no organization is above the national interests in State-building and Nation-building. It is obvious if one takes what is happening at present into consideration.

National interests of our country is non-disintegration, non-disintegration of national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty. To implement these causes, we are carrying out peace process. The peace process needs to steadfastly emphasize and reflect the national interests. If peace process is attached to other work process based on personal desire, political gains and interests of an organization, not only peace process but also other processes will not achieve success. Although the Myanmar saying which goes: "one stroke, two pieces" is a flowery word, I accept that it is necessary to have "one stroke for one piece" in the real life.

For the third point, "it is necessary to firmly stand on the exact and precise basic principles". Peace processes are based on basic principles. It is the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA). I have given clarifications for many times how the NCA emerged, and what the NCA comprised. And, I explained that the NCA was titled with ceasefire agreement but the agreements and future tasks included in the NCA were wider than the definition of ceasefire with the aim how to build the future Union. Such kind of agreement signed by many organizations by taking adequate time for negotiation had never come out in the history of peace process in Myanmar. So, NCA is basic principles of peace process. We should not derail from such route. It is very dangerous that responsible persons themselves waver over the agreement as well as do not stand on it firmly. I would like to urge you all to "widely consider, firmly stand and vigorously do".

A saying in the medical corps goes "prevention is better than treatment". There is no drug to cure Covid-19 pandemic till today. How do our global people face the world's pandemic without any drug for treatment? We all are facing it with prevention. We all are encountering it with having high immunity. The main duty of the Tatmadaw is to defend the State. The word of defence is very wide. It cannot be accepted that State defence means protecting the territory of the country and safeguarding of life and property of the people. It is necessary to take its meaning into consideration to safeguard National interests of the State and protect future of the State. It is necessary to build the unity of the country as immunity to have strengthening. We all should conscientiously expose the issues on disintegration of solidarity of the State and lessening of national immunity of the State. We should make concerted efforts for preventing these issues.

The Tatmadaw on its part is striving for ending the internal armed conflicts which might lessen unity of the State, national immunity and defence capability. The Tatmadaw has been making efforts for ending the armed conflicts in successive eras as well as will strive for such issue in the future.

To be able to successfully implement democracy and federalism, the Tatmadaw has adopted three policies for stability of the State, national unity and development of social economy while participating in the reform process of politics, administration and economy of the State. In so doing, it is necessary to effectively narrow the development gap between states and regions, the gap of social system between rural and urban areas and poor and wealthy gap which are actual needs of the country for ensuring unity and improvement of social life. Narrowing the internal gaps must lead to minimize the gaps between regional and ASEAN countries and our country. Everybody says our country is rich in sources including natural resources. It is right to some extent but not totally right. We are still weak in well-versed human resources qualified for effectively utilize already existed material resources.

For example, a data based on the census population of our country issued in 2014 showed 5.6 million of people in five groups aged between 5 to 21 years had not totally enrolled the schools. It means 5.6 million of 54 million population of our country had not totally attended the school with weakness in knowledge. When I study the education census of the State during the period of 22 years from 1997 to 2019, I found a total of 27 million of children attended basic education schools during the period. There are 22 million children till 2014. A total of 12 million among 27 million of children could reach the fifth standard in 2019. More than a half of those students ended their learning in the primary education. Likewise, a total of 12 million of children learned education in observing the data during the 10-year period from 2000 to 2009. Just 6.4 million of students could reach the fifth standard of middle education. It is actual education situation of our State. The school age children in around 1997 to 2002 become the youths who have turned 18 years to cast vote in the election.

This is why efforts must be exerted to help promote the education of the entire people. I happened to learn that education means promoting the personality skills and way of thinking of a learner rather than directly applying the skills he has learned. World countries are categorized into developed, developing and underdeveloped ones based on education standards. That follows suit for humans as well. Job availability, appointment and assignment are different based on education and performance. To put it simply, we must go to school if we want to pursue education. After studying, we must take exams. These are the things we must do by ourselves. What parents and guardians can do is to enrol their children at school and provide necessities for their schooling and education. Knowing this natural phenomenon, we can change all our differences. This cannot be done through demand. Regarding this, I said at the fourth anniversary of NCA signing in October 2019, "No one else will help us build a federal democratic union. We ourselves will have to build the federal democratic system suitable to our country. All the national people and citizens must work together to do this. Instead of focusing on the only desire incompatible with our prevailing conditions, we should pay attention to all possibilities in order to facilitate the peace process."

In our country, the multi-party democracy general election is only over two months away. Election is crucial and it is the process we must complete for the multi-party democracy we are practising in accord with the people's wishes. At the third round of the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong Conference held in July 2018, I emphasized the need for completing the peace process at the Union Peace Conference to be held in 2020 as we have the election in the same year. At the third anniversary of the NCA signing in October 2018, I reiterated that "Tatmadaw had vowed to complete the peace process by 2020. As it had vowed, eternal peace would be brought to the hands of the people as they aspire". Designating 2019 as the year of peace, Tatmadaw made unilateral ceasefire for nine months from 21 December 2018 to 21 September 2019 by issuing ceasefire and eternal peace statements, and that had never been seen throughout the peace history of Myanmar. The extended ceasefire from 10 May 2020 to 31 August was also announced. This is because based on the experiences from the 2010 and 2015 elections, we are intentionally trying to ensure stability in conflict areas and protect the people against any pressure and fear from the armed groups when they cast their ballots. At the same time, we are trying to build a peaceful and stable country. But, those responsible failed to take it seriously. We all have responsibility to ensure a free and fair election, choose parliamentary candidates qualified for serving for the peace of the State and national development and ensure the emergence of a visionary government. Thus, all those in attendance will have to make efforts in their respective roles. I would like all the people not only to pay attention to the election but also to ensure a free and fair election.

In conclusion, I would say:

- We shall have to observe what is required and what causes hurdles in our peace process and make reform as quickly as possible.
- We shall have to serve national interests, not self-interests, realizing that nothing is as important as our peace process.
- We shall have to march towards the peace goal with a sense of oneness and the spirit of Myanmar.
- All respective regions shall have to try to make the multi-party democracy general election to be held soon free and fair without any subversive act. Thank you all. ■

20 AUGUST 2020
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Build a political culture of negotiation to replace old politics of evil

THE fourth session of the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong began in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, with a pledge to sign the Union Accord in three parts.

Hence, the fourth session of the Union Peace Conference has become a milestone in our country's history of peacemaking and national reconciliation, inspired by the aspirations of the people for over seven decades.

In fact, building peace is a noble task and mission. Building peace in our country does not mean just silencing guns and bombs. It is also committed to eliminating the root cause of the mindset leading to "evil habit of politics", which relies on the force of arms to win over others. This is the ultimate goal of the peacemakers.

