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State Counsellor in Brunei

A Myanmar delegation led by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi arrived yesterday in Brunei Darussalam to attend the Royal Jubilee marking 50 years on the throne of His Majesty Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Wadduwa.

The delegation left for Brunei from Nay Pyi Taw International Airport, where they were seen off by diplomats and officials.

The State Counsellor and members of her entourage were welcomed at Brunei International Airport by the Brunei Attorney General, Her Excellency Datin Seri Paduka Hajah Hayati, officials from the Brunei Royal Army and Police Force, the head of the diplomatic corps of the Royal Palace, U Cho Tun Aung, Myanmar Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam and personnel from the Myanmar Embassy and their families.

The delegation led by the State Counsellor was then taken to the Guest House of His Majesty in Bandar Seri Begawan, where she would stay for the evening.

Yesterday afternoon, the State Counsellor met with Myanmar citizens living in Brunei, conversing, replying to their questions and posing for photos.

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State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is welcomed by dignitaries at the Royal Palace as she arrives to attend the Royal Banquet. **PHOTO: MNA**

No discrimination in providing aid to IDPs

Dr. Win Myat Aye, the Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, reiterated to the world refugee body yesterday that there was no discrimination in providing humanitarian aid to refugees in northern Rakhine State affected by the recent terrorist attacks.

He made the remarks in

his speech at the 68th Session of the Executive Committee of the UNHCR held in Geneva, Switzerland from 2nd October to 6th October, also pledging that the country would systematically repatriate those who fled to Bangladesh.

"It will be conducted according to the Myanmar-Bangladesh

1993 agreement on repatriating refugees. While welcoming fair cooperation, best endeavour will be made toward providing education, health and other necessary aid (to the refugees)," said the Union Minister.

At the opening ceremony held on Monday with Ms. Rosemary McCarney, the Canadian

Permanent Representative to the United Nations, presiding over the meeting, Mr Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees made an opening address.

Afterwards, ministers and deputy ministers from the countries represented at the meeting and high ranking officials made

speeches on general principles and matters on refugees to collectively find solutions.

In his address, Dr Win Myat Aye said, "Myanmar is a country in its nascent stage of democratic transition. The incumbent government is making concerted efforts for national peace and development. **SEE PAGE-2**

No discrimination in providing aid to IDPs

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National reconciliation is also the task to be performed as a priority. In implementing the tasks of socio-economic development, less-developed regions and states are being prioritised. Now I would like to discuss the situation in Rakhine State being presently of interest by international countries. Since prior to the events of the extremist terrorists' attacks, a committee was formed for performing the tasks toward Rakhine State peace and development. Moreover, the advisory commission on Rakhine State led by Mr. Kofi Annan was formed to find solutions for the controversial conflicts between Rakhine nationals and Muslims living in the region. During this period, ARSA extremist terrorist attacks took place on August 25. Due to those terrorist attacks, 30 security outposts were attacked, in which many security forces were killed, with others severely wounded. And local residents of Hindu origin and Rakhine national minority groups sparsely populated in the region were killed and displaced."

The Union Minister added, "In launching the operations against these terrorist attacks, security forces paid special attention for innocent people not to be harmed. Simultaneously, tasks of providing humanitarian aid to the victimized people were carried out. Controversial conflicts happening currently in Rakhine State got involved



Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye attending 68th Session of the Executive Committee of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. **PHOTO: MNA**

with various kinds of matters. In providing humanitarian aid, security and freedom are to be considered. Negotiations with internationally aligned countries were made on 4 September at the Ministry of the State Counselor's Office for effective and fair provision to victims. At the meeting, Ambassadors from the USA, the UK and Denmark, in-charges of Australia and EU countries, the UN regional representative, representatives of the Myanmar Red Cross Society, IFRC and ICRC took part. From 5 September on, clearance operations came to an end. Programmes are underway to perform the tasks of long-lasting peace, unity and development. The Office of the

President of the State formed a committee to implement the suggestions and recommendations of the advisory commission and investigation commission on Rakhine State. I myself chaired the committee while the Chief Minister of Rakhine State co-chaired and Deputy Ministers and Permanent Secretaries of respective ministries taking part as members. The tasks are commencing to be performed."

While attending the meeting, the Union Minister met with Mr. Kofi Annan, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Mr. Filippo Grandi, a delegation led by United States Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration Mr.

