

Union Election Commission Chairman receives Ambassador of Australia

UNION Election Commission Chairman U Hla Thein received Ms. Andrea Faulkner, Ambassador of Australia to Myanmar, yesterday morning, at the UEC's guest hall in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they cordially discussed matters related to formation and additional appointment of members in the commission, preparation being

made for the 2020 general election, making voter registration lists, measures of gender equality, preparation for amending Hluttaw election laws, 2020 election timetable and measures taken to grant the right to vote to overseas voters with the permission of the government.—MNA ■

(Translated by Win Ko Ko Aung)



Union Election Commission Chairman U Hla Thein receives Australian Ambassador Ms. Andrea Faulkner in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

ASEAN-ERAT visits reception centres in Maungtaw as it cooperates in repatriation of displaced people

ASEAN-Emergency Response and Assessment Team-ASEAN ERAT delegation conducted a field visit to reception centres in Maungtaw from 8 to 10 March, conducting an initial survey for repatriation of displaced people from Rakhine State.

The delegation comprised of 10 members from Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

During the visit, the delegation members practiced the process for accepting the returnees, including meeting with authorities and officials of the reception camps, security and administration at the camps, preparation for education, health, water and sanitation supply, food supply and accommodation, issuing the National Verification cards to returnees, humanitarian aid supply, arrangements for social harmony and diplomacy matters.

They also held talks with Maungtaw district and township level officials over repatriation readiness.

The ASEAN ERAT team

also visited the villages where the returnees would be resettled and observed the houses built with the assistance of UEHRD and donor countries.

On 11 March, the team met with Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu in Sittway and discussed their findings during the visit.

The ASEAN-ERAT team called on Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr. Win Myat Aye in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday and discussed their findings during their field visit to Maungtaw.

The team will report the areas for cooperation in Myanmar to relevant ASEAN members and will keep on cooperation in Myanmar.

ASEAN Secretariat Office, ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance-AHA and Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement are working together for repatriation of displaced people from Rakhine State.

The ASEAN-ERAT conduct-



ASEAN-Emergency Response and Assessment Team meeting with local people during their visit to Pantawpyin Village in Maungtaw, Rakhine State. **PHOTO: MNA**

ed a training in Nay Pyi Taw for safety of the members of the team and called on Union Minister Dr. Win Myat Aye on 6 March.

At the meeting, the Union Minister briefed about bilateral

cooperation between Myanmar and Bangladesh for repatriation of displaced people from Rakhine State, implementation of UEHRD projects, arrangements for settlement of returnees with

safety and human dignity, information sector and cooperation with related ministries and UN agencies.—MNA ■

(Translated by TTN)

First American Business Corner opens in Mandalay

THE first American Business Corner in the ASEAN region was opened at the Mandalay Region Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Mandalay Region yesterday.

The business corner was opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony by the Chief Minister

of Mandalay Region, US Ambassador Mr. Scots Marciel, Minister Counselor for Commercial Affairs, ASEAN, Ms. Margaret (Maggie) Hanson-Muse, MRCCI Chairperson U Kyaw Min, and Mr. John Fleming, a top US official for commerce.

The American Business

Corner aims to facilitate economic ties and successful deals between the U.S. and Mandalay businesses. It also aims to introduce American business practices to Mandalay businesspersons.

Chief Minister Dr. Zaw Myint Maung said the business corner is a platform for taking

the first steps to implement our dreams and aspirations. He said it is a special opportunity as the US chose Myanmar from among the ASEAN countries and then chose Mandalay first from the rest of the states and regions. He said we need to search a market that encompasses the

entire world in order to sustain Myanmar's development and democracy. It is hard for the government to implement this alone but it will succeed with the cooperation of the people, said the Chief Minister.—Tin Maung (Man Sub-printing House) ■
(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

Constructive engagement, cooperation key to promote, protect human rights

MYANMAR is determined to continue its journey towards establishing a democratic federal Union in which the values of human rights and democracy have taken firm root. While carrying out reforms for building such a Union, the Government has been working to bring about peace and national reconciliation, promote the rule of law, develop democratic practices, and ensure a clean government and good governance.

Despite facing challenges along the way, the government is committed to reaching the goal of transforming Myanmar into a democratic federal Union with collective strength. It has been moving step-by-step to make the peace process successful and find a sustainable resolution for the Rakhine issue.

The recent outbreak of violence ignited by attacks on police outposts by AA insurgents has further complicated the situation in Rakhine.

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Hindus, who are yearning to return, of their volition.

It has been questioned as to why the Special Rapporteur has said she was not aware that the displaced persons at the camps in Cox's Bazar have repeatedly expressed their desire to return to Rakhine State.

Myanmar is working not only with the UNDP and UNHCR, but also with ASEAN and regional partners to create a favorable environment for returnees.

Myanmar has taken into consideration the plight of all communities affected by the violence triggered by coordinated attacks of ARSA against multiple security outposts in October, 2016 and August, 2017.