> To bring eternal peace to our country we need to make efforts and have the political will to destroy the mindset of the politics of evil. Only then will we deserve to be "peace builders".

Just signing a truce cannot guarantee peace, since the truce can collapse the next day, unless we have conquered the politics of evil.

To bring eternal peace to our country we need to make efforts and have the political will to destroy the mindset of the politics of evil. Only then will we deserve to be "peace builders".

To achieve this mission, just sitting at a negotiation table is not enough. The word "negotiation" is beautiful, in term of meaning, but if those who sit at the negotiating table are not willing to seek answers or to break deadlocks, then we will never reach our ultimate destination.

As we negotiate to reach common agreements on issues where our views differ, we must recognize that courtesy is not weakness, and negotiating is not giving concessions. Honesty, trust, awareness and wisdom are necessary for negotiations to succeed.

Rather than focusing on problems that can exacerbate our differences, we must seek to identify those issues which can help to strengthen unity between us. Through dialogue, we can develop understanding, friendship, and empathy.

We must cultivate the culture of negotiation in our country, while keeping true and resolute in our quest for total peace, though it is difficult to relinquish those evil habits which have taken root in our culture.

Through negotiations, let's build a political culture which can replace the politics of evil.

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AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW FOR GNLM

Japan has no change in its position of fully supporting Myanmar's democratic nation-building through the partnership of the public and private sectors: Ambassador of Japan

The following is an exclusive interview with Mr Maruyama Ichiro, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Ambassador Mr Maruyama Ichiro. PHOTO: KYAW ZAYA

Q: It is only a few months away, the General Election will be held in Myanmar. Transition to Myanmar's democracy is facing many difficulties, including peace and Rakhine issue. So how will Japan continue to stand for Myanmar's democratic transition?

A: In Myanmar, transition to democracy began in 2015. The 2015 General Election became a free and fair one. Myanmar deserves appreciation for that achievement. I would like to express my deepest respect to the people of Myanmar and all those who have worked hard over the years to overcome various difficulties in building a democratic nation in Myanmar. I am convinced that the upcoming General Election in November 2020 will be conducted in a free and fair manner.

Japan has no change in its position of fully supporting Myanmar's democratic nation-building through the partnership of the public and private sectors. Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan Mr Motegi will visit Myanmar from August 24 to 25 in order to directly reiterate such Japan's firm position. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Myanmar People, Myanmar Government, and Myanmar Tatmadaw for warmly welcoming the first visit of Japan's Foreign Minister while still facing difficulties due to COVID-19.

Myanmar is facing many challenges, especially peace issue. This is a very complex issue. That is why, the Government of Japan has appointed Mr Sasakawa Yohei, the Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for National Reconciliation in Myanmar for the peace process. As part of his mission, he came to Myanmar, and met with leaders of the ethnic armed organizations, the State Counsellor and the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. The Government of Japan, together with Mr Sasakawa Yoheiwill continue to support the Myanmar Government to achieve peace and ceasefire in Myanmar.

Another one is Rakhine State issue, which is very complex as well. In this context too, the Government of Japan will stand together with the Myanmar Government and Myanmar people and will continue to cooperate with them. We will provide assistance to Myanmar as and when required. Japan will continue to cooperate with the Myanmar Government in tackling challenges being faced by Myanmar, including peace issue and Rakhine State issue.

Q. To recover economy after COVID – 19, Myanmar will have to rely heavily on investment as a developing country after COVID -19. We expect Japanese investors to come and invest here. How can you get investors to come, Your Excellency?

A: Japanese business community has been very much interested in doing business in Myanmar. With such an ardor, we held the Myanmar-Japan Investment Dialogue via videoconference on July 29 this year. The conference was attended by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Thaung Tun and Deputy Minister U Sett Aung from the Myanmar side. From the Japan side, over1,500 Japanese business persons attended the forum. This shows how much interest and enthusiasm the Japanese business community has in making investments in Myanmar.

Myanmar deserves praise for having been able to control the COVID-19 outbreak successfully. Myanmar Government brought back its nationals stranded in Japan due to COVID-19 by relief flight. Some Japanese business persons were authorized to take the same flight to return to Myanmar.

We would like to express our gratitude to the Myanmar Government for helping Japanese business community to return to Myanmar. The Government of Japan will provide necessary assistance to Myanmar to develop economy through the ODA.

For the development of Myanmar's economy, investments of Japanese business community are important. Therefore, the Embassy of Japan will continue to strive to attract investments from Japan to Myanmar.

Q: Prime Minister Abe Shinzo paid an official visit to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar from May 24 to 26 in 2013, which was the first visit by a Japanese Prime Minister in 36 years. Please let us know about Prime Minister Abe Shinzo's current support to the efforts of Government of Myanmar towards democratization, prevalence of the rule of law, economic reforms and national reconciliation.

A: The relationship between Prime Minister of Japan Mr Abe Shinzo and Myanmar began in March 1983 when he first visited Myanmar as aide to the then Foreign Minister of Japan Mr Abe Shintaro, Prime Minister's father. Since then, he has visited Myanmar many times and he feels very close to Myanmar and the people of Myanmar. Assistance for the construction of elementary schools in his personal capacity shows his affections to Myanmar.

During State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's official visit to Japan in 2016, Prime Minister Abe promised at the bilateral meeting to contribute 800 billion yen (US$ 8 billion) over five years for Myanmar's nation-building at public and private levels, for which Japan will cooperate with Myanmar. Gaining momentum by the visit of Foreign Minister Motegi to Myanmar next week, Japan will further cooperate with Myanmar in various sectors such as peace, democratic transition, health, education and development of human resources.

> More than 100 local and foreign companies are building factories in the Thilawa SEZ. They are still operating without a halt during COVID-19 pandemic.

Q:Japan and Myanmar have laid historically strong partnership foundation (Special Relationship) since the outbreak of World War II. So, let us know about your views on how you will improve bilateral relations since you become Japanese Ambassador in Myanmar.

A: Whenever I am asked this question, I always answer that we, Japan and Japanese people owe a debt of gratitude to Myanmar and its people. Japan gave trouble to Myanmar during World War-II. But, when Japanese soldiers retreated from Myanmar after they had been defeated in the war, Myanmar people helped them much. Myanmar people to whom Japan gave trouble helped the Japanese troops. This is quite a remarkable story.

In addition, Myanmar was the first country in the world to conclude the Treaty of Peace and the Agreement for reparations and economic cooperation with Japan after WWII, which allowed Japan to follow the path of post-war reconstruction. As Myanmar signed the treaty, other countries followed suit.