Simon Henshaw, a delegation led by UNHCR director Mr. Indrika Ratwatte, and a delegation led by International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) director Mr. Dominik Stillhart. The Union Minister explained security matters, the progress of Rakhine State affairs, the repatriation of refugees, resettling matters, working with the Red Cross Movement in providing humanitarian assistance, drawing up a master plan for Rakhine State development, matters in which international business companies can participate in implementing development programmes, cooperation with the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance

on Disaster Management (AHA Centre). He expressed his desire for cooperation based on fairness and urged them to observe the situation realistically instead of being critical of the people's government.

The Union Minister and party were informed by officials in the office of UNHCR on 4 October of the background history and current works in providing humanitarian assistance to refugees in Cambodia, Kyrgyzstan, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan, the reintegration and repatriation to their places of origin, and the strengths, weaknesses and challenges faced. The Union Minister and party commented on the discussions of the present Rakhine State situation in Myanmar and repatriation of refugees in Thailand.

At noon, a luncheon hosted by UNHCR was attended where informal meetings with representatives from Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand were held.

Yesterday at noon, the Union Minister attended the preparation for the 69th Session of the Executive Committee of the UNHCR, confirming the outcome of the meeting, decisions and the closing ceremony.

During the trip, the Union Minister explained the incidents in Rakhine State with supporting facts and video files. These facts and files were distributed to attendees, it is learnt.—Myanmar News Agency

Rakhine State Government meets with Maungtaw villagers

AUTHORITIES met with villagers in Maungtaw region who remained in their homes after the 25 August attacks by ARSA extremist terrorists and gave words of encouragement, provided cash assistance and discussed Maungtaw region development.

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and state ministers spoke about the Union Government, state government and departments that are conducting short-term and long-term projects for security, health, education, agriculture, livestock breeding, electrification, road communication, factories and shops, hotel zones, job opportunities and the general uplifting of the socio-economic situation

while implementing reconstruction works and asked for the wishes and comments of the local people.

Locals in turn discussed about businesses that are suitable for their present situation.

The Chief Minister and party then provided Ks10,000 per household to help meet the needs of villagers from Kyaukpandu, Mawyawadi, Shwe Baho, Yanaungmyin, Yaynautngartha, Tamantha and Minkamaung.

Local people in Maungtaw region can individually or as a group make proposals to relevant township and district administrative offices about businesses that they want to conduct.

In the afternoon, Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu

and state government members discussed security measures at No. 1 Border Police Command commander's office for the Maungtaw region. The Chief Minister emphasised cooperation on regional security matters and Border Police Command commander Police Brig-Gen Myint Toe explained security conditions.

The State Chief Minister was accompanied by Rakhine State Security and Border Affairs Minister Colonel Phone Tint, Finance, Revenue Planning, and Economy Minister U Kyaw Aye Thein, Electric Power, Industry and Transportation Minister U Aung Kyaw Zan and departmental officials from the state government.—Myanmar News Agency



Chief Minister U Nyi Pu meeting with local people. **PHOTO: MNA**

Reasonable Solution and Approach

By Khin Maung Oo

It has been learnt that H.E. Mr. Masud Bin Momem, the Bangladeshi Ambassador to the United Nations called for the United Nations Security Council not to avert its attention from the Rakhine State affair, up to the stage of getting reasonable solution to their demands. This statement meant “To put continuous pressure over Myanmar.” Bangladesh and Myanmar are neighboring countries sharing a border. As a matter of fact, if I had to present as done by the said “Person” I sure would say like this—“we will negotiate between the

two countries until a reasonable solution is achieved.” Such a kind of approach will be a friendly and positive one. On the other hand, to ask the UN to put pressure on Myanmar continuously, as presented by the Bangladeshi Ambassador to the UN is an approach void of trust and a negative attitude.

There is not a government in this world which can fully defend itself against the dangers of terrorists who dare to kill innocent people inhumanely. That is because terrorists never value human life and they absolutely have no regard for human dignity or morality. There is nothing in this world they

would not do to advance their cause.

They are not above doing blasphemous actions against other religions. They are never reluctant to destroy historical heritages.

The Bangladesh government has been learnt to have allowed Bengalis who fled Rakhine State to go nowhere apart from the places temporarily permitted to live currently. And, no one is allowed to purchase telephone SIM Cards as a protection against connections with terrorists. The so-called Bengalis are similar to Bangladeshi citizens in race and religion. In other words, they are like blood relatives

who have been living separately on each side of the border line. Had there been worries about dangers of terrorists even in the refugee camps on the Bangladesh side of the border, worries over dangers of terrorists in the midst of different communities are reasonable. What we hereby want to point out is that regrettably Bangladesh fails to acknowledge complex and very difficult situations which are very sensitive, between different communities. To sum it up, we should surely choose the reasonable approaches provided that we really want to achieve reasonable solutions.

