

NATIONAL

Pope meets with
State Sangha Maha
Nayaka Committee
PAGE-3

**NATIONAL**

Pyithu Hluttaw
Speaker visits
Kamakura
PAGE-2

**NATIONAL**

Amyotha Hluttaw
Speaker visits
Republic of Korea
PAGE-2



THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. IV, No. 227, 12th Waxing of Nadaw 1379 ME

www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Thursday, 30 November 2017

Pope prays for Myanmar healing

POPE Francis celebrated the nation's first-ever papal Mass yesterday morning when he conducted an open-air service for an estimated 200,000 people in Kyaikkasan Sports Grounds in Yangon.

He called on the crowd to "anoint every hurt and every painful memory" and promote "the reconciliation and peace that God wants to reign in every human heart and in every community."

The mass was attended by the Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr. Myint Htwe, Yangon Region ministers, dignitaries

from the ruling National League for Democracy, Cardinal Charles Maung Bo, the Archbishop of Yangon, bishops from neighbouring countries and thousands of Catholic worshippers.

In his sermon, the pontiff urged the people of Myanmar to resist retaliation and reprisals.

"I know that many in Myanmar bear the wounds of violence, wounds both visible and invisible," he told the crowd in Italian that was translated into Burmese. He said the temptation is to exact revenge, but urged a response of "forgiveness and compassion."

The Pope said he was impressed with the work being done by the Church for all of Myanmar, efforts that will help the country lift itself both spiritually and economically.

"I know that the Church in Myanmar is already doing much to bring the healing balm of God's mercy to others, especially those most in need. There are clear signs that even with very limited means, many communities are proclaiming the Gospel to other tribal minorities, never forcing or coercing but always inviting and welcoming."

SEE PAGE-3

Pope Francis, right, meets Dr. Bhaddanata Kumarabhivamsa, the chairman of the State Sangha Mahanayaka Committee. **PHOTO: MNA**



Pope Francis, centre, in the Popemobile, greets the large crowd at Kyaikkasan Grounds in Yangon. The pontiff then celebrated an outdoor Mass. **PHOTO: MYANMAR NEWS AGENCY**



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Pope meets with Chairman of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee

POPE Francis held a meeting with the Sayadaws of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee at the Wizaya Minghala Dhamma Hall at KabaAye Hill in Yangon yesterday.

At the meeting, Sayadaw Dr. Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa, Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, said members of different faiths urgently need to build mutual understanding, respect and trust among themselves in order to obtain a peaceful, secure and prosperous human society.

"We have to exercise restraint and refrain from interfering in matters of other religions and to cooperate in building bridges for world peace," said Dr. Kumarabhivamsa.

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar recognises the special position of Buddhism as the faith professed by the great majority of citizens and also recognises Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Animism as religions existing in the Union, and the country assists these religions to its utmost, he said. "There is no doubt that fundamental principles of every religion are based on loving and kindness. By sharing loving-kindness to each other, individual households, so-



State Sangha Maha Nayaka Sayadaws discussing with Pope Francis and party at the meeting. **PHOTO: HLA MOE**

cieties, citizens and states can be able to coexist peacefully. By committing peaceful coexistence among states, global peace can be achieved certainly," said Dr. Kumarabhivamsa.

"In today's world, it is regrettable for us to see "terrorism and extremism" in the name of religious beliefs. We do not accept that terrorism and extremism arise out of a certain religious faith, because all religious teaching instructs only for the welfare of the humanity," he said.

"We firmly believe that ter-

rorism and extremism arise out of only misapprehension in original teachings of the respective religion, because some religious followers introduce some amendments to the original teachings being dominated by their desire, ill-will, dread and delusion-the four wrong courses," he added.

Sayadaw Dr. Kumarabhivamsa said all must denounce all kinds of hate speech, false propaganda, conflict and war under the pretext of religion and strongly condemn those who provide support any such activities.

Afterwards, Pope Francis said the present meeting means strengthening and refreshing the friendship, respect and love which has pre-existed between the Buddhist people and Catholic Christians. He continued to say that this is an opportunity to confirm that they all are responsible for justice in mankind, peace and respect to human dignity. Such a confirmation made together in Myanmar should be present among the people of the world, he said. "It can be said we are fulfilling their hope by asserting

the same voice of confirmation on basic personal integrity, peace and justice", the Pope said.