After WWII, Japan was facing severe food shortage during the reconstruction period. Myanmar generously continued to provide rice to Japan for as long as over 10 years. Up until now, the Japanese people have always been grateful to Myanmar and the Myanmar people for their kindness.

I was assigned to the Embassy of Japan in Yangon five times. It means I have been working in Myanmar for 25 years. The current period is totally different from that of my first assignment. Now is the crucial time for Myanmar's politics and economy. In this regard, I feel that the time is ripe for the Government and people of Japan to work hard as a good friend.

We hope Mr Motegi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, will have good discussions with Myanmar leaders for further collaboration when they hold face-to-face meetings during his first visit to Myanmar as Foreign Minister on August 24 and 25.

Q: Myanmar is production-based country and also considered as potential market in the future. I would like to know your Excellency's efforts to enhance economic cooperation between Japan and Myanmar which will benefit both countries.

A: Our Prime Minister pledged that the Government of Japan will contribute JPY 800 billion to Myanmar in 2016. When it comes to making this pledge, we designated three sectors. The first sector focuses on transport including railway, airport and port infrastructure. The second sector is electricity and energy which are indispensable for industry. The third sector is the development of Yangon City. We will provide assistance to Myanmar for the development of this commercial city.

Remarkable success achieved by Japan in cooperation with Myanmar is Thilawa Special Economic Zone. More than 100 local and foreign companies are building factories in the Thilawa SEZ. They are still operating without a halt during COVID-19 pandemic. We are working hard to bring benefits from the Thilawa SEZ to Myanmar.

Thilawa SEZ will ensure that Myanmar gains technology and experiences so that Myanmar can work self-reliantly.

Q: I would like to know Japanese Government's assistance in Poverty Reduction in Myanmar, Regional Development of Ethnic Minorities, Human Resource Development, Political, Economic and Social Organizations Development, Infrastructure Development and Sustainable Development.

A: As I said recently, transport plays an important role to develop economy in Myanmar. For example, the two governments are working together on the development of the Yangon-Mandalay Railway with the ODA loan from Japan. In Yangon, the Yangon Circular Railway is being upgraded.

Another important sector is education. There are no basic education schools in some rural areas. School buildings are also constructed underJapan's poverty eradication project.

SEE PAGE-13

The four objectives

1. To mobilize the participation of all citizens in combatting human trafficking as a national duty;
2. To have the public instilled with awareness about and knowledge of trafficking in persons;
3. To protect and care trafficked victims with empathy; and
4. To strengthen cooperation and coordination among all counter trafficking stakeholders -- government agencies, civil society organizations, UN agencies, international organizations and general public.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Electricity and Energy
Public Notification

1st Waxing of Wagaung 1382 ME
19 August 2020

1. The Ministry of Electricity and Energy made an announcement on 10 July 2020 to exempt 75 units from the electricity bills of consumption from 1 July 2020 to 15 July 2020 when COVID-19 preventive measures were increased.
2. An additional exemption of 75 units will be deducted from the electricity bill from 16 July to 31 July. Thus, a total of 150 units between 1 July and 31 July 2020 will get exemption from the electricity bill.
3. In delivering the electricity bills for July, 75 units for the period from 1 July to 15 July were exempted from the electricity bill.
4. Therefore, the remaining 75-unit exemption for the period from 16 July to 31 July will be deducted from monthly electricity bills of consumption commencing August.

Ministry of Electricity and Energy

Flood Warning
(Issued at 11:00 hrs M.S.T on 19-8-2020)

According to the (10:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Ayeyarwady River at Shwegu is observed as about (1½) feet below its danger level. It may reach its danger level during the next (2) days.

According to the (10:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Ayeyarwady River at Katha is observed as about (2½) feet below its danger level. It may reach its danger level during the next (3) days.

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas at Shwegu and Katha Townships to take precaution measure.

Flood Bulletin
(Issued at: 13:00 hrs MST on 19-8-2020)

Flood condition of Chindwin River

According to the (12:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Chindwin River at Hkamti has exceeded by about (2½) feet above its danger level. It may fall below its danger level during the next (2) days.

According to the (12:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Chindwin River at Homalin has exceeded by about (2) feet above its danger level. It may continue to rise from the present water level by about (2½) feet during the next (2) days and may remain above its danger level.

According to the (12:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Chindwin River at Phaungpyin has exceeded by about (1½) feet above its danger level. It may continue to rise from the present water level by about (2½) feet during the next (2) days and may remain above its danger level.

Advisory

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas in Homalin and Phaungpyin Townships to take precaution measure.

Speech by Sao Yawd Serk, Chairperson of Restoration Council of Shan State, at 4th Session of Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong

I would like to first extend my greetings to the esteemed individuals attending this Fourth Session of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong, including President U Win Myint and other leaders, government officials, Hluttaw Speakers, leaders of the Defence Services, ethnic armed organizations and political parties, representatives from various organizations, foreign diplomats, international organizations and special guests.

Today is an auspicious day for all the citizens of the nation and for ourselves and a historic day as well. It is because we managed to take important steps towards establishing lasting peace and a Federal Union that we are all wishing for, and that is organizing this Union Peace Conference that is as essential as a blood vessel for the peace process in building a Federal Union.

We had to go through numerous processes, negotiations and meetings, compromises and challenges to convene the Fourth Session of the Peace Conference as we are doing right now. I acknowledge that there are numerous individuals and organizations that deserve our gratitude

Sao Yawd Serk, Chairperson of Restoration Council of Shan State

during the 9 years of the peace process.

I wish to record my expression of gratitude to former President U Thein Sein and his cabinet including former Union Minister U Aung Min for leading the formation of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), New Mon State Party Chairman Nai Han Thar for leading the EAOs through the Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team (NCCT) to create a draft for the NCA together with NCCT members and the Senior Delegation, the leaders from government, Hluttaw, Tatmadaw, EAOs and political parties for enacting the NCA, UN representatives, foreign diplomats and organizations, Myanmar Peace Centre for their support in the peace process, local organizations and other relevant individuals for their cooperation.

I also wish to honour the Peace Process Steering Team, the current government leaders and Tatmadaw leaders for carrying on with the implementation of the NCA from the previous administration, the National Reconciliation and Peace Centre, and Peace Commission.

The NCA is more than a ceasefire agreement as it will also pave the way for a Federal Union through political dialogue and implementation of those results. There are mechanisms in place for holding political dialogue on one side while monitoring to strengthen the ceasefire agreement on the other side.

Making amendments, revisions and revoking to parts of the Constitution and to existing laws based on decisions made at the peace conference, in addition to civilian protection, socio-economic affairs, and military affairs as outlined in the NCA, are also in effect. Making gradual changes to the Constitution as mentioned in the NCA will go in tandem with establishing a Federal Union.