The reason for the massive displacement of the people is the seed of fear sown by ARSA.

The government has said it is committed to ensuring accountability where there is credible evidence of human rights violations in Rakhine State.

The Independent Commission of Enquiry, established by the Union Government, is investigating all alleged violations of human rights and atrocities.

The Government is willing and able to address the accountability issue.

In the meantime, every independent mandate holder or mechanism created by the UN Human Rights Council must strictly adhere to the principles of independence, impartiality, and integrity.

It is also equally important for a mandate holder to refrain from making biased reports and unconstructive statements that can affect prevailing social cohesion and unity in a country.

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Sittway District: the homeland of ethnic Rakhine people

By Maung Tha
(Archaeology)

RAKHINE PEOPLE, once steeped in long traditions of culture, have lived in Rakhine State in the western part of Myanmar. Throughout history Rakhine kingdoms had had kings and palaces which were contemporary with those of Myanmar. Among tangible and intangible cultural heritages in Rakhine State, olden MraukU has been arranged by the government to be able to put in the UNESCO heritage list.

Rakhine State is composed of five districts with 17 townships with the capital city of Sittway. With better transportation, it is easily accessible to the State by Roads; people once reached the State by means of waterway. The journey between Sittway and Thandwe was once only reachable by a domestic flight.

State capital city of Sittway

According to the records of Home Affairs Ministry, the Rakhine went under the British rule after the First Anglo-Burma war on February 24, 1826. The British earlier used the city of MraukU as an administrative headquarters but moved to a commercial hub of Sittway in 1836.

Sittway is situated at the mouth of Kaladan and Mayu Rivers, getting a lot cool winds from the sea and its location is militarily vital. The Arkyat Hill is two miles west of Sittway and the British changed its name as Akyab after several changes of name for the Capital. Sittway Township is 9.88 miles long from the east to the west; 13.24 miles long from south to north and area of Sittway town covers six square miles.

Pauktaw township and Kaladan River are situated in the east, with the Bay of Bengal in the west and the south and in the north lie Ponnagyun and Rathedaung townships. Sittway is situated in the coastal plain, just 15 feet above the sea level. It has a tropical climate with winter temperature lowest degrees of 13.7 centigrade and summer temperature highest degrees of 34.5 centigrade during the period of four years. Every year the township has a rainfall of 200 inches, but in 2017 there was a rainfall of only 48 inches.

According to a statistics issued in March, 2017 the township consists of 33 wards, 27 village tracts and 87 villages with a pop-



The hundreds of pagodas in MraukU are the treasures of Myanmar. PHOTO: NYIZAW MOE

ulation of 229,376 of which 136,869 are Rakhine people, larger than in numbers than any other communities. Sittway has an airport, six helipads, and many seaports; people could go there by air as well as by sea. Buthidaung Township is 80 nautical miles; 40 nautical miles from Rathedaung, MraukU and Minbya townships; 16 nautical miles away from Ponnagyun township; 128 nautical miles away from Kyaukpyu; 224 nautical miles from Taungup and Manaung; 176 nautical miles from Yanbye; 70 nautical miles from Kyauktaw; 64 nautical miles from Myebon and 16 miles from Pauktaw. Now there is a direct link of 534-mile road between Yangon and Sittway which can be covered by car.

Economically vibrant Sittway has two big bazaars: Myoma has 826 shops and Mayu has 144 shops. The town has the Sittway University, the technological University and the Computer University. There are 8 high schools, 6 branch high schools, 6 middle schools, branch middle schools, primary schools and nursery schools. It has a State 500-bed hospital and 16-bed hospital and three Clinics for Leprosy, tuberculosis and malaria. Medical services are being provided for different kinds of patients in the hospitals and clinics.

There are ten pagodas, 172 monasteries and four nunneries with 1030 monks, 1699 novices and 240 nuns residing and keeping the Sabbath in those monasteries. Some monasteries such as Konawin Aye Pagoda, Atulamarazein Pylone Chantha Pagoda and Lawka Nanda Pagoda are famous among others. Myanmar's first lighthouse tower was established in Shukhintha Ward in 1844.

As the capital city of the State, Sittway has been prosperous and highly developed with smooth transportation and infrastructural developments.

Ponnagyun township

As the Sittway District consists of Sittway, Ponnagyun, Yathedaung and Pauktaw townships, the Ponnagyun township is situated on the left bank of the Kaladan River. It is 20 miles away from Sittway by road. In ancient times, the Brahmins were allowed to live to be mingled with the locals, thus getting the name of Ponnagyun. During the days of Rakhine kings, Ponnagyun was known as Uritaung; it was a branch of Yathedaung on 1 April, 1887 and again a branch of Kyauktaw town on 1 July, 1891 after the First Anglo-Burman war: Ponnagyun was then located near Mingan and Natseitma villages at the foot of Uritaung Pagoda. Uritaung town was badly damaged by a fierce storm on 23 October, 1868 and then moved to the present-day Ponnagyun. The

Ponnagyun township is 21 miles from the east to the west and 55 miles from the south to the north and area of Ponnagyun Town covers a total square mile of 0.52.