"Let us lend our hands to Catholic Christians or Buddhists who are striving to augment the compatibility and compassion among the societies of mankind".

In his greeting, the Pope gave thanks for the gathering.

"I wish to repeat my thanks again as I am invited to meet the Sayadaws", he said. "I pray, may blessing come to you all in the form of peace and happiness."—Myanmar News Agency ■

2nd coordination meeting of Myanmar Laws Translation Commission

UNION Attorney General U Tun Tun Oo, Chairman of the Myanmar Laws Translation Commission, talked about the status of the translation work at the 2nd Coordination Meeting of the Myanmar Law Translation Commission held at the Office of the Union Attorney General yesterday.

"At the Myanmar Law Translation Working Committee Meeting held on September 8, 9 and 10, 2017 Myanmar translations of the four laws which sub-working committees submitted were discussed for approval.

Myanmar translations of 3 other laws which sub-working committees submitted were thoroughly discussed at the branch office of the translation commission in Yangon by working committee members as the final stage of the

translation. The said 7 laws which had been rendered into Myanmar approved by the working committee and 2 other laws (Myanmar rendering) submitted by the sub-working committees—9 in all are to be approved after thorough discussions.

I hereby express my thanks to commission members for their accurate rendering and detailed negotiation", the Union Attorney General said.

The Myanmar Laws Translation Commission meeting will be held for four days from 27th November to 30th November; it was learnt.

Present at the meeting were the Deputy Union Attorney General, translation commission members and members of sub-working committees.—Myanmar News Agency ■

Reports of ethnic cleansing in N-Rakhine is not reliable: Myanmar church

MYANMAR'S Catholic Church held a press conference in Yangon yesterday about the three-day visit of Pope Francis to Myanmar. Vatican spokesman Greg Burke and several Myanmar bishops answered the questions raised by journalists.

Pope's visit to Myanmar represents "Unity", said Mr. Gerg Burk, the Holy See's spokesman, saying that Pope highlighted the

"unity" at meetings with Myanmar political and religious leaders during his visit. At the press conference, Bishop John Hsane Hgyi suggested that reports of atrocities being committed are not "reliable" or "authoritative" and that those who are criticizing Myanmar's response to a complex situation should "go into the field to study the reality and history" to obtain "true news." The Holy

See's spokesman Greg Burke also acknowledged that Vatican diplomacy was "not infallible" and that others were entitled to their views in his answer to the journalists over the term which he avoided to use during the visit. "I think it was pretty clear from the local concerns that the Pope was going to take the advice very seriously in public," Vatican spokesman Greg Burke said.—GNLM ■

Pope prays ...

FROM PAGE-1

Amid much poverty and difficulty, many of you offer practical assistance and solidarity to the poor and suffering", the Pope said. As the Pope entered Kyaikkasan Sports Ground in Yangon yesterday morning, crowds of Myanmar worshippers waved Vatican and Burmese flags while Francis passed them in the

Popemobile, as he made his way to the temporary altar to offer Mass. Catholics represent a tiny fraction of the population in Buddhist-majority Myanmar, with a major portion of Catholics among the Kachin and Shan ethnics in the far northeastern part of the country.

"Many of you have come from far and remote mountainous areas, some even on foot," he said to the crowd. "I have come as a fellow pilgrim to listen and

to learn from you, as well as to offer you some words of hope and consolation." Later in the day, the pontiff met with Bhaddanta Kumarabhivamsa, the Chairman of State of the Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee. He met with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on Tuesday. The Pope will leave Myanmar today to travel to Bangladesh, where he will spend several days before returning to the Vatican.—Myanmar News Agency ■



Pope Francis waves to Catholic Christians as he arrives to lead a mass at Kyite Ka San Stadium in Yangon on November 29, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**

Pope Francis in Yangon



Pope Francis delivers his speech during a meeting with the bishops of Myanmar at the end of their meeting at St. Mary's Cathedral, Yangon on November 29, 2017. **PHOTO: REUTERS**



Pope waves to Catholic Christians. **PHOTO: PHOE KHVAR**



Catholic Christians participate in a mass led by Pope Francis. **PHOTO: PHOE KHVAR**

Our Country Will Receive God's Blessings, I Felt

By Nandar Win, Zaw Gyi
PHOTOS BY ZAW MIN LATT

THE Kyaikasan Grounds, once in the past, the State Ceremonies and mass meetings were held saw a huge amounts of people coming from various parts of the country, since the evening on November 28. In the morning of November 29, psalms of Roman Catholic Church are spreading about the grounds, with those present there are waving Myanmar national flags and miniature flags with the logo symbols of peace and love on.