There is also making balanced discussions on security matters as the nation changes and develops and to implement them successively. The NCA has a detailed 7-step roadmap for this as well and we need to strictly follow that roadmap as we implement the NCA.

The Union Peace Conference normally has to convene once every 6 months but we were unable to do so due to various reasons. This was a great loss to the peace process. We only managed to hold the peace conference 3 times in the past 3 years but we reached 51 points of agreement. But we should have been able to create something more comprehensive.

We managed to resolve the distrust, suspicions, extra vigilance, unyielding principles, and different methods employed but we could achieve enough compromise to

SEE PAGE-11

Speech by Sai Nyunt Lwin, Vice-Chairperson (1) of Shan Nationalities League for Democracy, at 4th Session of Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panlong

I wish for the mental and physical wellbeing of everyone in attendance at this conference. I am grateful for the opportunity to represent the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy at this 4th Session of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong.

It is my understanding that this Union Peace Conference is an endeavour to end the prolonged armed conflicts in Myanmar through national reconciliation. It is the simple objective of rejuvenating the lapsing national development and pushing it forward.

We are now at the fourth session of the Union Peace Conference and we have reached as far into our journey as we should have. But it would not be wrong to assume we have not gone as far as we have hoped to. I realize we need to continue trying hard.

Everyone is aware that we cannot choose our neighbouring countries but our ancestors selected their neighbors back in 1947 to come together as one nation, one house and that choice was a fascinating milestone in Myanmar's history.

They chose to form a united nation by signing the Panglong Agreement in 1947 and consequently created the Union of Myanmar we are all living in now. From that point on we all became akin to brothers and sisters living under one roof. All the people living under the roof of the Union of Myanmar, for better or for worse, will have to live peacefully with one and another. Thus, it is paramount that there is equity among the rights, equality, freedom and opportunities among thdif-

Sai Nyunt Lwin, Vice-Chairperson (1) of Shan Nationalities League for Democracy

ferent groups.

From a certain perspective, the union we are living in right now is in essence the newly formed union created by the Panglong Agreement in 1947. Tagaung and Bagan is a chapter in history created by a certain ethnic group in the past because the other ethnic groups living together in the nation have their own unique history and happenings. We need to see that we are writing a new history for the new union and even more so while we focus on national reconciliation.

As we have chosen to live together with different ethnic groups in a nation it is not as easy to choose again. We decided to live together from 1948 and there is no other choice than to exist peacefully together into the future. We must not isolate any one organization or ethnic group in Myanmar's society. It is not a right thing to do and no one will accept it as well.

I have noticed people saying there is no other choice than to encourage love for one's own country. Patriotism is an essential quality and inherent to every ethnic group from birth. But with a nation housing as many ethnic groups as we do, it is certain we will have different definitions of patriotism. If we each hold on to our own brand of patriotism then it will be difficult to reconcile with each other. The only spirit that can unite the different sense of patriotism across the ethnic groups is the love and patriotism towards the union. I believe we need to put that spirit first and our different sense of patriotism second.

It is not individual patriotism but the love of our union that will lead the way for national reconciliation and establish solidarity as well. And from there, we deeply believe we can implement union peace.

It is also unacceptable that a single group should have greater control of the nation and even more so in a nation that houses so many different ethnic groups. Anyone who meets the criteria should be given the opportunity to lead regardless of their ethnicity. I urge you to create a nation that is shared among the ethnic groups living in it together.

The proliferation of a national identity centred on a single ethnic group while ignoring the identities of other ethnic groups cannot be dragged any longer in a more open-minded age like the present. As the patriotism of a single ethnic group is elevated for long, other ethnic groups would gradually try to reestablish their own culture and patriotism. While that can be seen as a positive factor the reality now is that there is less priority for issues concerning the entire nation and more focus on the issues of each of our own ethnic group.

We must realize that the organizational and single ethnic identity issues trumping the need for the affairs of the union to be placed first is a huge challenge for establishing unity. The truth is all ethnic groups are yearning for equality and as that remains unsuccessful the demands will keep growing. There is nothing to lose in advocating for equality. We only need to have kindness in our hearts.

I want us to view this peace conference as a means to fully implement the details of the Panglong Agreement signed in 1947. I do not wish it to be a conference that aims to overshadow and nullify the Panglong Agreement, as some people fear. I sincerely urge everyone to not allow that to happen.

It is my belief that we need to swiftly establish the national reconciliation that is necessary to our union. We are all aware of the economic delays caused by COVID-19 and our situation being placed between the power struggle of two geopolitical powers. It is a worrying predicament for our nation that has a lot of conflict. It is similar to foreign diseases evading when the immune system is weak. We need to build up our immune system and the only way to do that is to quickly implement national reconciliation.

May we succeed in swiftly building union solidarity and with those words of peace, I conclude my speech. Thank you everyone. *(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)*

■

Myanmar Hluttaw holds third coordination meeting for 41st AIPA General Assembly

MYANMAR Hluttaw organized the third coordination meeting yesterday to join the virtual 41st ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) General Assembly.

During the meeting at Zabuthiri Hall in the Hluttaw compound, Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat, who will lead the Myanmar Hluttaw delegation, coordinated the sector-wise discussions for the General Assembly, made by Deputy Minister for the Office of State Counsellor U Min Lwin, AIPA Joint Committee Chairman U Zaw Thein, Leader of Political sector Daw Su Su Lwin, Leader of economic sector U Naing Htoo Aung, Leader of social sector Dr San Shwe Win, Leader of women affairs sector Naw Hla Hla Soe, Leader of youth affairs Daw Wint Wah Tun, AIPA administrative sector Leader Daw Pyone Kathy Naing, Director-General from Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Office U Kyaw Soe and Director-General from ASEAN Affairs Department U Hau Khan Sum. The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker concluded the meeting with his advice to the attendees for making more preparations and better cooperation for the General Assembly.—MNA

(Translated by TTN)

Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Speaker U T Khun Myat presides over meeting to prepare for 41st AIPA General Assembly on 19 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

Working Committee meets to address COVID-19 impacts on Myanmar's economy

THE eighth meeting of the Working Committee to address the impact of COVID-19 on the country's economy was held via videoconference yesterday morning.

The meeting was chaired by U Thaung Tun, Union Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations. Members of the working committee Union Minsters U Soe Win and Dr Than Myint, Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar U Kyaw Kyaw Maung and representatives of the Ministries concerned took part in the meeting.

Union Minister U Thaung Tun chairs 8th meeting of Working Committee to address COVID-19 impact on Myanmar's economy on 19 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

The meeting discussed matters relating to the expeditious processing of the loan applications for the second 100 billion kyats funded by the state and the prompt disbursement of the loans to the enterprises by the Myanmar Economic Bank and the private banks that have agreed to assist in the task.

