Teachers see no boundaries as long as there is peace and security

U Aye Tun.

U Nay Myo Naing.

U Maung Byawh.

U Than Lwin.

U Soe Min Kyaw.

Basic education schools in Maungtaw District, Rakhine State, that were closed due to attacks of ARSA extremist terrorists on 25 August this year were reopened in September end. The Ministry of Education is implementing a plan to extend up to 300 schools in the district at the end of this month. Teachers are staying at a temporary hostel and teaching lessons at the nearby schools. Teachers were interviewed to express their difficulties and challenges in their work.

A brave teacher and his three students. **PHOTO: MIN HTAT**

U Aye Tun, teacher BEPS Tarein village

Our Tarein village has opened since October end. I am in Maungtaw to present papers. We will not go back home during the December school holidays as we are going to open classes. We will sacrifice our holidays as we want to end the courses in time. Only half of the students come back to school in Tarein. Many of the schools are like that. We found transport and other social needs as the main difficulty of Maungtaw region. Despite the hardships, teachers do their work with heart and soul. We were in Tarein during the terrorist attacks. We could not go anywhere till the Tatmadaw came and conveyed us to our relatives in the nearest places. It costs K 15,000 to travel by car as the final submission date is on 25 this month. It will be K 30000 for the round trip. We are facing a lot of difficulties in drawing our salary in Maungtaw. It will be more convenient if our salaries are paid at the nearest school or if the school head will draw all the salaries on behalf of teachers who will equally bear the transport cost.

U Nay Myo Naing, teacher **of affiliate BEPS, Khon**taing village

A student of affiliate basic primary school in Khontaing village lost his life during the terrorist attack on 25 August. As the village was burnt down, we have to close the school till now. We have instructions that we must open collective classes for our students at Jatchaung village. We face language barriers as most of the students are ethnic Mros. We can break the language barrier if we have a teacher who is skill in Mro language. Transport is poor. During the rains, we have to spend a night just to draw our salary. So we could not make progress in teaching as expected. It would be appropriate if a certain person takes the responsibility of drawing all the salaries. We see no borders as long as there is peace and security.

U Maung Byawh, teacher, Thaohottaw Post BEPS

We were sent to the assigned schools on 20 this month. After drawing our salary for this month, we will go to our assigned places. It is not convenience for us as we will have to draw our salary by ourselves. It takes five hours and cost K 15000 to get our salary. Most of the students are of the Islamic faith. We have to learn their language first in teaching them. Now we are attached at Ngakuya school.

U Than Lwin, teacher, Ngayantchaung BEPS

We have over 100 students. They are ethnic Rakhines, Mros and Thets and students of Islamic faith. We closed our school after the incidents on 25 August. We have not reopened it yet. Food is poor. Teachers in Maungtaw region face difficulties in drawing their salary by themselves. It will be good for us if the school head takes this responsibility. Some places are not secure for teachers till now.

U Soe Min Kyaw, Yankhaceti BEPS

Yankhaceti BEPS has lesser number of students. And there are only three teachers. Many people of the village were murdered during the terrorist attacks. We could not go anywhere. We faced hardships as it was rainy season. We draw our salary in Buthidaung. It is too difficult for us to get the monthly salary. Poor transport is our main difficulty. Improve in transport will erase all difficulties.

Due to the terrorist attacks in Maungtaw region, Rakhine State, 16 high schools, 109 middle schools and 58 primary schools totaling 183 schools were temporarily closed in Maungtaw Township, and 10 high schools, 107 middle schools and 104 primary schools totaling 220 schools, in Buthisdaung Township in Maungtaw District. Education Ministry made arrangements to reopen the schools on 13 and 14 September. Maungtaw Township has 1281 teachers, Buthidaung Township has 1384. The whole Maungtaw District has over 2600 teachers. Arrangements are under way to appoint teacher assistances.—News Team ■

Raising awareness for GAP guidelines

An awareness raising event for good agricultural practices was held at the Man Myanmar Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw on 11 November. The Ministry for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation has produced a GAP Protocol handbook (Good Agricultural Practice) with the purpose of cultivating good habits for agriculture, producing good quality crops and importing them into the market.

The GAP Protocol was compiled with consideration for 4 guidelines of producing safe food, producing good quality end products, reducing negative environmental impacts and improving the safety and livelihoods of farmers and workers.