In fact, the audience occupying the whole area of the ground came to attend to the holy praying ceremony of the Pope Francis, who has been on an official historic visit in Myanmar.

The Pontiff who brought peace and loving kindness together with him greeted audiences in the unroofed car in the grounds, followed by the ceremony of holy praying under the Papal leadership.

The audience recited psalms, praying together with the Pope Francis, who gave God's Blessings after praying. In turn, audiences received God's Blessings shared by the Pope.

Present at the praying ceremony were Cardinals accompanying the Pontiff, Cardinal clerics from India, Viet Nam, Japan, South Korea, Thailand and Laos, Reverend Monks from Asian countries including Myanmar, Buddhist Sanghas, Catholic Adherents across the nation and people amounting to nearly 200000.

Here are interviews with Catholic adherents in Myanmar made by MNA.

Daw Mary Nwe (Bhamo, Kachin State)

It is a rare chance to pay respect to the Pope Francis, being an opportunity to meet him once in my life. We, the whole family came here today with great pleasure. We pray for the God's Blessings over the people from Myanmar and across the world.

U Kyan Tin (Lashio, Shan State)

Since 10 pm last night, we waited in the grounds. The Pontiff, being the representative of Jesus Christ, came here for the first time over two thousand



U Saw Walter (Myanaung, Ayeyawady Region)



Ko Ar Jarr (Labutta, Ayeyawady Region)



Daw Mary Nwe (Bhamo, Kachin State)



Daw Zin Mar (Mayangone township, Yangon)



Ma Aye Myat Myat Min (Dagon, Yangon)



U Kyan Tin (Lashio, Shan State)



Daw Julee San Mai (Bhamo, Kachin State)



Ma En Mary (Hlaing township, Yangon)

years. From today's praying ceremony we came to be well convinced that revenges are the wrong concepts. Contrariwise, we came to know that we must direct towards forgiveness and peace.

Daw Julee San Mai (Bhamo, Kachin State)

I think all those who belong to the same belief will be pleased. As included in the Pope Francis's speech, the God told us not to revenge, which is not of value.

Loving kindness and helping to each other is the noblest and the most pleasant ones. Jesus Christ came to the world for the sake of the people. After two thousand years, the Pontiff came to us. This is a good omen for the country, Myanmar.

Daw Zin Mar (Mayangone township, Yangon)

The Pope, the highest in our Catholic Church came here. It is a rare chance to hear the Holy Statements. All religions have good characteristics of their own. All want to live in peace,



Frola Rosy (Kandawlay, Mingalar Taungnyunt, Yangon)

hand in hand with each other. Revenge is not good. It needs to solve with loving kindness. All should live in peace as designated by the God.

U Saw Walter (Myanaung, Ayeyawady Region)

We are very happy to have a chance to meet the Pope, once in a life. I came here to fulfill my itching desire. In all the religions loving kindness and forgiveness is of great importance. Patience and helping to each



Ko Sam San (Kawthoung, Taninthayi Region)

other is also good.

Ko Ar Jarr (Labutta, Ayeyawady Region)

I had never thought of meeting the Pope in my life. Today's praying ceremony is originated in peace. It is necessary for all to bear loving kindness and forgiveness.

Ma Aye Myat Myat Min (Dagon, Yangon)

Being a Roman Catholic adherent, I came here today.

Peace is of great need for our country. The Pontiff said to us to live in unity and with loving kindness. May our country be peaceful and pleasant.

Ma En Mary (Hlaing township, Yangon)

Since 4 am I arrived here. On the arrival, the ground was overcrowded with people. Even if we went to the Vatican City it is not possible to meet the Pope. I am very happy to see him. I assume that the papal visit will make Myanmar known to the world.

Frola Rosy (Kandawlay, Mingalar Taungnyunt, Yangon)

Since 11 pm I waited here. It is a great chance for us. I felt our country will receive the God's Blessings.

Ko Sam San (Kawthoung, Taninthayi Region)

I was greatly pleased to be here today. I think the papal visit to Myanmar will bring about betterment for our nation. Along with all his journeys, extraordinary things happened, I felt.