Myanmar's Economy is Projected to Pick Up Amid important Risks

DESPITE important risks, Myanmar's economy is expected to recover this year, with growth rising from 5.9 percent in 2016 to 6.4 percent. Public and private investments in priority infrastructure services such as power and transportation are projected to pick up and inflation is expected to ease further, according to the October 2017 edition of the Myanmar Economic Monitor.

The country has the potential to capitalize on major investment opportunities as global growth continues to recover, but faces several risks to growth. The country's recent deterioration in security in Rakhine State could negatively affect investment flows already affected by investor perceptions of slowing reforms, and exacerbate existing risks related to vulnerability to shocks including natural disasters.

Despite notable reforms and strong foreign investment commitments in Myanmar, implementation is lagging. The Myanmar Economic Monitor suggests Myanmar build on, and communicate, important reforms already underway, for instance in access to finance, electricity and land, business regulations and labor force skills, to boost investor confidence.

Improved global growth prospects and continued strong domestic demand underpin a positive outlook for the broader region, says the October 2017 edition of the East Asia and Pacific Economic Update also launched today. Stronger growth in advanced econo-

mies, a moderate recovery in commodity prices, and a recovery in global trade growth, will support the economies of developing East Asia and Pacific to collectively expand by 6.4 percent for 2017.

The report states that the uptick in growth in 2017 relative to earlier expectations reflects stronger than expected growth in China, at 6.7 percent, the same pace as in 2016. In the rest of the region growth in 2017 will be rise to 5.1 percent in 2017 and 5.2 percent in 2018, up from 4.9 percent in 2016.

Several external and domestic risks could impact this positive outlook. Economic policies in some advanced economies remain uncertain, while geopolitical tensions centered on the region have increased. Monetary policies in the U.S. and the Euro Area could be tightened more quickly than expected. Many countries in the region have high levels of private sector debt while fiscal deficits remain high or are on the rise.

“The recovery of the global economy and the expansion of global trade are good news for the East Asia and Pacific region and its continued success in improving living standards,” said Victoria Kwakwa, World Bank Vice President for the East Asia and Pacific Region. “The challenge will be for countries to strike a balance between prioritizing short-term growth and reducing medium-term vulnerabilities, so that the region has a stronger foundation for sustained and inclusive growth.”

Thailand and Malaysia are expected to grow more rapidly than expected, due to stronger exports, including

tourism, for the former, and increased investment in the latter. Gains in real wages are fueling strong consumption in Indonesia, and a rebound in agriculture and manufacturing is boosting growth in Vietnam. In the Philippines, the economy is projected to expand at a slightly slower pace than in 2016, partly due to slower than expected implementation of public investment projects.

Growth in Cambodia and Lao PDR is moderating compared to 2016, but its pace remains higher than other countries in the region; trade and FDI in Cambodia and expansion of the power sector in Lao PDR are the main drivers.

“The improved prospects for global growth offer a window of opportunity for countries to reduce vulnerabilities while pursuing reforms that can yield growth dividends over the longer term,” said Sudhir Shetty, World Bank Chief Economist for the East Asia and Pacific region. “Reducing risks to financial sector stability and strengthening competitiveness, including through deeper regional integration, remain priorities.”

To maintain resilience against risks, the report calls for a move away from measures aimed at short-term growth towards policies that address financial sector and fiscal vulnerabilities. These measures include: strengthening supervision and prudential regulation in countries experiencing rapid growth in private-sector credit and debt; reforming tax policies and administration to help boost revenue collection; and

being ready to tighten monetary policy if warranted by the pace of interest rate increases in advanced economies.

Structural reform priorities differ across countries. Sustained reforms of the state-owned enterprise sectors in China and Vietnam can improve growth prospects. The Philippines, Thailand, Lao PDR and Cambodia will benefit from continued improvements in public investment management systems to support expanding public infrastructure programs. In Indonesia, liberalizing the regulations for foreign investment remains important.

The report also highlights the potential that tourism development and deeper regional integration offer to offset the risks of protectionism. Growth in tourism, if well managed, has the potential to yield substantial benefits to the region, including for the Pacific Island Countries. The ASEAN Economic Community offers one avenue for promoting further regional integration, including by further liberalizing trade in services and reducing non-tariff barriers.

Despite success in reducing poverty, high and rising inequality is a growing concern, as are falling mobility and growing economic insecurity. For lasting inclusive growth, measures to reduce extreme poverty where it still exists must be accompanied by policies that broaden access to quality services and more productive jobs, and stronger social protection systems that reduce the consequences of adverse shocks.—World Bank ■