It is learnt that to-date over 10,200 applications for loans have been received by the committee via the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), CCI of States and Regions and directly online. — MNA

Speech by Sao Yawd Serk, Chairperson of Restoration Council of Shan State, at 4th Session of Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong

FROM PAGE-10

create more content for the Union Accord. We need to keep these lessons and experiences to heart as we move forward.

The Union of Myanmar achieved peace after the Panglong Agreement was signed between the various leaders back on 12 February 1947 but because we could not resolve our political issues with political dialogue, we ended up with armed conflicts that kept Myanmar far behind in the developing world.

U Thein Sein officially announced on 18 August 2011 the invitation to resolve our political issues through political dialogue and opened the way to peaceful discussion. He left a new culture of politics that has become a prominent mark in history.

The current government administration led by the National League for Democracy is equally working hard in the peace process. They managed to persuade the New Mon State Party and Lahu Democratic Union to sign the NCA while still endeavouring to bring in the remaining EAOs that have not signed the NCA. This is good news and good effort.

After the third session of Union Peace Conference in 2018 it was not convened for 2 years as there were negotiations on security matters and basic federal principles and some weaknesses in building trust on each other.

The guidance and management set by the 8th Joint Implementation Coordination Meeting (JICM) helped the government and the NCA-signatories to hold negotiations over the course of 8 months, with 8 official meetings and informal meetings, to create the third part of the Union Accord that will be submitted to the Union Peace Conference.

I would like to express my gratitude to the coordinating bodies of both sides that took the time and effort to continuously organize meetings to reach fair and acceptable results for everyone. I wish to record my acknowledgment of the hard work of these coordinating bodies.

I am filled with enthusiasm that Part III of the Union Accord involves the framework agreement for implementing the NCA, progressive implementation steps beyond 2020, and basic federal principles. I also heard they agreed to continue discussions on the topics that have not reached a mutual agreement yet. Some matters need more time for discussion.

For post-2020, we need to thoroughly negotiate for implementation of peace process in order to reach agreements. The important tasks are to consider how we will ensure implementation in accordance with the three steps of political plan and the three steps of security plan by linking the plans to the development of political situations. We need clear and exact prior agreements on the tasks. Then, the implementation of the process will be smooth.

We need to have all-inclusive policy to plan for inclusion of non-signatories ethnic armed organizations of NCA in the peace process and various levels of political talks for post-2020. Moreover, I would like to urge all to take into account the roles of community-based organizations and social-based organizations.

As we, both sides, have already signed the NCA, so we must strictly abide by the provisions of the NCA. Despite difficulties in implementation of the process, we must continue our march towards our goal, which is to build a Federal Union, through the NCA route.

There will be problems, difficulties and obstacles in implementation of the NCA. However, we jointly own the NCA, so we must jointly try to overcome the obstacles. If it achieves success, we must share the fruits of success. All of us must be accountable for the results, whether they are good or bad.

Moreover, I would like to express thanks to the government and the Ministry of Health and Sports for arranging required medical examinations and taking necessary measures for prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 in order that the conference can be convened successfully despite the COVID-19 crisis.

In conclusion, as mentioned in the NCA "in order to achieve lasting and sustainable peace in this country, we, the signatories to this Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, pledge to each other to diligently work together to implement all provisions included in this agreement completely, successfully and without fail in an accountable, responsible and transparent manner", I would like to urge all groups to collaboratively work so that political talks, including the Union Peace Conference– 21st Century Panglong, can be held regularly in order to build a Union based on democracy and federal system that assures democracy, national equality and the rights of self-determination, in accordance with the results of the political talks.

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo, Maung Maung Swe)

21st Century Panglong convenes first-day meeting

THE first-day meeting of fourth session the Union Peace Conference- 21st Century Panglong was held at Myanmar International Convention Center II (MICC-II) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

The presiding panel of the first-day meeting was led by Chairperson of the Peace Commission Dr Tin Myo Win, with presiding panel members Tar Hla Pe, Lt-Gen Tin Maung Win, Pu Zing Cung and Dr May Win Myint.

In his opening speech, Dr Tin Myo Win said that there was a two-year gap between the third session and the fourth session of the peace conference because of obstacles. He said that there were many hurdles and challenges, so various approaches, including holding informal meetings and special meetings, were used to settle the differences.

He said that some matters could not be agreed in previous meetings, so top leaders who have the authority to make decisions had to organize special meetings to resolve the matters. He added that all possible approaches including "ten plus ten meeting" were used to overcome the obstacles. He continued that negotiations on not only political issues but also ceasefire and military matters were thoroughly conducted to achieve good results.

Dr Tin Myo Win pointed out that despite difficulties, it is very significant to maintain the route of negotiation and dialogue in order to settle differences and resolve obstacles.

Peace Commission Chairperson makes discussions at the first-day meeting of the Union Peace Conference–21st Century Panglong on 19 August. **PHOTO: MNA**

He continued that the government proposed the "Ways Forward for Peace Process" on 13 June, 2019, and Ethnic Armed Organizations welcomed the process. He said that the NRPC Chairperson State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi announced three future peace processes and five federal principles in her opening speech at the ceremony marking fourth anniversary of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) held on 28 October 2019.

Dr Tin Myo Win said that the three future peace processes, which also emphasize on the subjects that should be included in the Part III of the Union Accord, and the five federal principles could facilitate peace talks that were postponed for a long time.

The 8th JICM meeting on 8 January 2020 could make eight resolutions, and the UPDJC and JMC meetings could also be restarted, and those meetings facilitated the fourth session of the Union Peace Conference–21st Century Panglong, according to Dr Tin Myo Win.

He said that the peace process is significant not only for making peace but also for building a Democratic Federal Union. He highlighted that despite different backgrounds of different groups in the conference, all have the same determination to build a Democratic Federal Union and the same wish to make peace process successful. In his closing remark, he urged all groups to exert greater efforts to bring about peace, which all citizens have expected.

During the first-day meeting, Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) Vice-Chairperson Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong explained UPDJC's report, and the Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee - Union Level (JMC-U) rotating Vice-Chairperson Saw Mathew Aye explained JMC-U's report.

Peace Commission Secretary retired Lt-Gen Khin Zaw Oo submitted a proposal on the NCA Implementation Framework; Arakan Liberation Party deputy leader Saw Mra Yazar Lin (UPDJC Secretariat member) submitted a proposal on step-by-step processes and implementation for post-2020; Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) Joint General Secretary Sai Kyaw Nyunt (UPDJC Secretariat member) submitted a proposal on basic principles of building a Democratic Federal Union.