GAP protocols have already been issued for 15 of the highest produced and imported agricultural goods in Myanmar including mangoes, cantaloupe, pomelo, watermelon, avocado, chili, tomato, onion, cabbage, corn, different types of beans, sesame, peanut, rice and coffee beans. The GAP Guidelines can be viewed at www.doa.gov.mm or www.facebook.com/doamoali. You can also contact the local Agricultural Department, Township Administration Department or Sub department for Horticulture or contact via phone at 067-410147, 410525, 410383. —The Ministry for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation ■

Collective force is our strength!

MUCH as we are facing international pressure, allegations and criticisms over the Rakhine State affair, Rakhine State Peace, Stability and Development Committee chaired by the State Counsellor was formed, constantly performing the tasks under the management of four working committees.

The Rakhine State affair is not only the affair of the whole nation but has also been under the close scrutiny of the international community. Thus it is being handled with great care. According to findings after a year-long study of the advisory commission on Rakhine State Affair, the tasks which will be beneficial for the country and the people among the recommendations of the advisory commission are now under implementation.

The tasks of implementation for peace, stability and development in Rakhine State cannot be accomplished overnight, so they are systematically being carried out step by step, being the ones to be implemented in the long run. At such a time, global pressure and pessimistic views will never be a fruitful approach. Instead, the international community should have cooperated to solve the problem so that constructive results can be brought about.

At present, the Union Government is urgently supplying humanitarian assistance but there are still difficulties to supply subsidies in sufficient quantities to refugees in a short period time. The UEHRD was therefore set up so that all the people in Myanmar can contribute their labor, effort and humanitarian assistance collectively.

In doing so, social harmony and understanding between both communities plays an important role for national security so that tasks for development can be performed without fear and anxiety.

> Assembly in the same place for negotiation between those from different races and societies in Rakhine State is strengthening mutual trust by consolidating differences.

The statement described in paragraph 60 of the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State which said, "The Government should encourage emergence of negotiations between social societies," is being implemented. Responsible officials from the Implementation Committee regarding Recommendations on Rakhine State, representatives from national ethnic races such as Thet, Daingnet, Mro, Khami, Maramagyi, Kaman, Rakhine, and etc., met on 24th November for negotiations. This is building harmony and mutual trust between different communities.

Assembly in the same place for negotiation between those from different races and societies in Rakhine State is strengthening mutual trust by consolidating differences. In other words, it is moving towards national peace, stability and development with collective forces, without segregation of race, religions and political beliefs. Provided that consolidation, unity and negotiation can be built up among different communities in Rakhine State, it is sure that a peaceful, stable and developed Rakhine State will emerge in the not too distant future. ■

Your Holiness, you are welcome to our country

Maha Saddhama Jotikadhaja, Sithu Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt

AS soon as I heard the good tidings in our media about the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to Myanmar 27-30 November 2017, my heart and soul were filled with elations. Though the Vatican City State and Myanmar have long history of diplomatic relations since the early days of Myanmar Kings, no Pope had ever visited Myanmar.

As a historian, I can trace the origin of this relation as far back as possible. In the time of King Bodawpaya [1782-1819 A.D), there was already established at his capital city Amarapura Roman Catholic mission of Barnabite Order headed by most reverend father Sangermano, who was the most trusted friend of Myanmar King. He built a church and a missionary school on the glebe lands donated by the King. He wrote a very valuable account of his happy years at Amarapura and his wide travels in the kingdom and published in a book form "A Description of the Burmese Empire". In it he described in detail the economy politics, religion and socio-culture of Myanmar people and ethnic nationalities. He admired Myanmar Kings policy and administration particularly religious freedom. King Bodawpaya's Empire was, he says very strong, organized and the vast and greatest empire in Southeast Asia.

In the time of King Mindon the second last Myanmar king [1853-73 A.D] diplomatic relatives were established between Vatican City State and Yandanapon Naypyidaw. But there was no resident Papul Nuncio at the capital King Mindon sent some young Myanmar scholars to Italy to learn science and technology and navigation, under the guardianship of Catholic missionary monks.

In 1958, as a student in London I hitchhiked from Geneva to Italy. I had the chance to visit St. Peters' Cathedral in Rome. Later, in my capacity as Direct General of Fine Arts Department, as well as that of Archaeology Department, I made two official visits to the Vatican City, with the support of UNESCO. On these 2 occasions I not only received the blessings of the then Pope who was making public appearance and giving blessings to the audience but also got the chance to visit the museum. Where I saw to my surprise and delight rick royal gifts of King Mindon to the Pope. Among them were a gold cross studded with rubies, a gold swan okh [rice container] for the pope and jewel studded gold book stand for the holy Bible. I also saw gold gilt Myanmar pei [palm leaf] and parabike [folding paper] on which, I think, Bible and Testaments were written. There may be similar objects of historical value in the museums of Catholic Churchs in other cities in Italy.

