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Union Minister U Thaung Tun meets with French Companies, attends Belt and Road Summit

PAGE-2

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A high-level Briefing on recent developments on international arena with regard to Myanmar was held at the President Office

State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will lead the defence team at The Hague



Union Minister for Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe briefing on Myanmar's preparations to defend the application of the Gambia at the International Court of Justice by the defence team led by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Government of Myanmar held a high-level briefing on the case filed by the Gambia against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice concerning the alleged violations of the provisions of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention 1948). The briefing took place this morning

at the Presidential Palace.

Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe and Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin briefed President U Win Myint, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Vice President U Henry Van Thio, Speakers and Vice Speakers of Pyithu Hluttaw and Amotha Hluttaw, Commander

in Chief of the Armed Forces, Union Ministers, and Chief Ministers on Myanmar's preparations to defend the application of the Gambia at the International Court of Justice.

At the Briefing, the Union Minister for Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe and Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin gave briefings on the recent de-

velopments in the international arena with regard to Myanmar, emphasising on the case instituted by the Gambia against Myanmar concerning alleged violations of the provisions of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention) at the International Court of Justice. Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs U Soe Han acted as the Master of Ceremony.

In his briefing to the Union-level dignitaries, the Union Minister for International Cooperation, U Kyaw Tin explained the purpose of the briefing stating that as the issue at hand is related to the high national interest of whole country and all the people of Myanmar,

SEE PAGE-3

Flight Training With Professional Foreign Trainers, International Awarded Female Trainers At Indoor Skydiving.

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Myanmar would welcome those wishing to help in a practical and balanced approach to resolve the Rakhine issue.

FROM PAGE-1

it is necessary to inform the public on the developments in order to avoid undue concerns among the public, based on the principles of openness, transparency and practice of democracy.

He informed that recently, there have been a number of orchestrated moves at the international arena to push for accountability for the alleged violations of human rights following the brutal attacks committed by ARSA terrorists on multiple border police outposts in Rakhine State and the counter attacks made by the security forces in October 2016 and August 2017.

He recalled that the protracted tensions between the two communities in Rakhine State had been escalated again since 2012. Therefore, the current Government took immediate steps to resolve this complex issue of Rakhine State as a top priority soon after taking office in 2016. Those measures include setting up of the Central Committee on Implementation of Peace, Stability and Development of Rakhine State in May 2016 and the Rakhine State Advisory Commission led by Dr. Kofi Annan in September 2016.

At the same time, the Government has been making every endeavour to promote economic and social opportunities in the impoverish Rakhine State. Thanks to these positive steps, the Government's efforts on peace, democratisation and development had gained positive recognition by the international community including the United Nations. Consequently, the annual resolution on Myanmar tabled by the European Union at the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly since 1991 came to an end in 2016 and economic sanctions imposed by the United States on Myanmar were also lifted.

However, the outbreaks of violent attacks by ARSA against multiple police outposts and the counter attacks launched by security forces in October 2016 and August 2017 and subsequent mass displacement of people from northern Rakhine State to Bangladesh attracts the great attention of the international community on humanitarian ground. This resulted in resurgence of growing international pressure again on Myanmar due to lack of

understanding on the complexities of the issue and the narratives of the people of Myanmar.

In addition to its ongoing efforts to implementation of the recommendations of the Kofi Anna's Advisory Commission, the Government has signed three bilateral agreements with Bangladesh with the intention of the implementation of the arrangement for repatriation and resettlement of the displaced persons. The Government has been cooperating with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), ASEAN and other development partners as well as donor countries to create conducive environment for the potential returnees. Preliminary Needs Assessment (PNA) in Rakhine State has been conducted by ASEAN. Myanmar and ASEAN has agreed on the implementation of seven prioritized projects to follow up the recommendations of the PNA and to establish Ad Hoc Support Team of ASEAN Secretariat. The Government has also launched the National Strategy for Closure of IDP camps on 19 November 2019.

The Union Minister added that the Government did not ignore the issue of accountability and had formed Maungdaw In-



Union Minister U Kyaw Tin briefing on Myanmar's preparations to defend the application of the Gambia at the ICJ. **PHOTO: MNA**

report of ICOE.