Pyithu Hluttaw MP U Pyone Cho (a) U Htay Win Aung announced detailed programme of the conference, and Maj-Gen Soe Naing Oo announced the rules that all representatives of the conference must follow.

Tar Hla Pe, a presiding panel member of the conference, delivered a concluding speech of the first-day meeting. In his speech, he said that a proposal has already been submitted for the matters related to signing the Part III of the Union Accord, which is the main task of the fourth session of Union Peace Conference.

He pointed out that if everybody genuinely yearns for peace and a Federal Union, the wish will be achieved. He concluded that after signing the Part III of the Union Accord in the conference, all stakeholders should build mutual trust, and exert efforts to reach long-lasting nationwide peace and to build a Democratic Federal Union.—MNA *(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)*

UPDJC holds 28th meeting

THE 28th meeting of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) Secretariat was held at the Myanmar International Convention Centre I (MICC-I) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Peace Commission Secretary Retired Lt-Gen Khin Zaw Oo, Maj-Gen Soe Naing Oo and Brig-Gen Ye Yint Win, Pyithu Hluttaw MP U Pyone Cho (a) U Htay Win Aung, Peace Commission advisory board member U Hla Maung Shwe, Director-General U Zaw Htay of the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor, and Sao Sai Ngern (RCSS), Pado Saw Tar Do Moo (KNU), U Myo Win (ABSDF), Saw Mra Yazar Lin (ALP), Khun Myint Tun (PNLO) and Nai Aung Ma Ngay (NMSP) from the ethnic armed organizations, and U Naing Ngan Lin (NLD), U Myint Soe (USDP), Sai Kyaw Nyunt (SNLD), Tar Hla Pe (Ta'ang – Palaung), and U Thein Tun (NUP) from the political parties and officials attended the meeting.

During the meeting, they discussed the Part III in the Union Accord to be signed in the fourth session of Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong, implementation framework for the NCA, step- by-step processes in Table-1 of implementation plans for post-2020, guiding principles for establishing the Democratic Federal Union, the programmes and plans for the third day of the conference, division of responsibilities at the conference, signatories of the agreement, witnesses and plans for 20th UPDJC meeting.—MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

UPDJC Secretariat holds their 28th meeting at MICC-I in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 August. **PHOTO:MNA**

Japan has no change in its position of fully supporting Myanmar's democratic nation-building through the partnership of the public and private sectors: Ambassador of Japan

FROM PAGE-9

Q:May I know Japanese Government's assistance to Myanmar in the COVID-19 response?

A: We made donation of medical equipment to Myanmar. The Government of Japan is planning to contribute JPY 30 billion not only for health sector but also for the economic recovery in order to support such efforts of the Government of Myanmar as COVID-19 hits the global economy. Mr Motegi, Foreign Minister of Japan, during his visit to Myanmar, will hold talks with Myanmar leaders on cooperation to resume travel between the two countries and measures to enhance cooperation in various sectors including the project to control COVID-19 outbreak.

Q: The Thilawa Special Economic Zone, set up with the help from Japanese Government, performs business in process and the State Counsellor also lauded its success. She urged other industrial zones to emulate or take the example from Thilawa Special Economic Zone. Please share the successful achievements, challenges and difficulties which concern with Thilawa Special Economic Zone.

What are the chances for further investments from Japan and International Community to Thilawa Special Economic Zone?

A:The Thilawa SEZ is a successful symbol of cooperation between the two countries.

More than 100 factories are being constructed and half of them are Japanese factories. For example, Suzuki Myanmar Motor is manufacturing cars. Toyota Myanmar is planning to manufacture cars next year. There will be no change of plan in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic. We wish technology and management of Japanese companies in Thilawa SEZ will help Myanmar companies to operate self-reliantly.

Another one is what State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi proposed at the Myanmar-Japan Investment Dialogue held via videoconference on 29 July. She proposed an idea of establishing a special economic zone in Mon State. We are very much interested in it and considering it seriously. This project will be significant because of its proximity to the East-West Corridor, to Thailand as well as to Yangon and good road transport. If the Government of Myanmar is willing to implement this project, the Government of Japan will consider seriously to work on this project together with Japanese business community.Gaining momentum by the visit of Mr Motegi to Myanmar, the Embassy of Japan, together with the Myanmar Government, would like to consider how we can cooperate to draw on the success of Thilawa SEZ.

Q: Do you have any messages to Myanmar?

A:We highly appreciate the cooperative efforts of the Government of Myanmar and the people for the development of the country amidst COVID-19. In Japan, Myanmar is greatly respected as a good friend. Therefore, the Embassy of Japan in Yangon and the Government of Japan will strive to boost bilateral relations including political, economic and cultural relations.—GNLM

■

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Myanma Port Authority

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No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

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Sr.	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number
1	Multi Ngwe Toe 25 WDG	OMI 25 WDG	Thiamethoxam 25% WDG	P2018-4316

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No.	Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Type and No
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2.	Riceshield 75 WP	Tricyclazole 75% WP	Provisional 2016-3112
3.	Farmozine 80 WP	Atrazine 80% WP	Provisional 2017-3947
4.	Fenfen 240 EC	Oxyfluorfen 240g/l EC	Provisional 2015-2490
5.	Puzate 70 WG	Imazethapyr 70% WG	Provisional 2016-3117
6.	Leadrole 80 WG	Ethiprole 40%+Imidacloprid 40% WG	Provisional 2019-2499
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YRTA remains unchanged in collecting school bus fares

By Nyein Nyein

School bus fares ranged between K20,000 and K50,000 per student last year. **PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR**

YANGON Region Transport Authority (YRTA) will collect the same school bus fare this academic year as that of last year, said YRTA Managing Director U Aung Nyi Nyi Maw.

Last year, the school bus fares were a minimum of K20,000 to a maximum of K50,000 per student depending upon the distance, he added.

"Our YRTA will collect the same school bus fares as last year. But, we will restrict the number of students on board the bus in line with the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Sports," he stated.

Although the school bus can carry 28 students, we will take only 14 students to abide by the social distancing rule imposed because of COVID-19, he added.

At present, a total of 90 students including 57 from TTC (Kamayut), 12 from BEHS (1) North Okkalapa and 22 from BEHS (6) North Okkalapa have registered to ride school buses. So, we are arranging to fix the number of students aboard the buses as well as the routes. The remaining schools are still collecting the list of the students, according to YRTA.