In the 19th century onwards Catholic mission of Delasa Order flourished in Myanmar. Here I am proud to say that I was the product of Catholic missionary school, St. Peter's English High School, Mandalay from where I passed the Matric Examination in 1948. I am now a late octogenarian still going strong in brain and brawn —the credit goes to my parents and to my Buddhist monk teachers and Catholic missionary teachers of St. Paters'. Highly disciplined life of my high school years was rigid, but happy. Three times a day for Catholic prayers, the Bible teachings Catechism and instructions on morals and manners by Catholic priests and brothers had laid a good strong foundation for becoming a good citizen of the country. On the farewell day when the matriculation Examination results showed all StPeters' students passed with distinctions, we Myanmar Buddhist students knelt down and paid worships to our teachers. The then principal of school Rev. Brother Director Clemetion uttered words of appreciation in Pali Sadu Sadu Sadu (well done) we all shed tears of delight as well as sorrows to leave our alma mater school. We also noticed that Rev Brother Clemention was also tearful, for missing his smart obedient pupils.

Now Myanmar is lucky to be blessed by the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis. In the press release of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Myanmar in Yangon it is said that "Pope Francis to meet all people of Myanmar". He would stop in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw. The crest published togather with the news has the map of Myanmar with letters "Love and Peace" on the top and ခြစ်ခြင်းမေတ္တာ and ငြိမ်းချမ်းခြင်း below.

Loving kindness [metta.] and Peace are the very same words Lord Buddha emphasized not only in his peaching and teaching but also in his missionary works. They proved always successful! "Catholic" meaning all embracing- both Christians and non-Christians inclusiveness in modern par lances.

Before coming to Myanmar His Holiness had made a very successful visit to Columbia, a Latin American Country where the situation of the past five decades was not dissimilar to that of Myanmar. The miraculous effect of that visit by means of his "message of unity, planting a tree of peace and saying a Mass to preach a re-conciliation in a nation bitterly divided by five decades of war. Within the short duration of 3 days 8.9.2017 to 10.9.2017 His Holiness, the leader of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics has accomplished his peace mission with resounding triumph.

At this time when Myanmar leaders and people are working together for national reconciliation, peace, progress and prosperity on the democratization process, His Holiness's auspicious visit to our country Myanmar will undoubtedly promote to reach our much desired goal.

May our Almighty Lord bring and restore everlasting peace and unity to our country Myanmar as well.

AMEN

Now His Holiness will be with us for a short duration 27.11.2017 - 30.11.2017.

My humble respects to Your Holiness Pope Francis.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

ONE of the most common challenges across South Asia during the seasonal monsoon is flooding; and with flooding there are two serious threats that endanger human life, namely- communicable diseases and snake bites.

Although the outbreak of diseases capture our major attention; however, the numerous reported and unreported deaths due to snake bites in the rural areas is grossly neglected and misrepresented.

The flood water that enters the local forest areas, plug the nesting holes of the snakes with water forcing them to come out in the open.

The snakes in the flood hit area of remote and rural areas then start looking for dry areas; and unfortunately come in close encounter with the local human habitants resulting in disasters.

The overflow of flood water, results in snake outbreak in the waterbodies as well as adjoining river banks, around forest fringes, agricultural fields, granaries and even in the inundated villages and rural homes.

The deaths due to snake bites result due to the following unfortunate factors: lack of proper transportation to the nearby health centers for quick injection of anti-venom, inadequate supply of anti-venoms in the remote, rural health centers or even in district hospitals, lack of enough skilled medical personnel properly trained in diagnosing and treating victims of snake bites, lack of education and awareness among rural communities and above all superstitions regarding snakes.

It is sad to note that many rural families turn to traditional healers for treating snake bite victims who only delay the process of proper medical treatment through their useless and fake show ups for treating the unfortunate victims.

Mass education and awareness regarding all kinds of snakes; both non-poisonous and highly poisonous (like the cobras, king cobras, kraits and viper) species are necessary for the rural communities.

As long as lack of awareness, infrastructure and communication exists in the rural in the remote, rural areas; superstitions as well as inadequate and improper treatments will facilitate monsoon deaths due to snake bites every year unabated.

Thanking you
Sincerely yours
Saikat Kumar Basu
Apt 6-409, 43 Street South,
Lethbridge AB Canada T1J 4B3
Cell: 1-4038944254

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

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 works to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon or by email to **dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com** with the following information: **(1)** Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), **(2)** Real 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 news office