Pautaw and MraukU townships lie east of Ponnagyun town, in the west lie Yathedaung and Buthidaung townships, in the south lies Sittway and in the north lies Yathedaung Township.

Ponnagyun is 20 feet above the sea level with mountainous regions in the north and a plain in the south. Situated in a tropical monsoon, the town has a temperature ranging between 13 centigrade and 36 centigrade.

According to the statistics issued in October, 2017, Ponnagyun town consists of 4 wards, 92 village tracts and 193 villages with a population of 2137845. Among them are 122070 are Rakhine nationals; 90% of its population are Buddhists.

The town has two hospitals: 25-bed hospital and 16-bed hospital are for the welfare and healthcare of the people.

In addition, there are five high schools and two branch schools and other basic schools in the township.

There are 115 pagodas, 186 monasteries and 8 nunneries; according to the statistics issued in 2017, there were 388 monks, 46 novices and 33 nuns keeping the Sabbath in those monasteries and nunneries.

Yathedaung Township

The township which lies in the north of Sittway was established in 1863. With reference to stories of hermits who once dwelt in mountains, the name of the town is known as Yathedaung (Hermits' mountain). Buthidaung and Maungtaung townships were allowed to join the border administration on 25 July, 1960. Yathedaung consists of 29 village tracts which were transferred and again allowed to come under the Administration of Yathedaung township.

Present-day Yathedaung is 12 miles wide from east to west and 34 miles from the south to the north, and Yathedaung Town's area covers a square of 1.73 miles. It borders with Ponnagyun in the east, in the west with Maungtaung and Buthidaung townships, in the south with Sittway and in the north with Buthidaung township. Religious buildings include pagodas and stupas with 200 monasteries in which 315 monks, 461 novices and 20 nuns residing and meditating in those buildings. There are many famous pagodas Buddha statues and stupas in the township.

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Pauktaw township

The town, situated in the east of Sittway, was established in 1788.

According to the records of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Zinchaung village of Ramawaddy town chief U San Phyu Aung and his wife Daw Mi Hla May bought a plot of pasture from U Mra Phaw Aung of Thayay village for the Rakhine 30 coins; the village of Thawway Pautaw was established in 1788. The name 'Pauktaw' implies the felling of trees grown on the rich pasture. As the village became a town in 1898 to be ruled by the British Township Officer for being in a strategic waterway. Under the Revolutionary Council government, the town was upgraded to B-level status.

The town is 19 miles from the east to the west, 40 miles from the south to the north, and area of Pauktaw Town covers 0.14 square miles. It is in the east of Sittway and Ponnagyun townships; in the west of Minbya township and in the south of MraukU. It is 11 feet above the sea level and the southern part borders with the Bay of Bengal. The township is composed of five wards 53 village tracts and 177 villages with a population of 187000; among them are 154326 Rakhine Buddhists. There are only 18804 townspeople in the wards of the town. A 25-bed hospital and 16-bed station hospital are open to the public. For the students in the township, there are five high schools, seven branch schools, seven middle schools and other basic schools have already opened.

There are 29 pagodas, 244 monasteries with 339 monks, 432 novices and 20 nuns residing and meditating in those buildings. Among the famous pagodas are Sandawshin Pagoda on Myegnu Island and Layudaw Pagoda in the west ward and other pagodas in Taungnyo and Kyauksu wards. The town is situated on the left bank of Kyweku River and in the south there are 8 islands including three Frongar islands.

Sittway District is situated veering towards the west of Myanmar. With better transportation more and more people keep visiting the town for various reasons. Those who wish to go to MraukU will have to go via Sittway so that they are able to study Rakhine's rich cultural heritage.

(Translated by Arakan Sein)



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued on Wednesday 13 March 2019)

SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS RECORDED AT 09:30 hrs MST: During the past (24) hours, Weather has been partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi regions, Kachin, Northern Shan and Rakhine states and generally fair in the remaining regions and states. Day temperatures were (2°C) above March normal temperature in Upper Sagaing Region and about March normal temperature in the remaining regions and states. The significant day temperatures were (40°C) in Chauk, (39°C) each in Taungdwingyi, Ngathaichau and Bawlahe, (38°C) each in Magway, Aungmye, Pauk, Sinbyugyun, Thayawady, Nyaunglebin, Phu, Gyobingauk, Hmawbi, Yangon (Kaba-Aye), Yangon (Northern Dagon), Hinthada, Patheingyi, Zalun, Labutta, Myawady and Ye.

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is a few cloud over the North Bay and partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere in the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF 14 March 2019: Light rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing and Taninthayi regions, Northern Shan and Rakhine states and generally fair in the remaining regions and states.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (3 - 5) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of day temperatures in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions, Shan, Rakhine, Kayah, Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 March 2019: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 March 2019: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 March 2019: Generally fair weather.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

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