Last academic year, YRTA ran 107 school buses for ten schools with around 2,000 students. Yangon Region government bought 200 school buses to transport the students to their respective schools.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Banana plantation making regular income for growers in Budalin

local villagers in Budalin earn daily income from banana plantation. **PHOTO: WIN OO (ZAYYARTINE)**

THE local residents in Budalin Township are growing banana with the use of water irrigated from river pumping project in Budalin Township, Monywa District, and this project has created jobs for the villagers to enable the latter to earn daily income, according to the waged labourers.

Previously, the farmers were growing the crops depending upon the rainwater. After the government has implemented the river pumping project, the local farmers can enjoy a sufficient supply of irrigation water to grow the banana plants. So, the banana cultivation has created job opportunities for the local villagers who are now earning the daily income.

"We have cut the banana trees and sent them to the market by six-wheel vehicles. If ten persons cut the banana trees from 6 am to 3 pm, they will get a six-wheel vehicle load of bananas which can accommodate 3,000 banana bunches. The loading charge is K150,000. Each person earns K15,000. In the banana-growing season, the labourers are working till midnight to get their extra income," said U Myo Naung, a banana loading worker from Chatkalay Village in Budalin Township.

The banana is grown mostly in Oak Ai, Chatkalay, Khochaung, Aung San Myint and Nyaung Kan villages from Budalin Township. The bananas from those villages are sent directly to Yangon. There are a total of 2,629 acres of banana plantations in Budalin Township, according to the Agriculture Department. —Win Oo (Zayyartine)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

3rd relief flight to fly for Myanmar citizens stranded abroad

BECAUSE of the suspension of international commercial aviation during the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, Myanmar will fly 3rd relief flight on 23 August for Myanmar citizens to bring back from the United States, Costa Rica, Mexico and South Korea.

Following the directives of National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), Myanmar government has been bringing back its citizens by sending the relief flights for those stranded in foreign countries and communities. However, it is not enough to bring back all Myanmar citizens with the weekly regular relief flight programme because there are many Myanmar citizens stranded in the United States.

Therefore, the embassy of Myanmar in Washington requested the relevant departments to fly the third particular relief flight to bring back its citizens through South Korea.

The selected relief flights of Myanmar Airways International (MAI) depart from Incheon International Airport, the Republic of Korea at 4:30 pm (KST) and arrive at Yangon International Airport in the evening. The third relief flight will bring back 125 Myanmar nationals.

Under the management of the respective departments, the returnees will be put under facility quarantine in Yangon Region for 21 days on their arrival. The government arranged the first relief flight on 2 August and the second flight on 12 August. The 3rd relief flight will bring back the citizens on 23 August.

Suspension of the international flights at Yangon International Airport has also been extended till 31 August. Myanmar has reported 379 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with six deaths as of 18 August, according to the latest figures released by the Health and Sports Ministry. —Soe Myint Aung

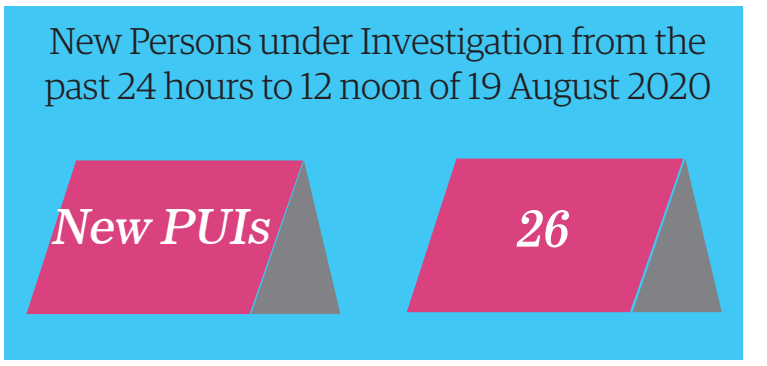
(Translated by Hay Mar)

18 new cases of COVID-19 in Myanmar reported on 19 August, total figure reaches 394

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases reached **394** after **18** new cases were reported on 19 August according to Ministry of Health and Sports. The case Nos. 377, 378, 379 had no contact with positive cases and overseas travell history. Case No 394 returned from the Philippines and others from India. Out of the **394** confirmed cases, **six** died, **333** have recovered, **329** have been discharged from hospitals and **26** were held under investigation.—MNA ■

Updated at 8 pm, 19 August 2020

Recovery Update on 19 August 2020 after two consecutive tests



Eighteen more COVID-19 cases on 19 August 2020: updated at 8 pm

Case No	Age	Gender	Address	Contact with positive patient	Oversea travel history	Hospital for medical treatment	Lab result	Remark
377	23	Female	Sittway Township, Rakhine State	No	No	Peoples' Hospital, Sittway	Positive	Held under quarantine (Sittway Township)
378	50	Female	Sittway Township, Rakhine State	No	No	Peoples' Hospital, Sittway	Positive	
379	45	Female	Sittway Township, Rakhine State	No	No	Peoples' Hospital, Sittway	Positive	
380	37	Male	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India	South Okkalapa Specialist Hospital	Positive	Held under quarantine (Kamayut Township)
381	33	Female	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India	South Okkalapa Specialist Hospital	Positive	
382	57	Female	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India	South Okkalapa Specialist Hospital	Positive	
383	62	Male	North Okkalapa Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India	South Okkalapa Specialist Hospital	Positive	
384	30	Male	North Okkalapa Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India	South Okkalapa Specialist Hospital	Positive	
385	34	Male	Bilin Township, Mon State	No	Yes, India	South Okkalapa Specialist Hospital	Positive	
386	64	Male	Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State	No	Yes, India	South Okkalapa Specialist Hospital	Positive	
387	50	Male	Kanbalu Township, Sagaing Region	No	Yes, India	Waibagi Specialist Hospital	Positive	
388	64	Male	Aungmyethazan Township, Mandalay Region	No	Yes, India	Waibagi Specialist Hospital	Positive	
389	71	Male	Shwepyitha Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India	Waibagi Specialist Hospital	Positive	
390	25	Male	Lewe Township, Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory	No	Yes, India	Waibagi Specialist Hospital	Positive	
391	58	Male	Aungmyethazan Township, Mandalay Region	No	Yes, India	Waibagi Specialist Hospital	Positive	
392	80	Male	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India	Waibagi Specialist Hospital	Positive	
393	29	Male	Botahtaung Township, Yangon Region	No	Yes, India	Waibagi Specialist Hospital	Positive	
394	21	Female	Muse Township, Shan State(North)	No	Yes, the Philippines	Waibagi Specialist Hospital	Positive	

Ministry of Health and Sports

164 Myanmar citizens fly back home from Malaysia

Myanmar citizens returned from Malaysia line up for immigration service at the Yangon International Airport on 19 August 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

A relief flight of Myanmar Airways International (MAI) landed at the Yangon International Airport yesterday night, bringing back a total of 164 Myanmar citizens who were stranded in Malaysia.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports, and local officials helped the returnees for health inspections and arranged for 21-day quarantine.