The Government has already arranged adequate logistic and physical preparations to receive verified returnees in accordance with the bilateral agreements between Myanmar and Bangladesh. A high level delegation was sent to Cox's Bazar to explain the displaced persons on the preparations and arrangements made by Myanmar Government for their return and resettlements. The Myanmar Government has recently proposed to the Bangla-

help in a practical and balanced approach to resolve the Rakhine issue. Despite its objection to the UNGA resolution on Myanmar, the Government has been cooperating with the Office of the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General and had recently facilitated her ninth visit to Myanmar.

State Counsellor will lead the Myanmar Legal Team to contest the case Brought by Gambia at the ICJ

Subsequent to the briefing by Union Minister U Kyaw Tin, Union Minister for the Office of the State Counsellor U Kyaw Tint Swe made a briefing on the case brought before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) by Gambia.

U Kyaw Tint Swe pointed out that there are three cases filed by Gambia at the International Court of Justice namely; the case filed by Gambia at the ICJ on November 11, 2019; the decision of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to authorize the prosecutor's request for full investigation into alleged crimes passed on November 14, 2019 and the case filed at the Federal Court of Argentina under the principle of "Universal Jurisdiction" on November 13, 2019.

Union Minister's briefing focused on application by Gambia at the ICJ. He gave the background to the Application which Gambia submitted on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). He provided the details of the Application which claims that Myanmar is directly or indirectly responsible for vi-

olations of its obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the Genocide Convention 1948). Together with the Application, a request for Provisional Measures was also filed by Gambia and the reasons for this were cited in the request.

The Union Minister explained that all members of the United Nations, including Myanmar, are bound by the Statute of the ICJ. He gave a brief account of the Genocide Convention 1948 and stated that Myanmar signed the said Convention on 30 December 1949 and ratified/acceded to it on 14 March 1956. At the time of ratification/accession in 1956, Myanmar made two important reservations on Article VI and Article VIII of the Convention. Myanmar made no reservation with regard to Article IX, which stated that "Disputes between the Contracting Parties relating to the interpretation, application or fulfillment of the present Convention, including those relating to the responsibility of a State for genocide or for any of the other acts enumerated in article III, shall be submitted to the International Court of Justice at the request of any of the Parties to the dispute". The case by Gambia is based on Article IX.

The Union Minister appraised the high level officials led by the President, State Counsellor that Myanmar has retained the services of top most legal experts and that a strong legal team has been formed. Apart from the legal team, the country concerned has to appoint an Agent who will represent Myanmar in all aspect of the case before the ICJ.

The case concerns the high national interest of the entire country. Accordingly, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in her capacity as Union Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will act as the Agent. The case will also drag on for years and U Kyaw Tint Swe, Union Minister of the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor is appointed as Alternate Agent.

Oral presentations of the case will take place in The Hague, Netherlands and Myanmar delegation will be headed by the State Counsellor, in her capacity as Union Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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vestigation Commission led by the Vice President (1) which issued the report of its finding. Furthermore, the Government also established an Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) led by Ambassador Rosario Manalo in July 2018 and the Commission has been undertaking investigation to the allegations and is expected to release its report on its findings before the end of the year. The Tatmadaw also established their own Court of Inquiry and has been making investigations. The Evidence Collection and Verification Team (ECVT) of ICOE is awaiting the permission of Bangladesh side to visit Cox's Bazaar Camp to conduct investigations to the allegations. The Government stands ready to take action against perpetrators with concrete evidence in line with the

deshi side to send a similar delegation to Cox's Bazar to meet with displaced persons there.

The Union Minister also explained in detail about the recent developments with regard to the human rights situation of Myanmar at the United Nations including Human Right Council, UN General Assembly and the Security Council. He also briefed on the functioning of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) and the establishment of the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIM). He also commented that the United Nations is focusing more on addressing the accountability issue spending large amount of its budget than on peaceful resolution of the humanitarian situation. Myanmar would welcome those wishing to