To bring back the Myanmar citizens who are stranded in foreign countries by relief flights and chartered flights in accordance with the instructions from National-Level Central Committee on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cooperated with the relevant ministries and Myanmar embassies from respective countries.

The Myanmar Embassy in Kuala Lumpur is cooperating with relevant organizations in Malaysia in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to bring home undocumented Myanmar nationals and those who are detained at cells.—MNA *(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)*

MFF holds Audit Meeting for football development

Myanmar Football Federation authorities hold MFF audit meeting for football development on 18 August 2020. **PHOTO:MFF**

INTENDING to promote Myanmar football world, Myanmar Football Federation held the Audit and Compliance Committee (1/2020) meeting at the MFF headquarters in Yangon on 18 August, according to the statement with the MFF.

MFF General Secretary U Ko Ko Thein, MFF Audit Committee Chairman U Hla Htay, and other MFF officials attended the meeting.

During the meeting, U Hla Htay discussed on financial rules and regulations set up by the FIFA and Asian Football Confederation, MFF to obey the rules and regulations set up by the FIFA and upcoming agendas of the MFF Audit Committee.

Next, MFF General Secretary U Ko Ko Thein emphasized on tasks and duties of the MFF audit committee, having external audit firm and audit department, scrutinizing plan on budget using for National Football Teams Department, Football Academies, Referees Departments, and Coaches and Football Technical Department.

The general secretary also focused on financial processes to be performed in line with FIFA and Asian Football Confederation.

The meeting was concluded by reviewing over upcoming agendas and matters of the committee, according to the MFF. —Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Neymar and attacking stars align for PSG in pursuit of Champions League glory

Neymar and Angel Di Maria were both outstanding in Paris Saint-Germain's 3-0 defeat of RB Leipzig in the Champions League semi-finals on Tuesday. **PHOTO: POOL/AFP**

LISBON—An inspired Neymar helped Paris Saint-Germain reach the Champions League final on Tuesday, but the fact that the Brazilian was not their best player against RB Leipzig says everything about the frightening strength of Thomas Tuchel's team and shows why they can be confident of lifting the trophy for the first time.

Neymar has become a different player in his third year in the French capital. His first two seasons at PSG following his 222 million-euro ($264m) transfer from Barcelona were blighted by injuries and constant speculation about a move back to the Camp Nou.

When it became clear last summer that a return to Catalonia would not happen, he knuckled down and decided finally to make a proper go of it in Paris. This is the end result.

After scoring in both legs against Borussia Dortmund in the last 16, just before the coronavirus brought football to a halt, he was outstanding in the 2-1 quarter-final win over Atalanta last week in Lisbon and even better in the 3-0 demolition of Leipzig.

Neymar hit the post twice in the first half, including from an audacious free-kick wide out on the right as everyone waited for a cross.—AFP ■

Former England keeper Hart joins Tottenham on free transfer

LONDON —Former England number one goalkeeper Joe Hart will compete to be number two choice to Hugo Lloris after signing for Tottenham Hotspur on a free transfer on Tuesday (Aug 18) .

The 33-year-old signed a two-year contract with Spurs with the club reportedly agreeing to pay him £50,000 (US$66,000) a week, the same as his wages in an unsuccessful spell with Burnley.

"We are delighted to announce the signing of Joe Hart on a contract until 2022," read a Spurs statement on their website.

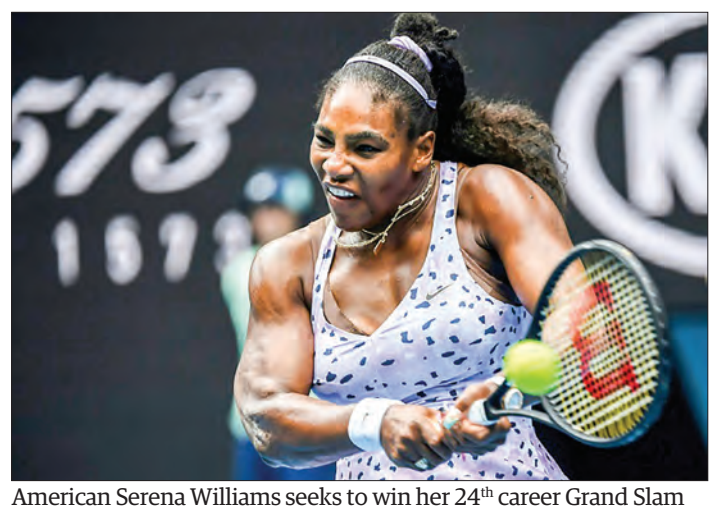
Hart will compete with Paulo Gazzaniga to sit on the bench - and get the nod for either League Cup or Europa League ties - as understudy to Lloris, whose own form was far from consistent last season.

He did excite interest form a variety of clubs ranging from newly-promoted Premier League side Leeds United to second tier Derby County and Scottish champions Celtic.

Hart's fall from grace has been dramatic - set in train by Pep Guardiola's arrival as Manchester City manager on 2016.

Guardiola made clear Hart - who won two Premier League titles, two League Cups and an FA Cup with City - was not his type of goalkeeper and sent him on loan to Italian side Torino and then to West Ham.

He finally found a more permanent home with Burnley in 2018 but ended up as number two to Nick Pope last season.—AFP ■



American Serena Williams seeks to win her 24th career Grand Slam title at the upcoming 2020 US Open to match Margaret Court's all-time record. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

US Open presses on despite rash of withdrawals

NEW YORK —US Open organizers said Tuesday that the number of players willing to compete in the Grand Slam had exceeded their expectations despite several high-profile withdrawals over coronavirus fears.

Defending champion Rafael Nadal, top-ranked woman Ashleigh Barty and world number two Simona Halep are among a list of stars opting to skip the event because of concerns about COVID-19.

But Serena Williams, Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray are all still due to play when the tournament begins at Flushing Meadows in New York on August 31.

"As far as our field, in context of the times and how different the world is, I couldn't be happier. It's exceeded our expectations," United States Tennis Association chief executive Mike Dowse said.

"At the end of the day it's our fans we are here to serve. They're going to see some unbelievable world class tennis."

Halep, the current Wimbledon champion, dropped out on Monday, joining high-profile absentees that include reigning US Open champion Bianca Andreescu of Canada and Ukraine's fifth-ranked Elina Svitolina.

Number seven in the rankings Kiki Bertens and eighth-ranked Swiss Belinda Bencic will also be absent.

The depleted field provides Williams with a golden opportunity as she seeks a 24th career Grand Slam title to match Margaret Court's all-time record.—AFP ■